

HAWKER'S
BIBLE CHAPTER
SUMMARIES
AND
REFLECTIONS

VOLUME 1



BY
ROBERT HAWKER

GENESIS – 2 CHRONICLES

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CONTAINING
GENESIS – 2 CHRONICLES

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PREFACE

Dr. Hawker delighted to speak of his Lord as “My most glorious Christ.” In his *Poor Man’s Commentary on The Old and New Testament*, “Christ and Him crucified” was emphatically the burden of his comments and the keynote of his ministry. Hawker, began his comments on each Bible chapter with a *Summary* of the chapter at hand, and concluded his verse by verse comments with *Reflections* on the same. This three volume set, entitled *Robert Hawker’s Bible Chapter Summaries and Reflections* omits all of the verse by verse comments and presents only his chapter summaries and reflections. Perhaps it could more appropriately be termed Hawker’s concise commentary on the entire Bible. While it *is* abbreviated, you will find it very thorough.

Dr. Hawker preached his last sermon in Charles Church on March 18th, 1827, and on April 6th he died, after being six years curate and forty-three years vicar of the parish. On the last day of his life he repeated a part of Ephesians 1, from the 6th to the 12th verses, and as he proceeded he enlarged on the verses, but dwelt more fully on these words: “To the praise of His glory Who first trusted in Christ.” He paused and asked, “Who first trusted in Christ?” And then made this answer: “It was God the Father Who first trusted in Christ.”

C. H. Spurgeon once commented concerning Robert Hawker by saying, "Gentleman, if you want something full of marrow and fatness, cheering to your own hearts by way of comment, and likely to help you in giving your hearers rich expositions, buy Dr. Hawker's Poor Man's Commentary. Dr. Hawker was the very least of commentators in the matter of criticism, but he sees Jesus, and that is a sacred gift which is most precious whether the owner be a critic or no. There is always such a savor of the Lord Jesus Christ in Dr. Hawker that you cannot read him without profit."

The Publisher

GENESIS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

THE first, and most important observation, to be made on this Book of GOD, is what our LORD himself declared, concerning the writings of the Author of it, in general; that *Moses wrote of Him*. John 5:46. And as the Redeemer did not say, in what part of this man's inspired writings, more particularly it is, that mention is made of Him, (perhaps with an intention to enforce a more diligent search through all,) it should seem to be our wisdom to keep this direction in view, through every part, in going over the whole of the *five* Books of Moses; that we may not overlook a single passage, in our search for Him, *of whom Moses and the prophets did write, JESUS of Nazareth*.

Reader! I charge you to place these four words of the LORD JESUS, as a motto for remembrance, at the head of every Book, and every Chapter: *Moses wrote of CHRIST*. And as from this unquestionable authority, whenever we open any of the writings of Moses, we may with safety say, whether it be discovered by us or not, *JESUS is here*: conscious also that from our own blindness, untaught of the HOLY GHOST, we shall never find Him; how ought we to look up, for light, and direction from above, and say with David; LORD open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law!"

There is another general observation to be made upon this Book of Genesis, before the Reader enters upon the perusal of it; namely, how gracious, and condescending it was in GOD, to cause those Sacred Records to be made, and carefully handed down to us, for giving us information concerning those interesting points, without which, they never could have been known by us. May divine grace make us duly thankful for such distinguishing mercies!

In this first Book of Moses, we have brought before us the history of the creation; the original state of man as innocent; his fall, by reason of sin; the gracious promise of redemption; together with the Church's history, in the hives of the Patriarchs, comprising a period of about 2369 years.

Reader! in observing how short an account we have of the lives of the Fathers, during so long, a period, contemplate with due seriousness, the fluctuating transitory state of man upon earth! And while the reflection suitably affects the mind, recollect no less, how sweet, and reviving the thought is, that amidst all the changing scenes of succeeding generations, in which one passeth away, and another cometh, our COVENANT GOD in CHRIST, liveth and abideth forever. LORD, grant to him that writes, and to him that reads these lines, that when their hour is also come, in which both will cease from their labors, be gathered to their fathers, and have seen corruption, they may find thee to be the strength of their heart, and their portion forever.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

As the very foundation of religion must be formed in the knowledge of GOD, and our relation to Him; the Sacred Historian opens this Book of GOD, with a general account of the glorious work of the Divine Persons of the GODHEAD, in Creation; and the particular recital of each day's work, in the progress of it: concluding the Chapter with an account of the Divine Complacency, in the review of the whole, as being all perfect in its kind, and very good.

REFLECTIONS

AMIDST many other precious instructions arising out of this Chapter, which I pray GOD the SPIRIT to unfold to the mind of the Reader, there are some which I venture to suggest to his more immediate attention.

And first. Is it not a very refreshing thought to the true believer in CHRIST, to behold, in the very opening of the Bible, in time first verse of it, and almost in the very first word of the verse, that the glorious doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is the foundation of faith, is so strikingly set forth? What an exalted thought is this for the human mind to dwell in contemplation upon, that the GOD with whom we have to do, and from whose goodness we originate, is so widely distinguished, in the nature of his own existence, from all his creatures! And with what veneration, humility of soul, and the most profound homage, ought we at all times to be looking up to this first, greatest, and best of Beings!

But this is not all. It is not enough to look up to the Great I AM, as he is in himself; but we are authorized, nay enjoined, to contemplate and adore the Divine Majesty, as he stands revealed to his creatures. In the 26th verse of this Chapter, we behold the Sacred Three in One, conferring together for our creation: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. As if by this act, they called upon the human mind to admire and adore the GODHEAD in this threefold character of Persons, as the united source of all our mercies. Well might David exclaim, and so may you and I, fearfully and wonderfully am I made! Wonderfully made, indeed, when our creation thus occupied the joint agency of the Sacred Three! Wonderfully redeemed, also, when the redemption of our nature engaged their joint concern! and wonderful will be that joy, which is unspeakable and full of glory, when their joint praises will employ the innumerable host of the faithful before the throne; when that hymn shall be sung: Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive all glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This Chapter is remarkable for the events recorded in it, which took place immediately after creation-work was finished. In it is

contained, also, the first institution of the sabbath, the blessings GOD pronounced upon it, and the sanctification of it. A description of the garden of Eden; of the tree of life; and of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. A more particular account of the formation of the first woman; and of the sacred institution of marriage.

REFLECTIONS

MANY are the sweet reflections which are suggested to the Reader's mind, from the perusal of this Chapter. Here is the first institution of the holy sabbath. And here we meet also with the first institution of the holy estate of marriage. Both of divine authority. Both sanctioned by GOD himself; and therefore both worthy to be observed with suitable reverence. Concerning the former, I would say to the pious Reader, may it be your mercy, and mine, to honour the LORD'S day, on account of the many precious purposes, for which the LORD himself honoured it: and to cease from our own works, as GOD did from His. And concerning the latter, I would add a prayer, that a due sense the Divine appointment, in the institution of holy wedlock, may make every one engaged in it, remember what the Apostle says: *Marriage is honourable unto all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers GOD will judge.* But doth not the idea of union in the marriage-state, in this life, awaken a spiritual improvement, and call up to the recollection of the true believer in JESUS, the sweet thought of our spiritual union with Him, who hath betrothed his people to himself, forever? Oh! what a precious scripture is that; *Thy Maker is thy Husband, the LORD of hosts is his name.* Isaiah 54:5. Dearest JESUS, be Thou my Husband, Shepherd, Friend!

May the recollection, which the 7th verse of this chapter awakens, of the dust of which our nature was formed, remind you and me of our earthly extraction; so that we can truly say *to corruption, thou art my father; and to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.* Job 17:14. But at the same time, may the pleasing thought, that the LORD GOD hath breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, make us never forget our heavenly relationship. And oh! that GOD the HOLY GHOST would breathe upon the dry bones, both of him that writes and him that reads, and bid us live.

Reader! do not overlook the very gracious doctrine of the 20th verse. *There was not found an help meet for Adam.* No! There is not, there cannot be, in any, or in all the creatures of GOD's providence, an help meet. And though the LORD GOD brought the woman to our first father, as a suitable help meet for the *body*; yet it is the *Seed of the Woman*, alone, which can become an Help-meet for the *soul*. Dearest JESUS! be thou my Help, my Hope, and my Portion forever.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

I know not, whether we ought to consider this chapter, as the most melancholy, or the most pleasing in the whole Bible. It certainly contains the substance of what forms both. Here we read the sad origin of sin, and its unavoidable consequences, misery and death. And here, we, no less, behold the first discoveries of grace, in the promised redemption, by our LORD JESUS CHRIST. So that while that sentence is still felt, In Adam all die; that mercy is, no less promised, In CHRIST that all be made alive. The contents of this chapter may be summed up under a few particulars. The account of the devices of Satan; the fall of our first parents; the arraignment of the sinners at the bar of Divine Justice; GOD's sentence, which followed; and the expulsion, in consequence thereof, of the first transgressors from Paradise.

REFLECTIONS

How dreadful is sin! and to what an awful state hath it reduced our nature! Oh! my brother, let us pray for grace, to flee from the first approaches of sin, and never let us, as our deluded parent, tamper with the temptations of the devil; but seek strength from above, to resist him, that he may flee from us.

I would beg to suggest one precious thought to the Reader's mind, from the difference of the sentence pronounced by the LORD GOD, upon the several transgressions. The Serpent is cursed, but Adam is not. The earth, indeed, is cursed, for his sake, and the whole

creation doomed to groan, and travail together in pain, on his account. But, praises to the divine mercy, in the midst of all this train of evil, induced by sin, our first father is not cursed; but, though justly condemned, is yet promised mercy. And is not this the reason? He, who in after ages, should come, *to do away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself* was to assume the nature of man. Hence, therefore, the nature is not cursed, for he saith, *Destroy it not, there is a blessing in it.*

Is there not a spiritual signification in the sentence pronounced upon our first mother, when it is said, *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children?* What traving pains can exceed the pains of a guilty conscience? What are the pangs to bring forth in a state of nature, compared with those which sinners feel, before their delivery into a state of grace? But what were the unequalled pains of the LORD JESUS, when He travailed for souls, in the garden and on the cross! Dearest LORD! didst thou, for me sustain the wrath of thy FATHER against sin? Oh! mayest thou see the travail of thy soul in my salvation, as well as in the salvation of all thy church and people, that thou mayest be satisfied.

One thought more, let me add, before we leave this precious chapter, which is suggested to the mind, in the foolish attempt of our first parents, after their transgression, to seek shelter from the Divine presence. Reader! may it be your mercy and mine also, upon all occasions of guilt, to seek a throne of grace, though both sin and conscience accuse; and not run away from mercy. May we never forget that there is One there, whom the FATHER heareth alway. Oh! may the blessed SPIRIT lead us to our GOD in CHRIST, not in the flimsy covering of anything we call our own by way of finding favor, like the fig-leaf righteousness of our poor parents, to conceal our shame; but clothed in the perfect robe of JESUS' righteousness typified by the coat of skins, that we may appear comely, in His complete covering, and be accepted in the Beloved, *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.*

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

This chapter begins that subject, which all succeeding history hath been manifesting, of the distinction between the church and the world. Abel and Cain form the great head of each, and their generations preserve the evidence of the original stock, to mark the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth GOD, and him that serveth Him not. We see, in this chapter, the truth of that awful sentence, of the enmity, which the seed of the Serpent bears, in all ages, to the Seed of the Woman. The sacred historian carries on the account, in this chapter, of the different branches of Adam's family, down to Enos, the son of Seth.

REFLECTIONS

The honest employment of our fathers, in the patriarchal age, gives the highest sanction, both of antiquity, and right order, to the different labours of life. It was the saying of a good old saint, now with GOD, "Give your children a Bible, and an honest calling, and then leave them with GOD, for his blessing." From the offerings of the sons of Adam, of their first-fruits to GOD, we learn how early the practice hath been, and how becoming it is to acknowledge the LORD, as the original Giver of all we have or enjoy. And is it not right that, as we are but tenants at will, we should be always ready to pay our rents, by way of acknowledging our holding. But what a sweet thought it is, that amidst all GOD'S gifts, of which we are only stewards, he hath given us the LORD JESUS, to have and to hold forever!—Contemplate, my soul, with due self-abasement, the awful effects of our fallen nature, in the horrible view of the murder of Abel. Alas! what crime is there, that man is not capable of committing, unless restrained by Almighty grace. LORD, keep me in the hour, and from the power, of temptation! Reader! remark, with me, that the first who tasted death, in consequence of the fall, died in the faith of JESUS. Blessed Redeemer! as thou art, thyself, the first-fruits in resurrection, so the first-fruits of the dust of the earth are thine! But, do I not see in Abel, a type of the blessed JESUS? Was not

JESUS hated, and, at length, murdered by his brethren, when, as the great Shepherd of his FATHER's sheep, he came to seek and save that which was lost? But, Oh! how infinitely short, Abel falls, in comparison of JESUS. The blood of Abel cries for vengeance. The blood of JESUS pleads for mercy. Dearest LORD! in all things it behoves thee to have the pre-eminence. May it be my happiness, like Abel, to offer all my poor offerings, in faith, with an eye to thy blood and righteousness; then will GOD my FATHER have respect unto them, and I myself shall be accepted in the Beloved.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This is an interesting chapter, though at the first view, it seems to contain nothing but the pedigree of the first patriarchs. But when we consider that this is the pedigree which, uniformly leads on to the promised Seed, and ends not, until it is summed up in the Person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, it is not what the apostle calls the fables of endless genealogies, (1 Timothy 1:4.) but contains the power of an endless life. Hebrews 7:10. This chapter is further remarkable for containing the short lives, and short history of the patriarchs, before the flood, including no less a period than 1656 years.

REFLECTIONS

What a vast succession of years and ages, related in so few words! Here is no less than the whole history of 1656 years, folded up in a chapter of 32 verses! Oh! my soul, seriously consider the frailty and shortness of all human excellence. What doth the whole history of man contain, more than this short history of the patriarchs, than that one man lived so many years, and he died! and another lived so many years, and he died. Blessed JESUS! what a relief is it to my soul, amidst all the death of the world, that thou livest and abidest forever!

Are we not (in the view of Enoch, the dedicated one, walking with GOD, amidst a crooked and perverse generation) led to

contemplate him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens? He was, indeed, the only one who truly walked with GOD, being one with the FATHER, from the beginning, over all, GOD blessed forever. How sweet are all the types of JESUS! But how sweeter far, he, to whom all types, prophecies, and sacrifices, ministered? Walk thou with me, O LORD, and, by thy blessed SPIRIT, may I be enabled to walk with thee, until, like Enoch, I come to be translated from this region of shadows and ordinances, to serve thee in thy temple for evermore.

Let us not dismiss the view, which the sacred historian here gives us, of that highly favoured servant of the Most High GOD, until we have taken another look at his character. By faith, (saith an Apostle) Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because GOD had translated him; for before his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased GOD. Precious testimony! Gracious GOD, may it be my portion. Enable me, O thou Holy and Eternal SPIRIT, so to walk with GOD, by a living faith on the person and righteousness of JESUS, as to please GOD, that having my conversation holy in this world, I may be truly happy in another.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us the evil effects of sin, and the sure consequences which follow; the wages of which, is, and must be, death. The abounding iniquity of mankind, and GOD's just determination to take vengeance thereof by an universal destruction. The distinguishing mercy of GOD, in the salvation of His people, in times of general visitation, is here beautifully represented, in the case of Noah and his family. GOD's compassion to the brute species, in providing for their preservation. Noah, in obedience to the Divine command, prepares an ark, to the saving of his house.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT dreadful consequences of the guilt related in this chapter, soon followed ungracious and unholy connections in the marriage state, between the seed of Seth and the seed of Cain! What sad events is sin ever producing in private life, and in public bodies! How hath it drawn away the wisest of men to idolatry! See 1 Kings 11:1,4. How hath it corrupted the church itself, and brought misery upon it! See Ezra 9:1,2. Reader! remember what the Apostle saith, *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? Or what concord hath CHRIST with Belial?*

What a sweet thought is that of the apostle: *The gifts and callings of GOD (he saith) are without repentance.* Romans 11:29. Though it is said, GOD repented that he had *made* man; yet it is nowhere said, he repented that he *redeemed* him.

May it be my mercy, to remember, while reading the account of Noah's finding favor with GOD, that it is by him alone, of whom Noah was a type, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that I can find favor and acceptance with GOD in this life, or salvation in another. In him, as the True Ark, may I be found, when GOD shall arise to judge the world.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

This is a very interesting Chapter, in that it enables us to look back and read the destruction of the old world, by water; as the scriptures teach us to look forward to the sure destruction of the world that now is, by fire, in the great day of the LORD JESUS. We here behold Noah and his household entering into the ark, on the seventeenth day of the second month, in the year of the world, 1656, before CHRIST'S manifestation in the flesh, 2348 years, and in the six hundredth year of Noah's life. The fountains of the great deep are broken up from beneath; the rains descend from above; and forty

days without intermission, the deluge continues to increase, until the highest mountains are covered, and the waters prevail, to the depth of nine yards, above the surface of the earth. All flesh is destroyed excepting Noah, and those who are with him in the ark; and the flood continues upon the earth for the space of one hundred and fifty days.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a precious consideration is it to the faithful, that amidst all the judgments of GOD, upon the wicked, the LORD is never inattentive to the interests and safety of his people. Before the flood sweeps away the sinner, an ark shall be provided for the saint. Before that the wicked shall be driven, with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the LORD, JESUS will make up his jewels, and be glorified in them that believe. In that decisive hour, LORD, may it be my portion to be found in Thee. Reader! pause over this wonderful deliverance, in the instance of Noah and his family, and consider, whether in the ark, you do not behold a type of the LORD JESUS, preserving his church and people. Doth not his GODHEAD appear in the fulness and all-sufficiency of his salvation? Is not the almightiness of his merits and death demonstrated, in bearing up the whole weight of redemption, when the wrath of GOD, like the torrents and tempests descending upon the ark, destroyed everything but this place of safety? And who doth not see, that in the blood and righteousness, the doing and suffering, of CHRIST JESUS, the eternal safety of the believer alone is found, O! for an ardent faith, to believe *the record which GOD hath given of His SON.*

Let us not dismiss the contemplation of this interesting subject, until that we have taken another and another view of the ark of safety. While GOD, as a kind Father, foreseeing the storm approaching, doth not think it enough to call his children from the field, but takes them by the hand, to bring them home into the house; so, the same mercy, which provides the shelter of the Saviour, provides help to the sinner, to embrace it. The call of grace, is not, to Noah, Go thou into the ark, but *come*; evidently teaching, that while GOD the FATHER hath so loved the world, as to give his only begotten SON, for salvation, he gives also his HOLY SPIRIT, to render that

salvation effectual. Holy and Eternal SPIRIT! while thou kindly enablest me to hear the voice of entreaty, calling me to enter into the ark CHRIST JESUS; and while thou, as graciously, art pointing to Him, as the Way, the Truth, and the Life; Oh! add another blessing to the undeserved favor, and *make me willing, in the day of thy power; work in me, both to will and to do, of thy good pleasure.*

One word more, before we close the Chapter. As all are not Israel, which are of Israel; so, let it be remembered, that all who went into the ark, were not like faithful Noah. Men, by virtue of the *profession* of religion, may mingle with the people of GOD, may be found at ordinances, and, from their connection with them, may receive many temporal deliverances. Hence, we find *Ham*, among the household of Noah, in the ark; and *Judas* among the disciples of CHRIST. But all this is widely distinguished from the *possession* of the divine life. Tares may, and will spring up with the good seed. And we know who it is that hath said, *Let both grow together until the harvest.* But the hour is hastening, when a perfect discrimination shall take place, and then an everlasting separation will follow, *between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth GOD, and him that serveth him not.* My soul! be it thy earnest prayer to GOD, never to rest in a name to live, while virtually dead before him. Grant, dearest LORD! that, while fleeing to the LORD JESUS, as the Ark, for refuge, CHRIST may be *formed in my heart, the hope of glory.*

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

The last Chapter concluded with the melancholy relation of the world destroyed, and the church brought within very narrow limits. This opens with an account of the renewals of mercy, in restoring the former and enlarging the borders of the latter. The fountains of the great deep, which were broken up, are stopped; the windows of heaven, for the out-pouring of the rain, are closed; the whole earth recovers its verdure: and Noah and his family are brought forth

from the ark, after inhabiting it for the space of a year and ten days. Noah erects an altar, and offers sacrifice. GOD accepts the oblation, and promiseth never more to drown the world, but that the seasons of the year shall have their appointed weeks, while the earth remaineth.

REFLECTIONS

I SHALL detain the Reader but with two observations, only, on this Chapter; and if they are well founded, may a gracious GOD give them their due weight on the mind!

Did Noah and his family remain perfectly secure in the ark, in the time of such awful destruction of the whole world? Think, then, O my soul, what infinite and inexhaustible resources are in CHRIST JESUS, for all the wants of all his people. There are no straits, neither is there any narrowness, but what we ourselves make, in the everlasting covenant of grace, founded on the blood and righteousness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; but abounding love and abounding mercy, answering to every necessity of his people. Gracious GOD! cause the reader and writer of this reflection to be abundantly supplied out of this fulness, and grace for grace, until the heart's experience of both, can join issue in the apostle's song, and, under the same assurance, say, as he did, *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

The other observation I would beg to offer, ariseth from the different characters which the raven and the dove seem to suggest to our minds. May we not, without violence, consider the raven as an emblem of the carnal mind, which, amidst all its profession, can live upon the mere carcass without, and feels no desire to enter within the ark, for its comfort and enjoyment? and is not the dove a lovely similitude of a gracious soul, which can find no rest for the sole of its feet, until taken in and secured in CHRIST JESUS? LORD! grant that I may never be found among those that can rest satisfied *without* the ark; but, give me that dove-like simplicity, and godly sincerity, which pants to enter *within*. And Oh! Thou, who art the *Almighty Noah* of thy church and people, as without thee, LORD, I can do nothing, do thou, like him who was thy type, put forth thine hand,

and take me into the ark, that I may live forever with thee, that where thou art, there I may be also.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens, to us, the beginning of the account of the new world, after the destruction of the old; so that here we commence, again, as it were, the history of mankind, in general, and of the Church of GOD in particular. In the contents of this chapter, we are highly interested; not only because it relates to us the goodness of GOD, in a way of providence to the world at large; but because we have in it the outlines of divine mercy, in the way of grace, confirmed afresh by covenant engagements, to Noah and his descendants, unto the latest generations.

REFLECTIONS

READER! if your feelings correspond with mine, from the perusal of this sweet chapter, you will like to dwell with peculiar rapture on what GOD saith in it, concerning the rainbow; and if, under the HOLY GHOST's teaching, you are led to discover some of those precious things, which seem to be connected with it, you will love to consider it again and again, in the most devout contemplation. Methinks, I could forever gaze on it, while the words of the LORD vibrate on my ear, or are present to my remembrance. What though I know that beautiful arch it forms in the heavens is produced from natural causes, and is constructed solely from the reflection of the sun-beams on the drops of rain; yet do I not know, also, that the GOD of nature is the GOD of grace too; and that such is the sovereignty of his goodness and his power, that all things are made to act subordinate to his high designs, who worketh according to the counsel of his own will. And shall I not indulge the pleasing thought, when my GOD causeth this glorious object to be hung out for man's notice in the heavens, though the means producing it be natural, yet the sign intended from it is gracious? Great FATHER of

mercies! hast thou said, that thou wilt set thy bow in the cloud, that it shall be a token of thy merciful engagements to mankind; that thou wilt look upon it, and that thou wilt remember thine everlasting covenant? Oh! then, give me grace, to look upon it also; and to behold in it, by an eye of faith, that mighty Angel, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST, whom John, the beloved apostle, in after ages, saw clothed with a rainbow round the throne. May I so look by grace, until mine eye awakens all the affections of my heart, and my soul is confirmed and established in the full assurance of faith and dependence upon all the covenant promises of GOD the FATHER, in CHRIST JESUS the LORD.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the history of the first branching out of the race of men, into families and households, of which, in after ages, the whole earth is overspread. Here are no less than seventy distinct roots of nations noticed, but only one nation upon earth, and that is, GOD's ancient people, the Jews, who can say from which of the seventy it sprung. The sacred historian gives a short account of the posterity of Japheth, and of Ham, but enlargeth chiefly upon that of Shem, because from that stock, after the flesh, the Messiah was to arise.

REFLECTIONS

How graciously hath GOD watched over the promised seed, in the family of *Shem*, and so particularly marked down the descendants of the chosen race, from whom, after the flesh, that Holy Thing (as he is emphatically called in his own word) was to spring, CHRIST in the flesh, who is over all, GOD blessed forever. And how graciously hath GOD been pleased to note the features of his people in every age, by that uniform mark, by which they are known, of a poor and afflicted people. While the posterity of *Ham*, are said to be the *Nimrod's* of the earth; the offspring of *Shem*, with

whom the blessing was deposited, is among the bond-slaves in Egypt. Let this teach us, how much better it is to be poor and humble, while belonging to the household of faith, than, void of faith, to be found related even to nobles.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

The sacred historian relates in this Chapter an awful proof of man's fallen nature, and thereby confirms the divine declaration concerning it, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. For notwithstanding that the flood had swept away the whole human race, excepting that part preserved with Noah in the ark; and GOD's displeasure against sin had manifested itself in this dreadful judgment, yet the sin of man soon broke out afresh; and, in the daring attempt of building the tower of Babel, evidently discovered that man ventured to defy the Omnipotency of GOD. The relation of this foolish, as well as impious undertaking, is contained in this Chapter, together with, the divine judgment which followed. Towards the close of the chapter, the Reader is first introduced to the history of Abram, of whom such honourable testimony is afterwards given throughout the whole volume of Scripture.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT an awful view is here again afforded of man's apostacy! So little effect had the remembrance of the deluge left upon the human mind, that instead of being humbled under the mighty hand of GOD, we behold the workings of the heart occupied in contriving a plan to counteract the divine sovereignty in future. Perhaps infidelity, which is the same in all ages, ventured to do, what it is forever doing, to put down to second causes what was evidently the effect of a first ordination; and denied any divine interference in the flood of waters. Alas! my soul, what are all the rebellious murmurings and transgressions arising in my heart, but the effects of

the same cause, unbelief! LORD I would pray, (as a pious father of old used to pray) “Preserve me from that evil man, myself.”

I cannot close this chapter without stopping to remark, how striking an instance of the sovereignty of Almighty grace is here given, when we consider that from the confusion of languages, sent as a judgment in this instance, arose, in after ages, an occasion for the display of mercy, in the gift of tongues, to the Apostles; so that the wonders of the day of Pentecost sprung out of the ruins of *Babel*. What a precious testimony to the truth of that scripture: *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.* Psalm 76:10.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

The History of Abram, just glanced at in the close of the preceding Chapter; the HOLY GHOST enters upon in this Chapter more particularly. The account of GOD’S first call of Abram; his gracious manifestations unto him; the removal of the Patriarch in consequence thereof, from his native country, to go into Canaan; his going down into Egypt, with the events which followed. These form the subject of the present Chapter

REFLECTIONS

METHINKS I would not read this call of GOD to Abram, and observe the Patriarch's ready faith to obey it, without begging grace from GOD, to attend to the many precious invitations with which I am called upon to follow JESUS in the regeneration; and, like Abram, to arise, leave house and home, and kindred, and relations; and by faith become *the follower of them who now through faith and patience inherit the promises.* And oh! that He, who endued the patriarch with such holy fortitude, would arm my mind with the like confidence, that, amidst every discouragement, *against hope I might believe in hope;* and trust GOD, where I cannot trace him. Dearest JESUS! grant me as thou didst the patriarch, the frequent visits of thy

love, and then whatever famine shall arise, or straits surround me, in the midst of all, a wilderness with thee will, to my soul, be far preferable to a land flowing with milk and honey without thee!

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

The history of the Patriarch Abram, is continued through the whole of this Chapter. He is still in his pilgrimage state, wandering and removing under the guidance of Heaven, from one place to another. His wealth is here particularly noticed; as also his remarkable piety. But troubles beset him. A strife between his servants and the servants of his kinsman Lot, soon causeth them to separate from each other. Lot removes eastward towards the fruitful plains of Sodom, and Abram remains still in Canaan.

REFLECTIONS

AMIDST all the competitions, strifes and jealousies, which this world's goods excites among men in life, let Abram's portion be my portion. Let me but be able, in a well-grounded assurance to call JESUS mine, and I value not what sinners value of the perishing things of time and sense. Precious Redeemer! it is thy favor which gives a sweetness to every joy, and softens every sorrow. Let the cisterns of all creature-comforts be dried up, if thy wisdom see it fit: the stream of thine everlasting love will still flow. And while, like the prophet, I can truly *rejoice in the LORD, and joy in the GOD* of my salvation it matters not, even if *the fig-tree doth not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine.*

Methinks this gracious call of GOD to Abram, which is always sweet in mercy, is uncommonly so in this instance: *lift up thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art.* And is not the same in effect said to every believer? Lift up thine eyes, and behold in every direction, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, how all mercies and promises are continued to the faithful, in the Covenant of grace which is in CHRIST JESUS. *All are yours* saith the

Apostle, *if ye are CHRIST'S*; whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come. Blessed GOD! May it be my mercy to enjoy all things in JESUS, and JESUS in all things!

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

If the history of the first battle ever fought be interesting, this chapter which relates it, must be so. But alas! what is the relation of all wars, but the relation of our fallen state. From whence come wars and fightings, but of our lusts which war in our members! Sodom, the land of plenty, becomes now the land of desolation. The battle of the king's involves Lot, Abram's kinsman, in the evil. The patriarch hearing of it, hastens to his rescue, and delivers both him and his household from captivity. In this enterprise Abram meets Melchizedec, king of Salem and Priest of the Most High GOD; is refreshed by him after the battle and blessed.

REFLECTIONS

How very awful is it to contemplate the bloodshed, ravages, and desolation made by war among the inhabitants of the earth! See Reader, what hath sin done, and what a train of evils originate from that one fatal source! The HOLY GHOST here opens to our view in this chapter, the first display of war. Calculate, if it be possible, since that period, the dreadful amount of the vast volume in this history alone, by which the peace of private life and public bodies hath been destroyed. O! Who shall speak the groans, the heart-aches, and the sorrows, which like a flood have broken in upon the world, and desolated every part of it. Blessed JESUS! hasten that glorious period promised to thy Church, when *nation shall not lift sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

But my soul! while in the mention of the adorable name of JESUS, leave, I charge thee, every other consideration as trifling and unimportant, to attend to what is related in this chapter concerning this Melchisedek, *priest of the Most High GOD.* Surely I behold in

him, JESUS the Son of GOD, who was indeed set up as the Covenant-head from everlasting, in the Eternal Councils and *whose delights were with the sons of men, before he made the earth or the highest part of the dust of the world.* He was indeed, in the truest sense of the word, *without father,* as Man, and *without mother* as GOD; having neither beginning of days nor end of life: for he is JESUS CHRIST, *the same yesterday, today, and forever.* And is he not also *King of Righteousness?* Yes! even the LORD *our Righteousness.* And, blessings to his holy name, He hath wrought out, and brought in an everlasting Righteousness, which is *unto all and upon all that believe.* And he is no less *King of peace;* for he hath made our peace in the *blood of his cross.* Hail thou Great Almighty Melchisedek! Be thou a *priest upon thy throne* for me; since thou hast an *unchangeable priesthood,* and ever *livest to make intercession for sinners, and art able to save to the uttermost, all that come to GOD by thee.* SON of GOD! help me by thy HOLY SPIRIT, to go forth in the spiritual warfare, against all the enemies of my salvation, as Abram did to the slaughter of the kings. And do thou bring forth thy bread and thy wine, even thy precious body and blood, which is *meat indeed, and drink indeed,* and refresh my soul by the way. And since I have nothing, LORD, to offer thee but what is thine, accept of thine own, which thou hast given me. By thee, blessed LORD, would I desire grace, *to offer the sacrifice of praise to GOD continually,* the fruit both of my lips and of my heart, *giving thanks to thy name.*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

In the two former chapters, we find many tokens of GOD's gracious intention towards Abram. In this Chapter GOD confirms the same by the solemn treaty of a covenant. Abram had the most delightful assurances given to him by a faithful GOD; and all folded up within a covenant of promise. A bountiful GOD, not only pledged himself to give the Patriarch an extensive estate, but an extensive issue to enjoy it. And as these blessings of the promised seed and the

promised land, spiritually considered, were types of better things to come, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the seed of the woman, and the heavenly possession through him which Canaan represented; they serve to teach us, under the gospel state, the greater privilege of those who are blessed with faithful Abram.

REFLECTIONS

LET the visions of GOD with Abram have this effect upon all the true seed of Abram, earnestly to desire and as highly to prize, all the gracious manifestations of the divine love. May we esteem all the ordinances and means of grace, which tend to open a channel of communication between GOD and our souls. But yet more affectionately covet communion with the GOD of ordinances. Blessed JESUS! I would say, both for myself and for the Reader, Oh! do thou manifest thyself unto me otherwise than thou dost unto the world! May I know that thou art my portion, my shield, and my exceeding great reward.

Reader! behold the Patriarch Abram, and learn in his history the sweetness of exercised faith. Amidst all those precious promises of a faithful GOD, yet how long, how seemingly tedious and trying, the dispensation was appointed to be to his seed, before the fulfillment. Oh! for faith, that against hope, you and I may believe in hope; and in all our trials, *may we run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS the author and finisher of our faith.* And as the patriarch considered himself as sojourning in a strange country, and was looking beyond the tabernacles which he inhabited, for a *city which had foundations*, so may we never lose sight of that most certain truth, that *here we have no continuing city*, but may we be *seeking one to come*. And oh! thou Almighty giver of faith, increase our faith, and enable us to *walk by faith, and not by sight*, until we realize the divine presence in all the glories of eternity, and *receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

The private history of an event in the family of Abram forms the contents of this Chapter. But as no scripture is of private interpretation, it is probable, that the HOLY GHOST thought proper to introduce it to the knowledge of the Church, in order to manifest that the explanation of it is to be considered spiritually. And this is one, among the innumerable other proofs, in GOD'S word, how much the right interpretation of scripture depends upon scripture. Paul the Apostle, was commissioned to explain this history, in his Epistle to the Church of Galatia. Galatians 4:22-25. The relation itself is simply this: A bond-woman called Hagar, is by Sarai given in marriage to Abram; the effects of this illicit marriage are related; the flight of Hagar into the wilderness, upon being hardly dealt with by her mistress; the mercy shown her by an Angel there; her return to her mistress, and her being delivered of a Son.

REFLECTIONS

What awful effects have been in all ages reduced by unlawful connections! See, how this illicit marriage, in defiance of the divine law, involved all the parties concerned in it in trouble! The unhallowed attempt to hasten the accomplishment of GOD'S promise, in opposition to GOD'S way, brought *Sarai* into distress, *Abram* into vexation, and *Hagar* into misery.

Let us again remark, how very sweet and refreshing to the soul are wilderness visits from JESUS, when for the exercise of faith and patience, his people are at any time brought there. Dearest LORD! do thou visit me when there, and then the wilderness will *rejoice and blossom as the rose*. Let me in every dispensation, and in every place, carry with me this memorial: *Thou GOD, my Saviour, seest me*; and the consciousness of thy presence, will comfort my heart in the most solitary desert.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

This Chapter is rendered the more memorable, in that it contains the substance of the Covenant of Grace, which, though here represented as made between GOD and Abram, yet in reality, forms the outline of that everlasting Covenant made with the LORD JESUS CHRIST, for all the spiritual seed of Abram. In this Chapter, GOD's appearance to Abram is taken notice of: the effect induced by it on the mind of the patriarch: the names of Abram and Sarai are changed; the rite of circumcision appointed as an outward visible sign or seal of the Covenant, and the Patriarch's obedience to the divine command.

REFLECTIONS

My Christian Brother! Are you included in this blessed Covenant? Have you the marks and characters of it? Can you say as Paul did, We are *the true circumcision, which worship GOD in spirit; rejoice in CHRIST JESUS; and have no confidence in the flesh.* Pause over the question! And oh! that a gracious GOD may grant you an answer of peace. If this be your portion, then need you nothing more to make you happy. For GOD saith to you as to the Patriarch; *I will give you the land wherein you are a stranger.* And where is that, but heaven? Dearest JESUS! hast thou not taken possession of it in the name of thy people? and hast thou not promised, that *thou wilt come again and receive them to thyself, that where thou art, there they shall be also.*

Poor timorous, doubting Believer! Did GOD say to Abraham that he would bless him, and in confirmation of it, reveal himself by this glorious name the Almighty GOD; beg of him then for grace to convert this promise into a prayer: and plead, that the same GOD may be to thee and thine, the GOD all-sufficient. And oh! that every gracious soul may find grace as the Patriarch did, to intreat GOD for the Ishmael's of his household, the unawakened and careless around him. And may the LORD'S answer be as gracious. *I have heard thee.*

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

In this Chapter, we have the account of another revelation of the divine will, which GOD was pleased to make to Abraham. The subject of the conversation is also recorded, and the hospitable manner in which the Patriarch received the messengers. A renewal of the divine promise, concerning a son by Sarah, is now made, and the time fixed for its accomplishment. The purposes of GOD relating to the destruction of Sodom, are made known to Abraham; and the Patriarch's intercession for the salvation of the place, is also taken notice of in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

How sweet were those days of primitive simplicity, when men were in the habit of enjoying intercourse of friendship with Angels. And if (as there seems great reason to suppose), one of those celestial visitors which called on Abraham, was indeed the SON of GOD, in an human form; what a charming evidence doth it give of favor and condescension on the part of GOD, and of happiness on the part of man.

But stop, my soul! pause over the thought, and remark with suitable joy and thankfulness, the far happier state of the Church in the present hour, among those highly favoured saints unto whom the LORD JESUS manifests himself, *otherwise than he doth to the world*. Since those days of Abraham, the SON of GOD hath come down, not merely in the form, but really and truly man, and *dwelt among us*. And his gracious visits have been, not as in the earlier ages when his name was *secret*, but to everyone unto whom his blessed SPIRIT hath made him known, and they have *seen* his glory: *the glory as of the only begotten of the FATHER, full of grace and truth*.

In beholding the patriarch *Abraham* drawing near and pleading with GOD for *Sodom*, who can forbear to call to mind that precious character of the LORD JESUS; or overlook that gracious Intercessor with GOD for his people, *whom the FATHER heareth alway*. My soul! never, I charge thee, forget thy JESUS, in this his High-Priestly office.

Only for thy comfort recollect, that though Abraham's mediation was not successful, such can never be the issue of the Redeemer's pleading. *He ever liveth to make intercession.* And oh! the blessedness of that assurance: *he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to GOD by him.*

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

The Sacred Historian, prosecutes in this Chapter, the account of what was hinted at in the former; namely, the destruction of Sodom, Lot is delivered from the overthrow: he is constrained by the Angels to flee for his life; his wife becomes a monument of the divine displeasure for looking back: Lot retreats into Zoar: he removes to the mountain: he there falls into the horrid sins of drunkenness and incest.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! do not hastily turn thine eyes of reflection from this Chapter. Behold in it the graciousness of GOD's mercy in the midst of judgment, and connect with it this precious assurance, in all times of prevailing corruption like this, that *the LORD knoweth how to deliver the godly out of danger* as well as *temptation*. Who shall say in the present hour what nations, ripe for destruction by sin, are still preserved by the *Lots* which are dwelling among them? Who knows, or can calculate, the extent and efficacy of those prayers of the faithful, which being quickened by divine grace are heard in the divine mercy, for the suspension of the LORD's anger from breaking forth upon a guilty land! My soul! I counsel thee to seek earnestly a spirit of grace and supplication from above, that in lamenting before a throne of mercy those sins of our common nature in which I bear a part, my spirit may so earnestly wrestle with GOD in the Redeemer's name and righteousness, that I may find acceptance in the Beloved.

Reader! what various views of men and things, of mercy and judgment, of grace and nature, and the very different terminations

between the righteous and the wicked, doth this chapter furnish. Gracious GOD! let it be my mercy to be called out of Sodom; to disregard the reproaches of the ungodly, and resolutely, like Lot, to bear an open testimony against them. And when in tenderness to my lingering footsteps, thou layest thy gracious hand upon me, oh! for thy quickening power in my soul also, that I may hasten to the Zoar of safety, even to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who alone *delivereth from the wrath to come!*

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

The history of the patriarch Abram is reassumed. In his journey (for he is still in the pilgrimage state) he is going towards the South. In Gerar, where he sojourned, Abimelech, the King of the place, beholdeth the beauty of Sarah, Abraham's wife; and she is, in consequence thereof, taken into the King's house. GOD, by the ministry of a dream, restrains Abimelech from his evil designs. Abimelech is informed of the relationship between Abraham and Sarah; he reproves Abraham, for not informing him of it himself; and sends him away from him, with his wife, and all that he had. Upon Abraham's Prayer, GOD removes the affliction from Abimelech and his family.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let not the greatness of Abraham's character tempt you to overlook Abraham's infirmity. Alas! what is man in his highest attainments! Had not the Patriarch lost sight that JEHOVAH himself was *his shield and his exceeding great reward*, he need not have condescended to such a pitiful resource for the safety of his wife. GOD forbid, that this weakness of the Patriarch should ever be made a pretence for the sins of others, when we see how it displeased the LORD!

Surely the HOLY GHOST causeth the infirmities of the faithful to be recorded, in order to teach his people that most unquestionable truth; that *there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not*; and to constrain the heart into the love of JESUS; whose perfect righteousness is the alone cause of justification before GOD. Dearest LORD! how increasingly sweet and interesting, in every renewed instance of human infirmity which I feel in myself, or meet with in others, is thy finished salvation to my view. Oh! Do thou establish my soul in it more and more. Give me to see, and know that I am thine in an everlasting Covenant, which *cannot be broken*: that from having committed my soul-concerns into thy hands; all my earthly interests I may safely leave at thy disposal; and that *the fear of man, as in the case of the Patriarch, may not bring a snare*.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

The long-looked for blessing of a son to Abraham and Sarah, is at length bestowed; and Isaac, the child of promise, is born. This Chapter relates the auspicious event. The casting out of Ishmael, the Son of Hagar, the bond-woman, is also noticed, with the circumstances attending it. Some inferior matters, which occurred in Abraham's family, and a covenant of amity, which the Patriarch entered into with Abimelech; form the remainder of the particulars, related in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

THE long exercise of Abraham and Sarah's faith respecting this child of promise, and the happy issue of it, may serve to teach us how sure GOD's promises are; and the certainty, that those who, with faith and patience, wait the fulfillment of the divine promises, shall not be disappointed of their hope. It is exceedingly precious upon all occasions to remark, the LORD's gracious dealings with his people. Faithful men love to dwell upon the evidences of a faithful GOD.

My Brother! Look, I beseech you, beyond the subject of this promised Isaac, unto Him, of whom Isaac was but a type; even unto JESUS, in whom all the promises center, and in whom they are *all yea and amen*. And as Sarah rejoiced in her Isaac, may it be your mercy and mine, with all *the children of promise*, as Isaac was, to rejoice in infinitely higher strains of joy in our Redeemer; that *unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given: whose government is upon his shoulders, and whose name is Wonderful: Counsellor: the mighty GOD: the everlasting FATHER: the Prince of Peace*.

When the Reader hath duly contemplated his person, of whom Isaac became a striking type, and in whom all the promises center; I would beg of him to make earnest enquiry concerning his own personal interest in this divine Saviour, Paul tells the believing church of *Galatia*, that as *Sarah* was a figure of the church, so *Isaac* became a figure of the children of that church. *Now we, brethren*, (says he) *as Isaac was, are the children of promise*. My brother, is this *your* privilege? Are you of the seed of the bond-woman or of the free? Are you one of the descendants of *Hagar* or of *Sarah*? In other words, (according to the apostle's beautiful illustration of it), do you seek favor with GOD from a *covenant of works*, which gendereth to bondage; or are your hopes of salvation founded on a *covenant of grace*, which maketh free. Upon the decision of this grand question will depend your everlasting welfare.

May it be the happy portion, both of the Writer and Reader, to be found as Isaac was among *the children of promise*! The LORD in mercy grant, that we may not be looking for justification from a covenant of works, which never did, or ever will, be able to save the soul! The law is the ministration of death. It is the dispensation of terrors from Mount Sinai. For *Hagar* is Mount Sinai, which is in bondage with her children, a spiritual bondage to sin, and a legal bondage to wrath. But the gospel is the ministration of life: freeing the soul, by the blood and righteousness of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, from the guilt and condemnation of sin, and bringing it into that liberty, wherewith the children of grace are made free. Grant, O LORD! that this may be our mercy: that in the great day it may be found that we have not been *children of the bond-woman, but of the free*.

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the account of that memorable instance of the trial of Abraham's faith, in respect to the proposed sacrifice of his son Isaac; the result of which hath handed down the Patriarch's character, with such honourable testimony in the church; and as deservedly hath procured him the name of the father of the faithful. GOD's command to Abraham to perform this service; the Patriarch's ready obedience; his journey to the place appointed, with Isaac his son; his resolute perseverance in the intended sacrifice; an angel from heaven staying his hand and, in the moment of doing it; the Substitution of a ram in the place of his son; GOD's gracious approbation; and the renewal of the promises of the covenant; these form the subject of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

When we behold the happy termination of the trial of Abraham's faith, who doth not see the certainty of that precious promise, *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation!* Oh! the vast privilege of those whom the LORD enables to be faithful, and whom he supports in the trying hour. Gracious GOD! be it my portion, to be kept by thy grace in every conflict, then shall I be *more than conqueror; through Him that hath loved me.*

But while I derive this instruction, under grace, from the Patriarch's bright example of faith, teach me, LORD, to behold a more glorious object of contemplation, in which this scene so strikingly represents of divine mercy. Do I not see in Abraham, as a father, so readily offering up his son, the type of that unequalled love of GOD our FATHER, in giving his only begotten Son as a sacrifice for the salvation of his people? And in the free-will offering of Isaac, to his father's direction, is not JESUS' voluntary submission to the death of the cross strongly represented? Oh! matchless love of both! May it be my happiness always to connect, in the view of redemption, the love of both, as the united cause and source of all my hopes; and under the precious application of the FATHER's grace,

and the SON'S merits to my heart, by the merciful influences of GOD the HOLY GHOST, may I live in the full enjoyment of this assurance, until I come to enter upon the possession of the realized felicity unto all eternity.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

The subject of this chapter is that common place subject which belongs to our nature universally, and forms a part in the history of all persons and families. Death (here we are told) makes an inroad into the house of Abraham, and takes away Sarah, the desire of his eyes, with a stroke. The Patriarch's concern for the purchase of a burying-ground is here related; his treaty for that purpose with the sons of Heth; his agreement with them: the place obtained: and the funeral of Sarah is observed with all due solemnity.

REFLECTIONS

I DETAIN the Reader but with *two* reflections on this Chapter. May the HOLY GHOST increase them largely, and profitably to his mind! The *one* is, that in the confirmation of GOD'S promises to Abraham, to give him Canaan for an everlasting possession, the first spot of it which he could truly call his own, was his burying-place. This was indeed possessing it, until the glorious morning of a resurrection. The *other* is, from hence the first sound of that sweet declaration was made, which *John* in after ages heard more distinctly: *Blessed are the dead which die in the LORD. These all died in faith*, said the Apostle. They fell asleep in JESUS. LORD, grant me the same faith! May it be my portion that, wherever the *Machpelah* for my earthly house may be, JESUS may receive my soul: and may it be found in that hour that *I have a building with GOD, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

The subject still continues, of Abraham's history. Every circumstance relating to the Patriarch becomes important, and as such the HOLY GHOST hath been pleased to transmit it to the church. In this Chapter we find the Patriarch engaged in making provision for the settlement of his son Isaac. Accordingly he sends his eldest servant to seek a wife for him among his own kindred: the departure of the servant on this embassy, and the success of it are here related. Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, consents to become the wife of Isaac, and the marriage is consummated.

REFLECTIONS

READER! If GOD, in his providence, hath called you to the anxious and important trust of a parent; and hath given you, in your own experience, to know the invaluable preciousness of divine grace; surely you will need no argument to teach you, how infinitely interesting it must be, to see that the connections which your children form in the marriage state, are gracious connections. It is a melancholy consideration, that even among truly serious persons too little attention is shown to this important article; and the after-consequences manifest, but too strikingly, the sad neglect. May the Patriarch's conduct in this particular, be followed by every truly gracious Parent of the Patriarch's spirit: and may GOD in his providence, direct the choice of every child of promise, like *Isaac*, to a true yoke-fellow in CHRIST JESUS; for there can be *no fellowship of righteousness with unrighteousness; neither communion of light with darkness. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the LORD, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty.*

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

This Chapter closes the historical relation of Abraham's life. Having carried on the interesting account of the Patriarch, from his call of GOD, through all the several gracious manifestations, which, in a covenant-way, the same GOD made towards him: we are now arrived in this Chapter, to the period of his death. The particulars relating to the disposal of his effects to his children and family; and the interment of the Patriarch, by his sons, Isaac and Ishmael; are also related in this Chapter: and the sacred Historian, having done with the memoirs of Abraham, immediately takes up the narrative of Isaac, with whom the promise is lodged, and through whom the history is to go on in succession, until He comes, to whom the whole of the promise is referred: and in whom it is finished. Here is an account of Isaac's prosperity: Of his two sons, Esau and Jacob: Of their different characters: Of the birth-right sold by Esau to Jacob: and the consequence hinted at, in which that event differently interested the parties.

REFLECTIONS

It is hardly possible, to close our view of the life of Abraham, without blessing GOD for such an illustrious testimony as his history affords of the triumph of faith. LORD, I would say, give to me a double portion of the same spirit! But do we not behold in the Patriarch, some faint outlines of resemblance of Him, who according to the flesh, was in after ages, to be his seed! Was not Abraham, as the chosen of GOD and the covenant head and father of millions of redeemed souls, a lively type of that Almighty Saviour, who was set up as the Covenant head of his people; and the one chosen of the FATHER before all worlds, in whom all nations are blessed! It is said, that by faith the Patriarch, when he was called of GOD to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went! and do we not from hence call to mind, the obedience of the SON of GOD, who left the realms of bliss, and came down a stranger in this strange land, that all his

people might afterwards, through Him, receive the gift of an eternal inheritance? Blessed JESUS! May everything of a gracious nature in thy holy word, lead me to discover somewhat of thyself, that while I admire and learn to praise GOD for the exercise of the faith and grace which I behold among men, I may be looking up, with gratitude and thankfulness unto thee, who art both the Author and Giver of Faith, and of all our Mercies.

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

The beginning of Isaac's spiritual warfare, like that of his father before him, affords large occasion for the exercise of faith. A famine prevails in Canaan: GOD directs the Patriarch what to do: Covenant promises are renewed: Isaac, through distrust and fear, denies that Rebekah is his wife, by calling her his sister: the consequence of this follows in a suitable punishment: after this Isaac prospers in worldly substance; GOD appears to him: his son Esau marries two Hittite women, which occasions great grief to Isaac and Rebekah. These are the principal things noticed in this chapter,

REFLECTIONS

Let no true believer in JESUS ever be discouraged by the trials he meets with, since the faithful in all ages have been so exercised. The Apostle makes this an evidence of the Christian character, that *no man should be moved by these afflictions, since* (saith he) *ye yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto*. Oh! it is sweet to see divine wisdom, and divine faithfulness, in all appointments concerning us; and to be able to say of every one of them, as *Paul* did, *I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through the supply of the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST*. But how very gracious is GOD amidst all the chequered circumstances of life, in famine, and in fullness, to renew to his people the unalterable assurances of his Covenant love in CHRIST JESUS! Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, to live upon this when all the supplies of creature cisterns be dried up; and

like *David*, rejoice in that GOD hath made with us *an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure*; and let this be *all our salvation, and all our desire, although he make it not to grow*.

I would have the Reader, methinks, (as I desire myself) to seek grace from the LORD, to profit by what this Chapter relates of the weakness of *Isaac's* faith, respecting the safety of his wife, and of his own life. Had he only considered, poor man, the faithfulness of that GOD who had promised him his assured favor and protection; there was nothing in the circumstances of his situation to have given him a real cause of fear. But consulting with flesh and blood, and not laying hold of GOD's promises, his trust in the LORD gave way, and he fell into temptation, sin, and unbelief. Reader! let you and I mark it down among the memorandums of our hearts, that such will be the sure result in every believer's experience, when not upheld by divine strength, but left to the weakness of his own mind. Let you and I therefore pray with the apostle, that *we may be strengthened with all might according to his glorious power*, who is the alone strength of his people; for then, and not otherwise, shall we be able to act faith upon GOD's promises, *unto all patience and longsuffering, with joyfulness*.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the history of Jacob's craftily obtaining the blessing of the birth-right from his father Isaac, and thereby supplanting his brother Esau: a circumstance, which unless read with a spiritual apprehension, will be to us, as it is always to the carnal, a stumblingstone and rock of offence. In this Chapter the HOLY GHOST also relates the sad conduct of the Patriarch Isaac, who, notwithstanding the open revelation GOD made to him before the birth of his two sons, Jacob and Esau, that the elder should serve the younger, in direct defiance of this will of GOD, sought to entail the covenant blessing on Esau. He gives directions to Esau! how to prepare for him venison, in order to receive this blessing;

Rebekah contrives by stratagem to obtain it for her son Jacob: the success of Jacob, and the disappointment of Esau, are both related in this Chapter. Esau determines to be revenged of Jacob: and Rebekah in order to prevent it, contrives to send Jacob to her brother's house by way of refuge.

REFLECTIONS

How sweet and precious is it, to behold dying believers anxious to give their last testimony, to the faith of JESUS! Though the pious parents of the present age, have not, like the Patriarchs, a *prophetical* benediction respecting the coming Saviour to give their children; yet have they a *parental* blessing at parting to deliver. And oh! how precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints, when life is closed with such an honourable testimony.

But ought not the improper, and frequently ill-bestowed, affection of parents, in the partiality among their children, to learn from this example of Isaac, how sinful it becomes in the divine eye? Reader! let us pray for grace, that nothing short of the *covenant* blessing, may satisfy the desires of our souls. The LORD put away far from us that awful spirit of a carnal state, which, like Esau, makes light of the covenant mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, and finds, like him, *no place for repentance, though it be sought even with tears.*

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

No sooner are the people of GOD brought within the bond of the covenant, than persecution ariseth. Jacob having obtained the blessing, is obliged to flee to Padan-aram, to avoid the fury of his brother. The sacred historian relates in this Chapter, the memorable events of his journey. He is favoured with divine manifestations: GOD confirms to him the promised blessing: assures him of his gracious favor and protection: impressed with a deep sense of thankfulness for those visions of GOD, the Patriarch vows to have the LORD for his GOD, and to dedicate himself to his service for ever.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! may you and I learn, from this interesting account of Jacob's pilgrimage, that when the providences of our GOD seem most to frown, the gracious tendencies of GOD are perhaps most smiling. And let the truly awakened soul say, whether the sweetest seasons have not been those, when, like the Patriarch, tribulations from the world have been most powerful. But I must not close this Chapter of Jacob's mercies, when the visions of GOD began with him, without first requesting the Reader not to overlook the precious outlines which are here drawn by the HOLY GHOST of JESUS's manifestations to all his people. Is it not by him that a channel of communication is opened to our souls for access to GOD, when like Jacob, we have left our father's house, and are as wanderers on the earth? Is He not *the way, and the truth, and the life*, by which all mercies come down, and all praises and prayers go up, through his divine mediations. And is it not by him alone, that we humbly hope, when all the pilgrimage of this life is over, to come again to our FATHER's house which is in heaven: to which hope we are begotten by his glorious undertaking, and his accomplishment of our redemption? Precious, precious JESUS! be thou with me, and keep me in the way that I go; and give me food and raiment convenient for me: fill my soul with the bread of life, and clothe me with the garment of thy salvation; then wilt thou be indeed the LORD my GOD; and I shall be thine, in an everlasting covenant, not to be broken.

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

As was before remarked of the faithful, every minute circumstance is recorded by the HOLY GHOST, which concerns the church: so is this Chapter, the domestic occurrences of Jacob's family, occupy more attention than the history of all the world beside, in that period. The sacred historian relates the journey of the Patriarch; his arrival at Haran; his reception by Laban; his

servitude; his marriage; his children; these form the principal contents of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! remark in this Chapter, how the LORD conducts the steps of his people, when he graciously brings them *into the bond of the covenant*. Though he leads them into the wilderness, he will not leave them there, but will speak comfortably to them; and as, in all their ways they desire to acknowledge him, he will direct their steps. What a simplicity marked the primitive ages! A few flocks and herds, and the produce of the field, constituted, for the most part, the riches of the Patriarchs. And even now, is not food and raiment with JESUS, all that the believer wants below! LORD! grant me the sure possession of JESUS, and keep my heart always with wise indifference to the things of time and sense; for having him, I shall in him possess all things.

I cannot pass over, in this place, what is said respecting the names of Jacob's children, without calling upon the Reader to observe with me, what a gracious practice it was, in the church of old, thus to minute down in the several providences they met with, the LORD'S gracious dealings with them. When godly parents perpetuate GOD'S mercies, in the names they give their children, every view of the child, and every renewed mention of the name, tends to refresh the recollection of those mercies. I venture to think, that the mother, or sister of *Moses* (though the name was given him by another, as the name signified *drawn out of the water*) yet never heard his name spoken of, but it brought again to mind his wonderful deliverance. And was not *Samuel's* name always refreshing to *Hannah*, when she herself gave it him, on this express account, in that it meant, what she too well knew ever to forget, that he was *asked of GOD*? Reader! pause over this, and let you and I enquire of our own hearts, how many *Samuels* we might name mercies by, if we were to number all that we have received, and which have been *asked of GOD*? Blessed LORD! revive in my forgetful heart continual remembrances of thy unnumbered mercies: and though I have neglected to mark them down by name, yet may the HOLY GHOST, who acts in the sweet character of Remembrancer

to his people, continually bring all things (and all mercies too) of my GOD and Saviour to my remembrance, whatsoever he hath shown me.

CHAPTER 30

SUMMARY

The further relation of the events in Jacob's history, is contained in this Chapter. Of the increase of his family, his children; of the increase of his wealth and riches: until after fourteen years in the service of Laban, his father-in-law, he proposeth to return to his father Isaac; but is detained by Laban, who agreeth to certain conditions which, Jacob had offered for his further labours in Laban's service; Jacob adopts a singular method for the increase of his flock and succeedeth.

REFLECTIONS

It would be a far happier world than experience proves it now is, if that charming observation of the psalmist were more generally adopted, when he saith, *Lo! Children are an heritage of the LORD, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* There is a blessedness pronounced upon the quiver that is full of them. And when a gracious parent beholds a rising generation of gracious children, to call the LORD blessed, when he is gathered to his fathers; the imagination can hardly form an idea of a subject more highly calculated to call forth thankfulness unto GOD. It is pleasing in the reflection to the upright in heart and mind, when like Jacob, in their dealings between man and man, they have the favor of the divine approbation. But what a double sweetness rests upon the possessions of the just, when every blessing is found to lead the soul *to* GOD, instead of drawing the heart *from* GOD. LORD, I would pray, that all thy mercies may be thus sanctified, and not one of them received but with thanksgiving and prayer; that coming from thy bounty, they may lead to thy praise, and all be doubly enjoyed in JESUS.

CHAPTER 31

SUMMARY

After a servitude of many years, in the family of Laban, Jacob resolves to return to his own home. And to this measure he is prompted, not only by the unkind treatment of Laban and his sons, but still more by a divine direction. The circumstances of Jacob's departure, with his wives and all that belonged to him: the pursuit of Laban after him: the gracious interposition of GOD for Jacob's protection, by the ministry of a dream on the mind of Laban: their interview: their reconciliation; their covenant of amity; and their final separation; these form the principal contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

In the perusal of this Chapter, methinks I would not have the Reader overlook the gracious interposition of God, in behalf of his servant Jacob, when *Laban the Syrian* pursued him in such determined anger. Rather than the poor servant should be injured by his unkind, and unnatural master, the LORD overawes his mind by the effects of a dream. Just so, depend upon it, my brother, is the watchful care of God over his people now. Oh! could you and I but be brought acquainted with the thousand and ten thousand instances of the kind, which are daily going on in life, we should see how sweetly the Church's history is again, and again repeated: *he made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives*. Psalm 106:46. Reader! watch but the tokens of divine faithfulness towards you, in disposing the hearts of your enemies to be at peace with you, and, depend upon it, the evidences will fully appear. *In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.*

But do not close the chapter until that you have remarked with me, how continually the Patriarch's history is leading us to the contemplation of the life of the blessed JESUS, of whom in numberless instances, Jacob was a type. Certainly the HOLY GHOST, in his divine ministry of glorifying JESUS, intended the records of this man's memoirs to direct us more immediately to CHRIST. How

was JESUS obliged to flee into Egypt to avoid the fury of those that sought his life! How was he afterwards led into the wilderness! What services did he sustain for the Church, both Jew and Gentile, which he betrothed to himself! And what persecutions did he go through, in those labours of love, for the souls of his people! Dearest LORD! may a sense of thine unequalled regard to our poor fallen nature, how base soever requited by the world, endear thee to my heart: and may it be my portion, with thy people, to have that testimony in my experience: *We love him because he first loved us!*

CHAPTER 32

SUMMARY

This Chapter relates some very extraordinary events, which occurred in the Patriarch Jacob's journey towards Canaan, after his separation from Laban. He is first met by an host of angels. He then sends messengers to his brother Esau, who dwelt in Seir, to enquire after his welfare, and to inform him of his own. The messengers return with an account that Esau is coming against him, and with him an army of 400 men: Jacob is greatly distressed with the intelligence, and hath recourse to God by prayer: he sends over the brook Jabbok all his family and household, and is left alone: an angel wrestles with him, until the breaking of the day: Jacob prevails, and obtains a blessing in consequence, the LORD puts a perpetual testimony of honour upon the Patriarch, in changing his name from Jacob to Israel.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! I charge you not to close your review of this lovely chapter, which under GOD's teachings hath refreshed the minds of thousands, and will continue so to do until time shall be no more, without first gathering to yourself some of the many sweet things it speaks of to the people of GOD. You see, in the Patriarch's instance, how those unto whom angels minister, and even unto whom JESUS himself is revealed, may, and will, be exercised with many sharp and

trying dispensations. Are you thus exercised in the spiritual warfare? Do *you* know what it is to have the ministry of angels meeting you in the way to *Canaan*? Do the seed of *Esau* come forth, to obstruct your path? And are you thereby constrained to seek aid from GOD? What nights of wrestlings in prayer have you counted? What days of sunshine have broken in upon your soul, to manifest divine communions? Can you call to mind the *brook*, the place, the time, when you have sent away the best and tenderest of all earthly endearments, that you might be left alone to enjoy the visits of GOD your Saviour.

Let these and the like questions arise in your minds, from the perusal of this chapter. And may the same gracious Covenant GOD and Saviour, (for he is the *same yesterday, today, and forever*;) grant both to you and to me, that in our going home to our Father's house, like the Patriarch, JESUS's host may meet us, and give us comfort: nay, may JESUS himself be there, in every step of the way; that Jordan's waves, and the valley of the shadow of death, that lie between, may not affright: for when he is near, his rod and staff shall comfort. So will *goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our life, till we come to dwell in the house of our GOD for ever*.

CHAPTER 33

SUMMARY

The Patriarch's history is still continued through this Chapter. Here is the account of Jacob's meeting his brother Esau, and the effect of the interview: the affection displayed between the brothers; their amicable separation: Esau returns to Mount Seir, and Jacob pursues his journey to Canaan.

REFLECTIONS

How sweetly doth grace induce all the finer affections of the heart, and constrain all our angry passions into love! LORD, let thy grace enable us to *put on, as the elect of GOD, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-*

suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, even as CHRIST hath forgiven us, so also may we. And in the reading of this chapter, I would beg of GOD to bestow, both upon him that reads, and on him that writes, the grace of having a wise choice between the fulness of this earth's blessing, and the appointment of whatever the LORD sees fit in a covenant way. Dearest JESUS! while the Esaus of the present hour, are sending out into the highways to enquire of every one they meet, who will show them any good; let but the light of thy countenance be lifted on my soul, and it will put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that corn and wine increase.

CHAPTER 34

SUMMARY

Hitherto the Patriarch Jacob had been exercised with many sharp and trying afflictions, as they arose out of the circumstances of his own life. In this chapter, the history of the Patriarch records the beginning of the afflictions with which he was exercised, as they arose out of the circumstances of his children. Dinah his daughter, and as it should seem his only daughter, prompted by vain curiosity, going forth to see the daughters of the hind, is ravished by Shechem prince of the Hivites. Jacob's soul is grieved at hearing of it. His sons determine to be revenged. Hamor the father of Shechem, in order to gratify his son's wishes, proposeth a treaty of marriage between his son and Jacob's daughter; the sons of Jacob appear to give consent, on condition of the Hivites being circumcised: but when this was done, Simeon and Levi come upon their city by surprise, destroy all the males, and take away their cattle.

REFLECTIONS

How dreadful the effect of unbridled passions! What sad events have been induced by their indulgence in all ages. And what is the whole history of mankind since the fall, but the same distressing

page of suffering and sorrow, by reason of iniquity and sin. Blessed JESUS! how endearing here again is the recollection of thy merciful character, in that thou earnest *to take away sin by the sacrifice of thyself*.

I think that this chapter affords a very interesting lesson to young women. Female modesty is so truly graceful and becoming, that too much care can never be taken of it. Like the fine bloom of the purple plumb it cannot be touched without injury. Had the daughter of Jacob been less exposed, her chastity would not have been violated. Hence among the precepts of the apostle to young women, which he gives in charge to his beloved *Titus*, to teach the church, he particularly dwells on this, that they be *chaste and keepers at home*: as if wandering abroad tended, most likely, to the loss of their chastity.

And while this lesson is read to *daughters*, and especially to the daughters of gracious parents, from this chapter; let not an exercised soul among *parents* that are gracious, forget to derive this instruction also from it, that a godly father may have ungodly children. Grace is not by descent. It runs not in the blood. *Jacob* was dear to his GOD: but *Jacob's* children were very often a source of sorrow to him. Many afflicting providences were in his family. *David* also, though *the man after GOD's own heart*, yet concerning his children he might well cry out, as he did in one of his Psalms, LORD, *remember David and all his afflictions!* Reader! if GOD in his providence should have called *you* to the interesting character of a parent, and in his wisdom should see fit to exercise you with such distresses, where will you find resources to bear you up under the heavy pressure? There is but one that can give relief, and that one the holy men of old possessed. And that is a comfortable and well-grounded assurance of an interest in the covenant righteousness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This acts like an anchor to the soul in a dark and stormy night. *David* fled to this, in his troubles, and found that he rid by it safely through the tempest. *Although my house* (says he) *be not so with GOD, yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. For this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*

CHAPTER 35

SUMMARY

In the opening of this Chapter, Jacob's history seems to brighten in the renewal of divine visits to him. But, in the progress of the Chapter, we have the sad news of death in his family. Such is the mixed state of the happiest pilgrimage. The Patriarch by the LORD'S direction, removes from Shechem to Bethel. Arriving there, he builds an altar unto the LORD: Deborah, his mother's nurse, dies in Bethel, and is buried there: GOD again visits Jacob, and renews the assurance of his favor: Jacob sets up a pillar in token of it: he prosecutes his journey: by the way new calamities befall him, for his beloved Rachel dies in child-bed of Benjamin: he perpetuates her memory by erecting a pillar: still pursuing his rout towards Isaac his father's house afresh instance of grief occurs; for Reuben his eldest son, commits incest with his father's concubine. Jacob's sons are mentioned: he arrives at his father Isaac's, at Mamre. Isaac dies in a good old age, and is buried by the joint affection of Jacob and Esau.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! while we pass over this Chapter to admire and adore the divine goodness manifested in so many sweet and repeated visits of his love to the Patriarch Jacob; let us examine our own hearts for the like tokens of such *Bethel* enjoyments. Will you look within, and ask your own heart; (for I desire continually to put the same questions to mine); when did the visions of GOD begin with my soul? When did JESUS, (according to his most sure promise to his people), manifest himself to me otherwise than he doth to the world? When did I experience the renewings of the HOLY GHOST? Reader! do not dismiss these questions unanswered?

In the sorrows of the Patriarch's household, let us seriously contemplate the lot of a fallen state. *Sin hath indeed entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passeth upon all men because all have sinned.* But my soul, look with an eye of faith beyond the grave. What though thy friends, children, servants, die; nay, thou

thyself art hastening after them? yet JESUS, *thy* JESUS liveth. And am I not his in an everlasting covenant, and is he not mine? And shall I mourn then with such bright prospects in view? Dearest LORD! when all friends leave me, and when *my heart and strength fail, be thou the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.*

One look more at *Isaac* before we dose the Chapter, and drop the Patriarch's history. I delight in every person and in everything, which receives in scripture the particular notice of GOD the HOLY GHOST, to trace somewhat which may lead my heart to JESUS. And is there nothing striking to this amount in Isaac's life? Was not the Redeemer long promised, long looked for, with a devout earnestness by all the church, and at length born into the world in a method contrary to the established course of natural causes; similar, but infinitely beyond the example of Isaac's birth? And were there not *Ishmaels* to mock the LORD JESUS in the long and trying persecutions he sustained, like the son of *Hagar the Egyptian*, despising *Isaac*? In the cheerful acquiescence which Isaac made to his father's will for sacrifice; carrying the wood; being bound upon the altar; and not offering a repining word when Abraham took the knife to slay his son; can I not, as a type, trace somewhat of thine unequalled love; oh! thou Lamb of GOD, who voluntarily didst undertake, by the sacrifice of thyself, the redemption of thy people; when fainting beneath thy cross, thou wast led *as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so openedst not thou thy mouth!* Oh! may my soul live in the constant, daily, hourly meditation of thy love! May everything tend to lead my heart unto thee! And may thy love at length awaken mine, and induce all those precious effects of loving thee *who hast so loved me, as to have given thyself for me.*

CHAPTER 36

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a digression from the main subject of Jacob's history, but becomes so far interesting from its connection with it, as it records the fulfillment of the divine promises concerning the

posterity of Esau. When Rebekah was pregnant with Jacob and Esau, the LORD informed her that two nations were in her womb; and that two manner of people should be separated from her bowels. In confirmation of this, the distinct race of Esau for several generations is recorded in this Chapter: their decided hatred to the seed of Jacob is thereby more clearly left for discernment, as it occurred in the after ages of the Church.

REFLECTIONS

There is much spiritual improvement to be drawn from the perusal of this Chapter by every gracious soul, when GOD the HOLY GHOST awakens the heart to the observation. *Jacob's* seed, no doubt, while they were bond-slaves in *Egypt* felt their misery the more, while calling to mind the splendour of Esau's race in *Edom*. But how mistaken are our views of things, and what false calculations do we make in our estimation of happiness. Esau's children were great indeed among men. But the seed of Jacob were beloved in the sight of GOD. JESUS hath made them *kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER, and they shall reign with him for ever*. Dear LORD! give me that sweet promise and I ask no more. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne.* Revelation 3:21.

CHAPTER 37

SUMMARY

The interesting history of the Patriarch Joseph, the son of Israel, begins at this Chapter. And as he is in many instances a most striking type of the LORD JESUS, it merits our attention the more. Here therefore I beg the Reader to call to mind the motto with which I opened our comment on this book of Genesis: Moses wrote of CHRIST. This Chapter hath for its contents the commencement of Joseph's history at the 17th year of his age: the partiality of his father for him: the envy of his brethren: their conspiracy against him: their selling him for a slave: and the distress of Jacob in consequence of the loss of Joseph

REFLECTIONS

Reader! there are many practical reflections for the suppression of anger in its first appearance; and many useful improvements for the discountenancing partiality to children, which may be gathered from this Chapter, and which under grace you will do well to regard. But I turn aside from every other consideration, as of less moment, in order to follow up the evident intention of the HOLY GHOST in this Chapter, to behold *him*, whom the Patriarch Joseph plainly shadowed out in several striking circumstances of his character.

And did not GOD the FATHER send his beloved Son from the realms of bliss into this our world, to see if it were well with us, and how we fared? But though he came full of love and mercy, yet when he came *unto his own, his own received him not*. Did they not conspire against him? nay, why do I say did *they* not, have we not *all* by sin and by rebellion conspired against him, sold him into the hands of the Gentiles, and *by wicked hands have crucified and slain him*? Was he not stripped of his raiment, cast into the pit, and *his grave made with the wicked in his death, because he had done no violence, neither was there any deceit found in his mouth!* Oh! thou Almighty Joseph of thy brethren! give me grace to see that though thou hast been *despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*; and I have, (like those unnatural brethren), *hid as it were my face from thee*; yet by the sovereignty of thy grace help me to see, that thou wert sent by GOD the FATHER, to look after and provide for my everlasting welfare. Thou art sent indeed before thy people, and *to save their lives by a great deliverance*. Hail, thou dear Redeemer! henceforth may the language of my heart be, *blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD*.

CHAPTER 38

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a digression from the subject of Joseph's history, but it becomes a very interesting one, because it records the race of

Judah, *another of Jacob's sons. And as our LORD sprang out of Judah, according to the flesh, (Hebrews 7:14.) it is indeed highly important to trace the descent of Judah, until we find it terminate in CHRIST. The contents of this Chapter are, Judah's marriage and issue: the death of his two eldest sons for rebellion against GOD; Judah's incestuous commerce with his daughter-in-law, and the effects of it.*

REFLECTIONS

What hath sin wrought in all ages! What a dreadful bias to evil is naturally in the mind of every man! What awful examples doth the LORD sometimes proclaim, in punishments, of his utter displeasure of sin! But, my soul! while thou art seeking grace from GOD, to avoid every appearance of sin, let that state of humbleness, that astonishing and unequalled state of humbleness, to which JESUS submitted, when he came to do away sin by the sacrifice of himself, endear the Redeemer yet more and more to thy heart, and form him there *the only hope of glory*. Was it not enough, dearest LORD, when thou condescendest to take flesh and blood for the purposes of salvation, that thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb, but didst even appoint thine ancestors, after the flesh, to be such as were more particularly marked with unworthiness? Gracious Redeemer! may it serve to teach my heart those sweet *lessons*, that thou wert pleased to be made in all things like as we are, yet without sin: and although thou wert made in the *likeness* of sinful flesh, yet thou didst partake of none of the corruptions of flesh; and that in thy tender alliance with our nature, thou dost not refuse that alliance even with the vilest of our nature; but *where sin aboundeth, grace doth much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD.* Romans 5:20, 21.

CHAPTER 39

SUMMARY

In this Chapter the Sacred Writer reassumes the history of Joseph The account is related of Joseph's being carried down into Egypt; and of the reception he met with there. He is sold to Potiphar, a captain under Pharaoh king of Egypt: Joseph is so blessed of the LORD, that his master commits unto him the care of all his substance: Joseph, on account of the comeliness of his person, becomes an object of desire to his mistress. She attempts to seduce him; but by the grace of GOD being preserved from the temptation, her lust is changed into hatred. She accuses Joseph to her lord, who, unheard, throws him into prison. The LORD manifests his favor to his servant, so that he inclines the heart of the keeper of the prison to be kind to Joseph These are the contents of this Chapter, to which as there is much in type and figure of the LORD JESUS, we shall do well to be very attentive in the perusal.

REFLECTIONS

Who doth not feel pity in the review of Joseph's unjust and cruel treatment! Behold the Patriarch a little before the object of his father's love. And now look at him as a bond slave and a prisoner in a strange land! To what a reverse of circumstances are even good men exposed, in this waste and howling wilderness. But, Reader! never forget that JESUS is with his people always, and *in all their affliction he is afflicted*. Suitable, seasonable grace shall be given them as they stand in need. And *as their day is, so shall their strength be*.

But is there nothing in this Chapter which prompts the heart to discover some faint sketches of him of whom Joseph was a type? Oh yes! certainly a greater than Joseph is here. How was the Son of GOD when upon earth sold and tempted, and led into prison and unto death! If we look at Joseph suffering by unjust imputation, can we forget for a moment him to whom our sins are imputed; though he did *no sin, and in whose mouth there was found no guile*. Did he not

bear our sins in his own body on the tree when he died, *the just for the unjust to bring us to GOD*. LORD, grant that as in so much mercy, thou didst condescend to be *sin for us who knew no sin, we may be made the righteousness of GOD in thee*.

CHAPTER 40

SUMMARY

The sacred historian prosecutes the interesting history of Joseph through this Chapter. The events of the prison, which by their tendency had a relation to Joseph and his future prospects in life, are here related. The chief butler and the chief baker, servants in Pharaoh's household, are for some offence brought into the same prison with Joseph. They each of them dream, and their dreams Joseph interprets: their correspondence with what Joseph predicted proves his ability: Joseph acquaints them with the unjust cause of his being imprisoned: and as he foresaw the speedy restoration of the chief butler to his office before Pharaoh, he entreated him to use his interest with the king to bring him out of the prison. But though he had such claims upon his gratitude, he forgot him.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! mark this down in the memorandums of your life, that whether in a prison or a palace, the faithful have GOD for their portion. And what a sweet thought is it, that, as no walls can confine the souls of GOD's people; so neither can bolts or bars shut the LORD out. If you are the LORD's prisoner, this is preferable to being the world's freeman. And when we recollect how precious the enjoyments some have found in those seasons, very evident it is that the Comforter is with them, and that to bless them. But even here in Joseph's history, let me not lose sight of the LORD JESUS, who *was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation?* Blessed LORD! let me never forget the afflictions of my spiritual and almighty Joseph, nor the cause of them; but in all

events of life as well prosperous as distressing, cease not to remember thee!

CHAPTER 41

SUMMARY

In this Chapter we behold the workings of GOD's providence concerning Joseph and his household, more plainly opened to our view, and the great events leading to his own welfare, and the preservation of his Father's family, beginning to unfold themselves, as the leading cause, for which the LORD permitted his being sold as a dare, and carried down into Egypt. The ability which Joseph had displayed, in the interpretation of dreams, in the instance of the chief butler and chief baker, raised his reputation in the court of Pharaoh; king of Egypt; and a case soon after occurring, which the LORD in his providence had so ordered that Pharaoh himself should be exercised with a dream, which none of the wise men of his court could interpret: Joseph is sent for; he explains to Pharaoh the dream; the event is found to correspond; and in consequence, Joseph is advanced to the highest dignity in the kingdom, next to Pharaoh: Joseph's marriage, and children, are also noticed in this Chapter; together with the equity and wisdom of his administration under Pharaoh, which endears him to the Egyptians.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! two or three things in a way of *Providence* ought to affect your heart in reading this Chapter. See how safe their interests are, however long they may seem to be forgotten, whose concerns are in the divine hands! And how much therefrom, it ought to be the study of the faithful to attend to the workings of the LORD in all events of their life; convinced of this, that they who humbly watch and trust a merciful GOD, for the fulfillment of all his covenant promises, will never want a faithful GOD to watch over and take care of them.

But with those *providential* views only, let not the Reader close his meditation of this Chapter. A view of grace also is at hand. And if from Joseph's exaltation to the right hand of Pharaoh, our eyes are directed by the SPIRIT OF GOD to the LORD JESUS at the right hand of power, into whose Almighty hands the sovereignty of grace is committed; here we shall see indeed, a true *Zaphnath-paaneah*: a wonderful counsellor! before whom all nations shall bow, *whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and whose dominion endureth throughout all ages*. Oh! thou great provider for all thy people's need, incline our hearts by thy grace to come to thee for food. And forasmuch as there is none but thou who hast the words of eternal life, *none so discreet and wise as thou art*: be thou our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Thou shalt be our lord and governor, and *according unto thy word so let our souls be ruled*. Ever would we desire to bow the knee before thee; and may not only ours, but every tongue confess, that *thou art* JESUS CHRIST *the* LORD, *to the glory of* GOD the FATHER.

CHAPTER 42

SUMMARY

A gracious GOD in his over-ruling providence, having caused a famine of bread to prevail in Canaan, compels thereby the sons of Jacob to go down into Egypt to seek sustenance for themselves and their household. And this brings about the leading design which the LORD had in view, (as the HOLY GHOST informs the Church, Psalm 105:16, 17.) in sending Joseph before his family into Egypt. The contents of this Chapter, are: the departure of the sons of Jacob from Canaan: their arrival at Egypt: their appearance before Joseph: their unconsciousness of him: his knowledge of them: their humbling themselves before him: his treatment of them: he supplies them with corn, but detains Simeon; their return to Canaan: and the distress of their father in finding that they had left Simeon behind.

REFLECTIONS

Learn, my soul, that gracious lesson to live above ordinances while favoured in the use of them; that when the means fail, the LORD of the means, who never faileth, may be thy portion forever. And if at any time *thy* JESUS should seem to make himself strange to thee, and by his dispensations to speak roughly unto thee, never doubt but that faithful are the wounds of thy friend: he is still a brother *born for adversity*.

Hail thou spiritual Joseph! thou almighty governor, and no less our brother, in whose hands are all *the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. To thee we come for food. Before thy sacred presence would we bow the knee. We are indeed verily guilty before thee; for, like the unnatural brethren, we have sold thee by our sins, and hid our faces from the anguish of thy soul by our iniquities. But GOD hath sent thee before us to preserve us a posterity in the earth, and to save our lives by a great deliverance. Nourish us, dearest LORD, how unworthy soever thy favor; and feed us with that living bread which came down from heaven; so will we praise thy mercy, and adore thy name.

CHAPTER 43

SUMMARY

The patriarchal history is continued throughout this Chapter. The pressing claims of hunger compel Jacob, however reluctantly, to send his children again into Egypt for more food: and Benjamin must go with them: their arrival is particularly noticed, and the reception which Joseph gave them: he is apparently much kinder to them than before; they are brought into his house, which though the idea at first alarmed them, yet as Simeon is brought, out to them, and they are told that Joseph means to entertain them at his table, their fears subside, and they begin to be merry.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let you and I turn from the table of Joseph amidst his brethren, while they are thus merry and happy with him, to consider the spiritual interest which we have in these things.

The world which we dwell in, like that of Canaan to the Patriarch's family, is a world of famine in bread for the soul. And if you know what spiritual hunger means, you will know also that this heavenly corn for ourselves and our household, can nowhere else be had but of the lord of the country, even from the LORD JESUS; of whom Joseph was the type. Shall we not arise and go to him? We will not, like Jacob's sons, take a present in our hand, for he is too rich to be benefited by our favors: and his blessings are too great to come within the price of purchase. But like Jacob, let us pray that GOD Almighty may give us mercy before the *man*, even the GOD-MAN CHRIST JESUS.

Dearest LORD, behold us now before thee! Oh! say to thy stewards the ministers of thy table as Joseph did to his: *bring these men home and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon.* And oh! the wonderful condescension, JESUS indeed *receiveth sinners and eateth with them.* We see thy face. We behold thy glory. We hear thy voice. We rejoice and are merry like the brethren of Joseph, while our brother JESUS saith, *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* And dearest Redeemer! we would pray do thou make our meeting gracious in drawing nigh to us by thy HOLY SPIRIT, in opening to our minds the Holy Scriptures, and in making thyself known to us in breaking of bread and in prayer. Then shall we fully understand and have our souls refreshed indeed in the experience, that *thy flesh is meat indeed, and thy blood drink indeed.*

CHAPTER 44

SUMMARY

The interesting narrative of the Patriarchal history is still prosecuted through this Chapter. The brethren of Joseph having

purchased corn and laden their cattle, take their leave of Joseph to return to their father. But Joseph, wishing to detain them, having ordered his steward secretly to put their money in the mouth of their sacks, and his silver cup in the bag of Benjamin; soon after their departure from the city sends his steward after them to charge them with this breach of honesty. Their sacks are examined, and the cup being found, they all return to Egypt in the greatest sorrow and distress imaginable. In this state when brought before Joseph, Judah becomes the mouth of the rest; and unconscious before whom he spoke, he feelingly represents the history of his family in the several incidents of it: describes the supposed death of Joseph: the distress of his father which was now again renewed in parting with Benjamin; offers himself as a bond-slave forever, rather than that Benjamin should be detained; and concludes with praying Joseph for mercy, that the grey hairs of his father may not be brought down with sorrow to the grave.

REFLECTIONS

This Chapter opens to our view *very* profitable reflections. How soon was the joy of the children of Israel turned into mourning. And yet in the midst of both, their covenant GOD was carrying on one and the same plan of mercy towards them. Learn, my soul, in all the checquered circumstances of life to remember this, and both in prosperity and adversity to live upon an unchangeable GOD.

But chiefly let this Chapter, with all the events of it, lead me to JESUS. Whatever tends to detain me, or to bring me back to him, may I esteem a mercy! Dearest LORD! put thou the cup of salvation in my lot, and may it be my portion to be thy servant forever. I would cry unto thee as one of old; *Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims shine forth. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up that strength, and come, and save us. Turn us again, O GOD, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.*

CHAPTER 45

SUMMARY

Nature was wound up to the highest pitch in the bosom of Joseph, by the address of Judah in the foregoing Chapter, and could no longer contain. In the opening of this Chapter it gave vent, in Joseph declaring: who he was, and by following the information with expressions of the utmost tenderness to his brethren. The effect of this discovery is related. And after the first emotions of surprise and joy, mingled with shame and reproach in the breasts of Joseph's brethren, are subsided, they converse together. Pharaoh king of Egypt is informed of the event, and he and his people rejoice at it. Joseph dismisseth his brethren to his father with the intelligence; invites him to come unto him and sends waggons for his convoy. The heart of Jacob misgives him at the first account; but when he had received fuller evidences of the truth of Joseph's being alive; Israel resolves to go and see his son before his death.

REFLECTIONS

How grateful, after afflictions, are the renewals of joy! How refreshing the manifestations of JESUS after long, and dark seasons of his absence to the soul? Reader! let the perusal of this Chapter be sure to lead thy heart to the examination, whether JESUS hath made himself known to thee otherwise than he doth to the world. For without this the chief and best improvement from it will be lost. Oh! it is sweet to look at him whom by sin and disobedience we have sold for a slave! It is precious, indeed, to behold him who was wounded for our sins and bruised for our iniquities; now risen and exalted at the right hand of power; and though changed in state, yet still retaining the same nature, and still not ashamed to call his people Brethren.

Dearest JESUS send the waggons of thine ordinances to bring us to thyself. Into the Egypt of even death and the grave would we follow thee, to behold thy glory. And as the good of all the land is before us, and in the heaven into which thou art entered, thou art only gone before as our fore-runner to take possession in our name;

thither may thy good SPIRIT bring us, as to our eternal home: where we hope to see thee *face to face, and to know even as we are known.*

CHAPTER 46

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the particulars of Israel's journey to Egypt. And never surely was there a journey undertaken with more clear and leading views of the divine Providence. Constrained by famine, invited by his son, and encouraged and directed by his GOD, the hoary Patriarch sets forward to embrace a long lost child. He takes all his family with him, arrives at the place of meeting, and beholds his son: an account of their interview.

REFLECTIONS

While, as a subject of particular providence, we read this Chapter to remark, how the LORD graciously arrangeth and ordereth the circumstances of his people so as to fulfil that promise, that *all things work together for good to them that love GOD*; let us more closely observe the spiritual instructions contained in it. Reader! this Chapter concerns us. Doth not our Almighty Joseph call us down as Israel was of old, into the Egypt of darkness, even the shadow of death: and doth he not say as to him, fear not to go down, I will go with thee: and will assuredly bring thee up again. Yes! he is and will be, *the resurrection and the life*. And therefore may you and I be enabled to say as David did, *when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me*. Blessed GOD! give to him that writes and to him that reads an happy meeting of our Spiritual Joseph, that like Jacob we may be content to die when that sight is accomplished, and cry out with the same full assurance as holy *Simeon*, in the taking the LORD'S CHRIST into our arms; LORD *let thy servant now depart in peace, according unto thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

CHAPTER 47

SUMMARY

The Patriarchal history is continued, mixed with an account of Joseph's wise administration concerning the affairs of Egypt. Joseph having informed Pharaoh king of Egypt of his father's arrival, and having introduced first some of his brethren, and then his father, to Pharaoh; the king ordered the best of the land for their accommodation. The famine still continuing, the Egyptians again apply to Joseph for bread, whose prudent conduct in the distribution of the same, endears him yet more and more to Pharaoh and all his people. After seventeen years residence in Egypt the Patriarch Jacob finding symptoms of his end approaching, sends for Joseph, and gives him charge concerning his burial.

REFLECTIONS

What sweet lessons do the lives of the Patriarchs Jacob and Joseph afford, of endearing ties of parental and filial affection? Would we learn the influence of grace refining nature's feelings, let us read over those sacred records.

Reader! do not forget to spiritualize the Egyptian monarch's question to the hoary Patriarch, and ask the same of your own heart. How old are you in grace? What years, what days can you number since you were *new* born? Few and evil no doubt are the best of our days in the best of our pilgrimage. But do not forget that the spiritual arithmetic is not counted by natural calculations' *for the child of grace shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner still remaining in an unconverted, unrenewed state, being an hundred years old shall be accursed.*

From the tender affection of Joseph to his dying father, in the promise he made him, let me turn my eyes and contemplate Joseph's LORD and Saviour in the promise he troth left to all his people. He saith to all the true spiritual seed of Israel now, as to the Patriarch himself; *Fear not to go down to the grave, I will be with thee.* And this thought is a sweet thought: the covenant holds good in death as in life. The grave cannot dissolve it. When *we live, we live unto the*

LORD: *and when we die, we die unto the Lord: so that living or dying we are the LORD'S. O thou that hast the keys of hell and death; sweetest Saviour! be thou my GOD, my guide and my companion, both in life and in death: then to live will be CHRIST, and to die will be gain.*

CHAPTER 48

SUMMARY

The time of Jacob's death drawing near, Joseph hastens to visit him: and the dying Patriarch takes occasion in this interesting interview, to recount to Joseph GOD'S gracious dealings with him from his youth. Joseph's two sons being brought before Jacob he blesseth them. And in the sure confidence that GOD would confirm his promise of bringing his seed again to Canaan, Jacob gives a particular spot of land there to his son Joseph. These are the contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! I would pass by many very sweet and interesting reflections which arise out of this Chapter, to fix my mind upon one most eminently striking, and as important as it is striking: namely, how triumphant must be that glorious principle of faith which animated the Patriarch's mind at such a distant period before the coming of JESUS; and which enabled him to sing such a song of praise *to the GOD which had fed him all his life long, and to the angel which redeemed him from all evil.* Oh, my soul! if these all died in faith in a *coming* Saviour; shall not I, now I have seen him *come*; having *finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, brought in an everlasting righteousness, and sealed up the vision*: shall not I find grace to be *the follower of them, who now through faith and patience inherit the promises*? Blessed LORD! give me this precious gift of faith. Enable me to see GOD'S CHRIST in this great salvation; and by an ardent lively faith to know my right of appropriation in it. Then

shall I be assured, even as Jacob was in a dying hour, that *this* GOD is my GOD for ever and ever, and he will be my guide even unto death.

CHAPTER 49

SUMMARY

At length we arrive to that point which forms the period of all things here below: and we are brought to the conclusion of the Patriarch Jacob's history. This Chapter relates the memorable circumstances of his dying moments. He convenes his children all around him, and under the spirit of prophecy declares to them, as the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, what would distinguish their families in the last days. Having finished his prophecy and blessed them, and given commandment concerning his burial, the dying Patriarch gathers up his feet into the bed, and yields up the ghost.

REFLECTIONS

MARK *the perfect man and behold the upright*, (saith the Psalmist), *for the end of that man is peace*. Reader! think what an important thing it is to die well. What is to be performed but once should be well performed. For if we err here there is no repentance in the grave. LORD, grant, if it be thy holy will, that like the Patriarch I may be waiting while *living* for thy salvation: that when *dying* like him I may rejoice in the possession of it.

Let us take a parting look at the Patriarch Jacob while closing his history, and once more in him behold a lively type of the blessed JESUS. Before his birth, like the Patriarch, was he not chosen to be the father of many nations? Did he not in a yet more striking manner struggle in the womb with the elder Adam; and by fulfilling the covenant which he had broken, recover the birth-right for his people? In the great work of redemption, how was he driven from his father's house, exposed to all the horrors of the wilderness, and made the subject of temptations? For the love he bore his Church, what a series of servitude did he not endure? Never, surely, could it

be said of Israel, as of Israel's GOD, with equal strength of reason, *that which was torn of beasts was required of my hand; in the day I was consumed by drought, and of the frost by night.* Blessed JESUS! *in all things it behoveth thee that thou shouldst have the pre-eminence.* May it be my portion to have thy person and gracious offices always in view, until *in the dispensation of the fulness of times thou shalt gather together in one all things in thyself, both which are in heaven and which are on earth:* and the whole multitude of thy people shall be *gathered round thy throne in everlasting glory.*

CHAPTER 50

SUMMARY

This Chapter which concludes the book of Genesis, concludes with it the account of the last tokens of respect shown to the Patriarch Jacob's remains. He is embalmed by the physicians of Egypt; and after the days of mourning were expired, Joseph obtains permission from Pharaoh to carry up his father's remains for interment into Canaan. The funeral ceremony is here related: their return to Egypt: Joseph and his brethren's affectionate regard for each other is again mentioned: the years which Joseph lived after his father: Joseph's death and age.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! it would be wrong to close our review of the life of the Patriarch Joseph, without once more looking at so illustrious a character, both as he is in himself, and as he is a type of the ever blessed JESUS. As he is in himself, how truly lovely doth he appear in every relation and character of life. As a son, as a brother, as the wise governor in Egypt, raised up by the LORD for the preservation of his own house and family, and the whole kingdom of Egypt. And as a father, as a man, when a servant, and when a Lord! But how lovely is it to see the HOLY GHOST graciously shadowing out the features of JESUS, in the prominent parts of Joseph's life. From the first

departure he made from his father's house, through the whole of his eventful life, from the prison to the throne, we see the outlines of the great Redeemer's history sketched out. And from Joseph we are immediately directed to JESUS, and as we bow the knee before him, we cannot help crying out; Hail! thou glorious Almighty Governor of thy kingdom! Thou art indeed the true *Zapnath-paaneah*. Thou art He whom thy brethren shall praise, and all thy church adore. To thee every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that thou art CHRIST, to the glory of GOD the FATHER.

Before we shut this book of Genesis let us take one thought more. The close of it may lead our minds to the improving thought of the close of our own. It serves to enforce upon the mind that solemn conclusion of the sacred writer; so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Reader! what a vast change hath been wrought in the circumstances of mankind, from the opening of the history of creation through the several periods of it. There we began the wonderful relation of GOD's goodness to our race, in the formation of man after his own image. And here we behold him become the prey and food of worms! And whence all this but because sin hath entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death hath passed upon all men, because all have sinned. And what shall bring relief to the mind under this discouraging prospect, but the contemplation of his love and faithfulness, who is the unchangeable covenant GOD, *the same yesterday and today and forever*. Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, to live upon this great and unchangeable GOD, as he is revealed to his people in a three-fold character of persons. And under this assurance that blessing will be our portion: *the children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee*.

EXODUS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

IN opening this second book of Moses, I would desire the Reader to call to mind the observation which was made at the opening of the first; namely, that as Moses wrote of CHRIST, we might be careful not to lose sight of him through every chapter, but to be searching for him in this field of scripture as for hidden treasure. And indeed as it appears from the many references which are made by the other sacred writers of both the Testaments to this book of GOD, that there are more types and shadows of the LORD JESUS in Exodus, than perhaps in any other of the writings of the Old Testament a more awakened attention, therefore, should be called forth, accompanied with earnest prayer to GOD the SPIRIT, that we may find him, *of whom Moses and the prophets did write, JESUS of Nazareth.*

The principal things contained in *Exodus*, are the accomplishment of GOD'S promises made to Abraham concerning the increase of his seed; the rigorous treatment the Israelites suffered in Egypt; the LORD'S emancipating them from bondage; and the ordinances of worship appointed in the wilderness. And as from several of the New Testament writers, we have authority to consider the deliverance. from Egypt, as typical of a far more important deliverance of the church from the bondage of Sin and Satan; it should seem to follow, that nothing can more merit our attention than this sacred Book of GOD.

One general observation more I would beg to offer, before we enter upon the perusal of this part of the Holy Volume: and that is, that though Exodus as a book is not in point of bulk much less than that of Genesis; yet in point of time, its contents are very inconsiderable compared to it. The Book of Genesis comprised no

less a space in history than 2369 years; whereas the whole of Exodus includes no more than 145 years. May a gracious GOD accompany the Reader's attention to it with the teaching of his HOLY SPIRIT: and now *the vail which in reading the Old Testament blinded the Jews, is done away in CHRIST; may we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the LORD, be changed into time same image from glory to glory, even as by the SPIRIT of the LORD!*

CHAPTER 1

Summary

This first chapter opens with an account of the increase of the children of Israel: the jealousy of the king of Egypt, in consequence thereof: the cruel policy which he and his people adopted to decrease the growing number of the Israelites; and the LORD'S gracious interposition to counteract their design.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a decided character is here drawn between the men of the world and the saints of GOD. And what an everlasting enmity we perceive running through all ages, between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Gracious GOD! Be it my portion rather *to suffer affliction with the people of GOD, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.* My soul! Learn from this chapter a lesson of grace and patience. How slow soever the promises of GOD appear to his people in fulfilling, it is but in *appearance*, for they are *all yea and amen in CHRIST JESUS.* Though the seed of Abraham did not seem to increase immediately after the promise given, equal to what the haste of natural desires might expect, yet *the LORD is not slack as some men count slackness.* The *vision is for an appointed time; it shall come, it will not tarry.* May all faithful believers learn from hence how certain GOD'S purposes are! *Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*

CHAPTER 2

Summary

This Chapter is rendered remarkable in that it is the beginning of the history of Moses, the writer of the Book of Exodus, and one of the most illustrious types of the LORD JESUS, as the great deliverer and lawgiver of his people; and as a mediator. The Contents of this Chapter are, the birth of Moses: his immediate danger at his birth, in being exposed to perish for want of sustenance, or from the ravages of destruction on the banks of the Nile: his preservation by Pharaoh's daughter :her adoption of him: his education under her: and his leaving the court of Egypt for his attachment to his brethren of the Hebrews: his flight to Midian: his marriage: and the event of it in the birth of a son. The close of the Chapter gives a further account of the oppressions exercised on the Israelites: their groans by reason of them, and GOD's merciful notice thereof.

REFLECTIONS

How often do the very plans of bad men counteract their own designs! How frequently hath it been known, that the schemes of the ungodly to oppress the righteous have ultimately proved their very means of deliverance? Little did the tyrant of Egypt think when he issued the cruel edict for the murder of his harmless subjects, that his own daughter should be made the unconscious instrument of rescuing the very one whom the LORD would raise up to destroy his empire. Little did the Jews in ages after this event, imagine, that when they had nailed the LORD JESUS to the cross, that *that* very cross should become the means of accomplishing the reverse of all that they intended.

My soul! learn from such astonishing instances, in which *the wrath of man is made to praise the LORD*, by fulfilling the sacred purposes of his will, to commit all thy concerns with implicit confidence into the LORD's hand. If thou art his, (this is the grand point to be interested about), depend upon it he will take care of his own. And let this be an everlasting maxim, for the truth is unquestionable, that the man who by grace is led to watch the

LORD's providences, will never want for the LORD of providences to watch him.

Reader! dismiss not this interesting Chapter before you have once again remarked, how the cries and groans of the LORD's people called forth the LORD's attention unto them. Men may cry under trouble and groan under oppression. But in all this there is no concern for sin which is the cause of it, and consequently no cry to GOD to be delivered from it. *Job* describes such in lively characters. *By reason* (says he) *of the multitude of oppressions they make the oppressed to cry, they cry out by reason of the arm of the mighty. But none saith, Where is GOD my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?* Job 35:9-10. Reader, how stands the case with *you*? Are your cries the cries for sin? Do your troubles lead the heart to GOD? And is the language of your soul, where is GOD my FATHER, my Saviour, who knows my sorrow, and to whom alone I look for deliverance? Pause over the subject, and may the HOLY GHOST be your teacher!

CHAPTER 3

Summary

The last account of the LORD's personal and particular manifestation of himself, which we met with before the one related in this Chapter; was that to the Patriarch Jacob. Genesis 46:2-4. A period of more than two hundred years before. Here we read of the LORD's appearing to Moses in a flame of fire in a bush. The LORD begins in this method his manifestations to Moses' calls to him by name out of the midst of the bush: proclaims his own glorious and incommunicable name: declares himself to be the covenant GOD of Israel: assures him that he hath seen Israel's sorrow, and heard their groans; that he will deliver his people and bring them up out of Egypt: appoints Moses as their deliverer: prepares him to expect difficulties, but assures him of an happy issue. These are among the principal things contained in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Enquire, O my soul, when did the visions of GOD begin in thy experience! And when did the LORD JESUS call to thee, as to Moses, by name; and make himself known to thee otherwise than he doth to the world? Oh! for special, distinguishing tokens of the divine love and faithfulness.

Reader! learn from that part of the life of Moses which hath been already brought before you in this and the foregoing chapter, how much more suited a life of retirement is for the enjoyment of communion with GOD, than a life of bustle. Moses saw and learnt more of GOD at the back part of a desert, than all the forty years before, in which he had been educated in a court.

But principally in this Chapter, let neither the writer or reader overlook the typical representation here made, of the LORD JESUS coming down from heaven to redeem his people. Dearest Saviour! thou hast surely seen, and heard, and known the afflictions of thy people, which are in spiritual Egypt. Oh! thou great, thou Almighty I AM, that art *the same yesterday, and today, and forever*; give me to rejoice in the firmness and unchangeableness of all covenant mercies: in the FATHER'S gift, the Saviour's purchase, and the blessed SPIRIT'S application! How precious is it to reflect, that when by reason of the bondage and oppression of sin, our souls are bowed down and we are tempted to cry out, *our strength and our hope are perished from the LORD*; thou rememberest us in our low estate, *for thy mercy endureth for ever*. Be thou still the great I AM to me, and with me, and for me. May I have the grace for ever to know, to live upon, and to rejoice in, this great I AM, in all covenant relations that being brought up out of the Egyptian bondage of sin and death, I may, at length, through the same Almighty grace, be brought into the glorious Canaan of everlasting rest.

CHAPTER 4

Summary

In this Chapter we have the objections which Moses advanced against executing the commission the LORD appointed him to, of undertaking the deliverance of Israel from Egypt; in the people's unbelief to receive him under this character, and his own incompetency of standing before, Pharaoh. Here are contained also the LORD'S gracious answers for silencing those objections: in imparting to Moses a power of working miracles, assuring, him of his presence to accompany him, and appointing an help-mate in his brother Aaron to act with him. This Chapter relates also the departure of Moses from his father-in-law, to return into Egypt: he meets Aaron in the way: they confer together on the important subject: on their arrival at Egypt, they communicate to the elders of Israel the LORD'S gracious designs towards them: the people in token of holy joy at the report, bow their heads before the LORD and worship.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! while you and I behold with concern the conduct of one of the most faithful servants of the LORD, in the repugnance which he manifested to an immediate obedience to the LORD'S commands; let us consider in him a renewed evidence of the universal taint of our fallen nature, and derive from the view this sweet improvement, that none but our adored Redeemer call be endeared to the heart as holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. And did Moses need one miracle upon another to gain him over to the interests and services of his GOD; how many miracles of grace have you and I required, and yet in the present moment the remains of unbelief still lurk within! Well may we both cry out, not only in beholding the obduracy of the avowed enemies of GOD like that of Pharaoh, but even in the rebellion and unbelief of his friends like that of Moses; *from hardness of heart and contempt of thy word and commandment, good LORD deliver us.*

One word more on this Chapter. We see that GOD's people though persecuted, we're not forsaken; though cast down by men, were not cast off by their GOD. They were still the LORD's people, and therefore the LORD's care. Now let you and I seek for grace to remember this amidst all our dark and trying dispensations. There is *a time to favour Zion*, and that time must come. In the covenant *all things are ordered and sure*. The season for sending trials, the season for removing trials, and one continued stream of love is running through all. Blessed GOD! give me grace like Israel to believe that the LORD is looking upon my afflictions, and like them in token of submission and thankfulness to *bow the head and worship*.

CHAPTER 5

Summary

In this Chapter we have a relation of GOD's ambassadors, Moses and Aaron., appearing before Pharaoh to demand, in GOD's name, permission for Israel to hold a feast unto the LORD in the wilderness. Pharaoh's answer, in which he despiseth GOD, is also recorded. The ambassadors urge the necessity of the measure, lest GOD should punish the Israelites with sickness or the sword. And Pharaoh to manifest his defiance of GOD's power; lays upon the people of Israel greater burthens of slavery. In consequence the children of Israel are more rigorously treated: they make complaints to Pharaoh: which are received with inattention: they complain of Moses and Aaron they murmur; at GOD's dispensation: and Moses himself is tainted with the dissatisfaction, and returns to expostulate with GOD.

REFLECTIONS

To what a daring height of profaneness and impiety is the human heart capable of arriving, unrestrained by Almighty grace! LORD, keep me from that awful desperately wicked state which is here

described in the character of this wretch, who from *not liking to retain GOD in his knowledge was given over to a reprobate mind.*

Reader! observe with me how mysterious according to our view of things, the LORD'S dealings are with his people. So hath it been with the church of GOD in all ages. *We look for judgment but there is none: for salvation, but it is far off from us.* Such was the complaint of the faithful. And such was, and is, and will be their complaints until grace shall be no longer in a state of exercise, but be consummated in glory. *In the world ye shall have tribulation,* this is the inscription on JESUS' standard. But what a precious thought is it that not an hour, no not a moment beyond the LORD'S time of trial, shall man's power be exercised over his people! Reader! beg of GOD the HOLY GHOST to write this sweet Scripture in your heart, and grant you grace to live in the believing assurance of it *for the LORD shall judge his people and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left.* Deuteronomy 32:36.

CHAPTER 6

Summary

This becomes an interesting Chapter, in that a gracious GOD, in answer to the complaints of Moses and the people, takes occasion therefrom to assure them of the reality of his delivering them from the oppressions of Egypt, by proclaiming his glorious incommunicable name of JEHOVAH, the promise-making, and promise-performing GOD. Moses is again commanded to repair to the court of Pharaoh: and by the way to assure the people that the LORD their GOD had heard their cries, and that he would deliver them. Moses expresseth his reluctance and desires to be excused going again before Pharaoh; but the LORD'S commands are absolute. The HOLY GHOST hath thought proper in this place to introduce the ancestry of Moses and Aaron in the tribe of Levi, together with that of the tribes of Simeon and Reuben.

REFLECTIONS

Nothing can be more refreshing to the soul under all the discouragements and trials of the faithful, than the firm assurance that we are brought into covenant with a GOD whose promises and performances are sure to correspond. Our fathers in the church of old knew GOD under this glorious character, and now it is confirmed to us and sealed in the blood of JESUS, how earnest is every appeal made to the heart to believe the record which GOD hath given of his SON.

Reader! pause once more over the view this Chapter affords of the timidity of Moses and the unbelief of the Israelites. Alas! what is any man in his highest attainments unsupported by divine strength. My Brother! may we learn this lesson from it, and it will be profitable to place no confidence in ourselves; but may all our sufficiency be in the LORD. We can never trust ourselves too little, nor our GOD too much. I can do nothing by myself, (said one of old), but I can do all things through CHRIST which strengtheneth me.

CHAPTER 7

Summary

The LORD having now by his grace over-ruled all the objections of Moses, the man of GOD with Aaron his brother proceeds without further delay in the execution of their commission. This Chapter relates to us the event of Moses' second embassy unto Pharaoh. Moses demands, in the LORD'S name, the freedom of Israel for the purpose of divine worship. Pharaoh again refuses. Moses, at the command of GOD, works a miracle by way of confirmation of the authority by which he acted. This proving ineffectual to subdue the heart of Pharaoh, Moses at GOD'S command begins to chasten Egypt with plagues. He turns the waters of the river into blood, which is the first of the ten plagues with which the LORD visited Egypt, before the Israelites: deliverance is accomplished.

Reflections

Pause my soul over the perusal of this Chapter, and behold, in the history of the Egyptian monarch, the awful state of an hardened heart. And what were the calls of his magicians to counteract the sovereignty of GOD, but similar instances of the obduracy of the wicked in all ages, who aim to strengthen themselves against the Almighty, and run upon the thick bosses of his buckler!

Reader: do not overlook one sweet instruction in this Chapter. What will not the LORD do for his people? Rather than Israel shall be any longer oppressed, Egypt shall be destroyed, and the noblest of rivers turned into blood. Oh! may you and I be found among those who have the LORD for their portion, and then we shall have no cause to fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills carried into the midst of the sea. Dearest JESUS! undertake for me, for thou alone canst answer for me, O, LORD my GOD.

CHAPTER 8

Summary

Moses the minister of GOD is represented in this Chapter, as prosecuting his great commission in the chastisement of the King of Egypt and his servants, for the deliverance of Israel from bondage. Under the command and by the authority of GOD, Moses calls for three successive plagues, in the swarms of frogs, and lice, and flies, which cover the land of Egypt. But the result of these visitations, like the former, is, as the LORD had said; though at the voice of Moses the plagues are severally removed, yet the heart of Pharaoh remains hardened.

REFLECTIONS

My soul; I charge it upon you as you value the divine favour, pause over this chapter, and take a careful survey of the LORD's sovereignty, in his justice toward his enemies, and his grace and mercy toward his people. And while a deep sense of sin impresseth

the mind with a conviction, that all the difference *between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth GOD and him that serveth him not*, ariseth out of divine grace, not human merit; oh! that such views of heavenly mercy may serve to endear GOD in his covenant relationship to the heart; and direct the soul into the participation and enjoyment of the FATHER'S love, the Redeemer's grace, and the SPIRIT'S unremitting mercy.

Learn, my soul, the vast and infinite importance of having thy GOD and Saviour for thy friend at all times, and upon all occasions. If such small and inconsiderable instruments as *frogs, flies*, and vermin, may become so formidable to distress, when commissioned by the divine power; how needful is it to live always under the smiles of his favour, who alone can make thy blessings to become blessings indeed; or can at a moment convert thy very food into poison. If GOD be for us who can be against us. If he be our enemy it matters not who is our friend. Dearest and ever-blessed JESUS! thou who art the peace of thy people, be thou at peace with me, and then all thy creatures will be at peace with me also. For thou hast said, *on that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.*

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

The interesting record of the Egyptian punishments for the deliverance of Israel, is still pursued and carried on through the whole of this Chapter. To the three fore-mentioned plagues of the frogs, lice and flies, succeed three more. One of a murrain among the Egyptian cattle: another of boils breaking out both upon man and upon beast: and a third in that of a mighty storm of thunder, hail and rain, which destroys all that was in the field. But although

during the continuance of those visitations Pharaoh seemed to relent: yet on their removal his former hardness of heart returns, and he refuses to let Israel go.

Reflections

Reader! may it be your happiness and mine to follow up the design of the HOLY GHOST in dwelling so particularly on this interesting history, and not take our leave of the solemn instructions contained in it, until by divine teaching it hath ministered to this end, to *make us wise unto salvation through the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS*. How very awful are GOD'S judgments! How very comforting the review of his mercies! Never my soul, never may I lose sight of those distinguishing marks of the LORD'S love to his people in times of peril. He that severed between the cattle of Israel and the cattle of Egypt still separates between the precious and the vile. It is a sweet relief to a poor afflicted soul in a trying hour, that the LORD *knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*. JESUS is still the *hiding place from the storm, and the covert from the tempest*. And when the LORD hides his saints, he shows himself. Precious is that scripture, which the LORD hath left on record for his church: *I the LORD do keep it, I will water it every moment lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day*. Isaiah 27:3.

CHAPTER 10

Summary

The history still proceeds through this Chapter. Pharaoh's heart remaining in the same obduracy, Moses is commissioned by the LORD to inflict the eighth and ninth plagues in the punishment of Egypt; the locusts infest his coast, and darkness of three days continuance beclouds his land. At length after several ineffectual remonstrances on the part of Moses, and entreaties on the part of Pharaoh: Moses is driven from his presence with the threatening of the loss of life, if ever he appeared again before him

REFLECTIONS

There is not a more important reflection to be kept alive in the human mind, than that both the creation and government of the whole world of intellectual and spiritual beings is for the divine glory. The praise ascribed to JEHOVAH in heaven, corresponds to what all things teach us here on earth. *Thou art worthy, O LORD, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Blessed GOD! let it be my happiness to record thy praises, and to speak of all the signs and wonders which thou hast wrought in a way of redeeming my soul, and the souls of all thy people, from the house of spiritual bondage, in the accomplishment of which *thou hast subdued Egypt and destroyed it, and scattered thine enemies abroad with a mighty hand.* Oh! may it be written upon my heart with the pencil of the living GOD, that it is *not by might, nor by power in ourselves, that thou hast brought us out; but by thy right hand, thine arm, and the light of thy countenance. Salvation belongeth unto the LORD, and thy blessing is upon thy people.*

CHAPTER 11

Summary

Matters are now coming to a crisis, and a dreadful crisis it is in this eventful history and it will soon be seen to whom the sovereign power belongs. This chapter prepares the way for the account of the tenth and last plague of Egypt in the destruction of the first-born. Moses denounceth this punishment, and all the conference between him and Pharaoh is ended forever.

REFLECTIONS

Before I leave this Chapter to enter upon the sequel of the wonderful history which follows, and behold the arm of GOD executing his threatenings upon the incurable obstinacy of Pharaoh and his subjects; I would pause once more over what I have read, to

admire and adore the distinguishing grace of GOD to my soul. Oh! thou dear Redeemer, thou *that art the hope of Israel and the Saviour thereof, how is it, why is it, that thou hast manifested thyself to me, and not unto the world?* Ponder, my soul, I charge thee, the wondrous distinguishing love which passeth knowledge. Reader! in the contemplation of Pharaoh's character, learn the cause also why many now like him reject *the counsel of GOD against their own souls*; slight the gospel of JESUS, and refuse both *him that spake on earth, and him that now speaks from heaven*. LORD! write by thy blessed SPIRIT that solemn question on every heart, and accompany the word by thy power, *How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?*

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This Chapter becomes exceedingly interesting to the Christian Reader, in that it contains an account of the institution of the Jewish passover. And whoever considers what Paul the apostle hath said of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, whom he expressly calls our Passover, will be very earnest to observe every minute circumstance recorded of the Jewish passover, whose great and leading object was to point to CHRIST. Here, therefore, I would again particularly desire the Reader to keep in view the motto which was placed over the writings of Moses in our first entrance upon them: I mean what the LORD JESUS himself said, Moses wrote of me. And in this Chapter I would beg the Reader to search, as for hidden treasure, through every part of it, until he hath found JESUS. The most prominent parts of this Chapter are the institution of the passover: the feast of unleavened bread: the destruction of the firstborn of Egypt: the distress and terror of the Egyptians at the event: the pressing importunity of Pharaoh and his people for the departure of Israel, the Israelites baring Egypt by night, being urged to it by the Egyptians: and an account of a mixed multitude going up out of Egypt with them.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! you and I can hardly enough contemplate the LORD's goodness to Israel as recorded in this chapter; and never can we sufficiently adore the divine mercy, when we consider our interest in it. Oh! what a night of deliverance did the LORD work for them after the rigorous bondage of four hundred years! What a series of troubles he had supported them under, and brought them through, in defiance of all the oppressions of the enemy! And with what an high hand did he at length carry everything before them, when the moment of his salvation was come. Truly might their leader say, "*It is a night much to be observed unto the LORD of all the children of Israel in their generations for ever. This month shall be to you the beginning of months, the first month of the year.*" It is indeed a new month, a new year, new life, new privileges, new enjoyments. And well may every one that reads the wonderful narration exclaim, *What hath GOD wrought?*

But, my Brother! while beholding Israel's emancipation from Egypt, let us seek grace to contemplate a still far greater deliverance, of which this was but the type; even the recovery of our poor fallen nature from under hellish bondage, by the glorious redemption of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This is the night indeed, ever to be remembered by us, even the night of sin and death, in which we lay, when JESUS our Almighty Passover passed over the houses of his people, and carried ruin and destruction amidst all the enemies which held our souls in vassalage and in misery, Surely, we may well cry out with the Psalmist, *O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD all the earth. Sing unto the LORD and praise his name: be telling of his salvation from day to day.*

Dearest and ever blessed JESUS! since thou hast condescended to be our Passover, help us by the sweet influences of thine HOLY SPIRIT to keep the feast, *not in the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* And oh! let the blood of the everlasting covenant be sprinkled upon our hearts, that it may be our security from the condemning sentence of the law, and from all the dreadful evils of destruction consequent thereupon. Enable me by precious faith to

feed upon thy precious body: and make it to be meat indeed, and thy blood drink indeed, to support and nourish me in my spiritual life. And grant that, like the believing Israelite, I may eat it with my loins girded about with truth, and my feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. And like him also, with my staff in my hand ready to be gone and in haste to depart, that when thou shalt come, whether at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, I may be found waiting thy approach, and go up with a high hand out of the spiritual Egypt of sin and death, to the possession of the everlasting *Canaan* of promise.

CHAPTER 13

Summary

The sacred historian continues the interesting, history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The LORD commands that all the first born of Israel shall be sanctified to him from the womb, that it may be a standing monument in the church throughout all ages of the LORD'S delivering his people from this bondage. The ordination of the feast of unleavened bread: the transmission of these great things to be in the instruction of their children; the first fruits of their cattle are appointed as a token of tribute to the LORD: and in cases of redemption, how to be redeemed. These points being settled, the relation of Israel's journey is reassumed. The LORD points out their way, and guides them by a pillar of cloud going before them. The children of Israel carry up the bones of Joseph with them as they had promised.

REFLECTIONS

LORD! Let all thy distinguishing mercies, (like those which were granted to Israel,) by which thou dost manifest thy love to my soul, be so deeply impressed upon my unthinking and forgetful heart, that by thy power they may live in my constant remembrance. And I would yet further pray concerning them, that the more distinguishing thy tokens of love in them are, the more sweetly they

may be held in my esteem. Will my GOD also grant me grace, to be not eating my morsel alone; and while commemorating his mercies in redemption to my soul, hide the knowledge of it from those around me. But LORD make me communicative, in imparting the glad tidings to others. Chiefly may I remember thy precept, and teach my children, and my children's children, how by strength of hand, the LORD hath brought me out of worse than Egyptian bondage, even of sin and death. And since, LORD, thou hast been so gracious, as to bring me out, and art bringing me through the wilderness, I know that thou wilt bring me in to see that good land, which is the glory of all lands, even the goodly mountain and *Lebanon*. Dearest JESUS! during this wilderness state, and while exercised with wilderness dispensations, ever give me to see, that however rough and thorny the way, still it is *the right way*, to the city of habitation. Be thou my *pillar of cloud* by day, going before me in grace and wisdom, to direct: and be thou my *pillar of fire* by night, to surround me, and screen me from all danger. LORD, I would humbly cast myself upon thy care, for, like Israel, hitherto thou hast borne me as upon eagle's wings. LORD bring me home at length safely unto *Canaan*, that where thou art I may come, to behold thy glory, and to dwell before thee forever.

CHAPTER 14

Summary

As the foundation of the Church was in miracles, so every after-stage in the building is carried on with increasing wonder until the top stone is brought forth with shoutings of grace, grace, unto it. Israel being brought into the wilderness, on the south east side of Egypt, Pharaoh, as the LORD had forewarned Moses, pursues them with a powerful army. This Chapter relates the interesting account of this pursuit. The Israelites are shut in on every side, and, according to human calculation, there is no way left to escape. The LORD opens a new way for them. Israel is delivered; the Egyptians

are destroyed; and the effect wrought on the mind of the Israelites is strikingly expressive of thankfulness.

REFLECTIONS

Who would have thought, that after the many humbling lessons, Pharaoh had been taught, that folly should again so far have blinded his eyes, as to have come out against the LORD's people. My soul! Think seriously, in the view of this awful instance, to what a desperate state of wickedness the heart of man is capable of attaining when given up to a reprobate mind.

Who would have thought, that after the LORD had so wonderfully interposed in bringing Israel out of Egypt, and while guiding them by a *pillar of cloud*, and protecting them by a *pillar of fire*; that any further trouble should have arisen to harass and afflict them. My soul! remember the straits of Israel, in all the lesser trials of your faith: and do not forget, that as but for those difficulties which the people of GOD sustained, they never would have known the preciousness of divine interposition, in this miracle of mercy to themselves, and destruction to their enemies: so neither would you know the numberless instances of the LORD's opening ways of deliverance to you, and a thousand proofs of grace helping you on in the path, if there was not an hedge of thorns thrown up against you, and that frequently, thereby *divine strength is made perfect in human weakness*.

Reader! before we leave this precious chapter, look at it once again. Have you seen *Israel* in that critical moment, when, according to all human appearance, destruction was inevitable; an enemy behind, mountains on each side, and destruction before, and did GOD then manifest the lighting down of his glorious arm in the very moment of danger? And is it not so with the sinner, in his perilous state, unawakened by grace, and exposed to everlasting ruin. The enemy hastening on; sin encompassing all around; and every step he takes only leading nearer to the borders of eternity. LORD! open to the Reader (if haply his eyes have never yet seen his danger) a sense of this state! put a cry like Israel's in his heart to the LORD; and when, under divine teaching, he hath learnt, that every door of escape in himself is shut, and that there is no way to escape by

human power; then do thou, as to Israel, open that *new and living way* in CHRIST'S blood; give him to *see*, that *there is salvation in no other*; and let the language of one of old, be the language of his heart; *I will go forth in the strength of the LORD GOD, and will make mention of thy righteousness even of thine only. My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation, for I know not the number thereof.*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

This is a very memorable chapter, for it contains not only the most ancient of all holy songs, but that which, considered spiritually and with an eye to JESUS, is to be the most lasting. The HOLY GHOST causeth the sacred writers of the Old Testament frequently to refer to it: and to leave the impression of it in strong characters on the minds of New Testament believers, it is again spoken of in the close of the canon of scripture as the Song of Solomon of Moses and the Lamb, sung in glory: Revelation 15:3. In this chapter we have the words of this song, and the joy of Israel in singing of it. Beside these: here is an account of Moses conducting Israel into the wilderness of Shur: their arrival at Marah: and at Elim.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! In the contemplation of this deliverance to Israel, shall not you and I, while we consider it as a type of a far greater deliverance from sill and everlasting death, call upon our souls to join in the celebration of GOD'S mercies? I would say to the drowsy faculties of my heart, *Awake, awake, utter a song.* Did the LORD bring his people out of Egyptian bondage, and did Israel sing his mercies at the Red sea, and shall not I, whom he hath brought out of nature's darkness, and out of the bondage of sin and Satan, shout alike the Salvation of the LORD! Oh! thou blessed and only Potentate, King of Kings, and LORD of LORD'S: thou infinite and eternal JEHOVAH, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST: fain would my

awakened soul look up to thee, under each and all of those glorious distinctions of person, and power, and praise thee with unfeigned lips. Thou hast indeed, as thou didst to Israel of old, brought me out of the iron furnace, out of *the horrible pit, the mire, and the clay, and hast set my feet upon a rock and established my goings: hast put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our GOD: so that many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.*

But blessed LORD! Oh grant me faith, and grace, in full exercise, that in all the after stages of a wilderness dispensation, whether in the sweet enjoyment of Palm trees at *Elim*, or the bitter waters of affliction at *Marah*, I may still by living upon thee and thy fulness, be never cast down in unbelief, and repining in the emptiness, or unsatisfying nature, of all creature enjoyments. Oh! lead me on to *Canaan*: and till the happy hour shall come when I shall have done with all things here below, enable me by faith, amidst all changing providences, to live upon an unchangeable GOD. Let faith give me a present enjoyment of the good things to come. Let me see JESUS in everything; and his wisdom, and love, and faithfulness, mingled with every dispensation. And let my experience resemble his of old, who thus expressed himself: *For this cause we faint not: while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

Israel, having left the Red sea, journeyeth into the wilderness, and from Elim arrives at Sin. The people murmur for want of bread. GOD supplies them miraculously, in a method till then unknown. Manna is rained from heaven, and quails cover the camp. The people are taught how to gather their daily provisions; and a pot of manna is, at the command of GOD, laid up for a memorial. These are the contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! learn in Israel's history what the Israel of GOD, more or less, hath been, in all ages. We left them in the former chapter sitting under their palm trees, and blessing GOD in their fruitful wells of water. But, when brought for a moment only into a wilderness state, a little disappointment soon produceth murmuring, Oh, my GOD! pardon thy servant in this also. How often have I repined, and dared to think hardly of GOD, when like Israel he had only been leading me into the wilderness, to speak comfortably to me there; when difficulties have been induced, perhaps with no other view than but to afford the better opportunity to magnify the LORD'S graciousness. LORD! grant that past experiences may afford strength for grace in full exercise, to rely upon thy future assurances. And wherever most straitened, and shut up in creature confidence, may divine faithfulness be then sweetest to my heart. Thou hast promised, and that's enough: *Bread shall be given, water shall be sure: and my defense shall be the munition of rocks.*

But chiefly in this chapter, in the view of Israel's food, and the manna sent them from heaven, LORD give me grace to behold thee, thou heavenly manna, thou true bread of life, which art thy FATHER'S gift to the famished souls of poor sinners. LORD, in direct defiance of all my murmuring and sinful thoughts, oh! do thou descend, as thou art in thyself pure, holy, and precious, new and renewing me every morning. And while the HOLY SPIRIT is unfolding thee to my view as the FATHER'S gracious gift, and exciting an increasing appetite after thee to be filled, do thou grant that I may so feed on thy body broken, and thy blood shed, that I may live by thee. Let not my portion be like some of the unbelieving Israelites, who tempted CHRIST, and with whom he was not pleased: but may it be my happiness to know by an heart-felt experience, that thou art the bread of life which came down from heaven, of which, whosoever eateth shall live for ever. LORD, *evermore give me this bread!*

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

This is a most interesting Chapter, and when explained to us by the gospel as it is in the outlines of it by one of the apostles, serves to show how much redemption work occupied the divine mind, when in so many ages before its accomplishment, CHRIST was held forth to the Church in type and figure. Here therefore, let the Reader particularly keep in view, that Moses wrote of JESUS. The children of Israel in their journeying through the wilderness, depart from Sin and arrive at Rephidim. Murmurings again break forth in the camp from the want of water. Moses cries to GOD. GOD causeth water to issue from the rock. After this the host of Amalek comes forth to obstruct Israel; but is defeated. GOD commands Moses to record this event in a book. These are the contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! while you and I pause over the relation of Israel's unaccountable conduct, and from the part we bear in this wonderful history, feeling the same sources of unbelief, disobedience and murmuring, in ourselves, as we behold in them, which are the sad consequences of a fallen nature; may we seek grace to avoid their sin, that we may not come under their reproaches. But as we have authority to conclude that *all these things happened unto them for our example*, may a gracious GOD afford us these improvements from them, lest while we think *we stand we are found to fall*.

But above all other improvements from the perusal of this chapter, oh! let me leave everything to contemplate the view it gives me of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. In the smitten rock, may my soul lose sight of everything but JESUS. May my eye gaze with wonder and delight on what I there discover, until the ever-flowing, over-flowing stream fills my ravished heart. Dearest and ever-blessed JESUS! do thou both supply me now, and follow me through the whole of this wilderness state, as thou didst the church of old; making glad the city of our GOD in all ages. May I behold thee as the stone smitten by the rod of Moses, answering all the demands of GOD's righteous

laws for me, and flowing both in atoning and regenerating supplies for all the wants of my soul. And oh! do thou, who alone canst smite the rocky heart of sinners, and convert the flinty stone into a fountain of waters, subdue all the stubbornness of my nature. Conquer and subdue *in* me and *for* me all the *Amalekites* of my salvation. Work in me both to will and to do of thy good pleasure, until grace comes to be consummated in glory, and my poor faculties are all brought into a state suited to the everlasting employment, of singing praises to GOD and the LAMB.

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

The relation of an event in the family affairs of Moses, is introduced in this Chapter. The Reader will recollect, that when Moses with his wife Zipporah and his two sons were at the inn in their way to Egypt, as related in the fourth Chapter, it is said that the LORD met him. It is probable at this time it was that Moses sent back his wife and children to her father: while he proceeded to execute the commission he had received from the LORD. Here therefore in this Chapter, that part of the subject concerning Moses' household is revived. Jethro, his father-in-law, brings into the wilderness to Moses, his wife and children: their mutual pleasure at meeting: and some other circumstances of their conduct and conversation are related.

REFLECTIONS

While so much is said in this Chapter of the LORD's watching over his people, may neither the writer nor the reader of this Commentary, want grace to watch over the LORD's dealings towards us. Doubtless there is enough in every man's life, who with an eye of faith is enabled to trace the wonderful history, to look back and see the path we have come thickly strewn with mercies: in which GOD hath not left himself without witness of his faithfulness and truth.

In all our enjoyments of friendly intercourse with one another, like those of Moses with his father-in-law, let us be very careful to see to it, that it be a friendship formed in JESUS; cemented by his blood, and kept up by his grace. Then we shall find it indeed to be a sanctified friendship, there will be no going back from one another, or at least, if absent in body we shall be present in spirit. And being knit together in the sweet fellowship of the saints, it will outlive all the short and dying connections of this world, and form an everlasting union which cannot be broken in the realms of endless life.

Reader! may you and I learn from the conversation between Moses and his father-in-law, how sweet and edifying that converse is, which hath the LORD and his mercies for the chief topic of discourse! And surely, if the heart of a *Midianite* could find subject of holy joy in the relation of GOD'S goodness to Israel, well may we find cause to bless a GOD in CHRIST for what he hath done for our souls.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the record of that memorable event to which all the subsequent acts of the Church have reference; the giving of the Law upon Mount Sinai, amidst the glorious manifestation of the Divine Presence. Israel, being now arrived at the holy mount, after a journey of between forty and fifty days, from their departure from Egypt, are gathered together to receive the law of GOD. The preparations for this, together with the awful signs which accompanied it, are related in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Pause, my soul, over the perusal of this Chapter, and while duly meditating the vast and infinite importance of GOD'S righteous law, delivered with such awful solemnity on Mount Sinai; learn herefrom to contemplate with increasing joy and thankfulness, that precious,

blessed, holy, law-fulfilling, law-satisfying surety; the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath answered all its demands, and is thereby become *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*. And under all the deep convictions of the mind, which wound in the recollection of the manifold transgressions committed by thought, and word, and deed, against the law of GOD; learn to bless GOD with increasing praise, at every renewed view of him, *who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*. And oh! thou dear Redeemer, do thou by the sweet influences of thy grace in my heart, teach me to prize those inestimable privileges which, by thy great undertaking, both in *doing* and in *dying*, thou hast procured me, of always drawing nigh to my GOD and FATHER, in thy blood and righteousness. Blessed be GOD, the boundary which kept back the people, is removed. Our GOD manifests no longer his presence in the awful signs of *the sound of the trumpet and the voice of words*. We are not come to *the mount which burned with fire: nor to blackness, and darkness, and tempest*. But we are come to JESUS, even our JESUS, *the Mediator of the new covenant*; and to his *precious blood of sprinkling*. Oh! for the constant leadings of GOD the HOLY GHOST, that we may have a constant, stated, daily, hourly, drawing nigh, in this new and living way, until we shall arrive at the fountain head of mercies, to the throne of GOD and the LAMB, to serve him in his temple night and day.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

The former Chapter was preparatory to this. In that, we saw the very solemn and awful manner in which JEHOVAH was pleased to manifest the tokens of his presence, on Mount Sinai. And in this, we have the declarations he made, in the delivery of the Ten Commandments to the people. The effect this discourse, accompanied with the awful signs, had upon the people. Their request to Moses, to act as their Mediator upon this occasion; and

the will of GOD communicated unto them by Moses, are also related in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED GOD! do thou enable me to reverence thine holy law, and never to lose sight of that solemn truth, that rather than one jot, or tittle, of thy law should fail; thou hast given that glorious, all-sufficient Surety, to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in him.

And Oh! thou adored Redeemer, may every renewed view, and every repeated hearing of thy FATHER'S law, still serve to endear thee the more to my heart. May I be led therefrom to behold thee as becoming one with our nature, for the express purpose of fulfilling the whole will and law of GOD, for us, and for our salvation. And as thou didst undertake so hast thou graciously answered the demand, both in obedience and suffering, of all that was owing to divine justice. Yes ! thou clearest Jesus, thou didst take the whole debt upon thyself, and when we had nothing to pay, either in doing or in suffering, then it was thou didst say, *I will be surety for them: at mine hand, FATHER, thou shalt require it.* LORD, help me, by the sweet influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT, to accept thy sacred person, under this complete character, as my Justifier before GOD. Do thou blessed SPIRIT of all truth, guide my soul to JESUS, and never suffer me to have more than *an altar of earth*, or to *lift up a tool of my own*, to pollute the sweet sacrifice of JESUS' blood and righteousness. Never let me go about to establish mine own righteousness, but most thankfully bless GOD for the covenant righteousness of GOD my Savior; blessing and praising the divine mercy, that when by sin I had destroyed myself, and the terrors of a broken law stood forth against me, JESUS was made of GOD to my soul, *wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that all my glorying might be in the LORD.*

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

For the better apprehension of the moral law before given in the second table of it, Moses enlargeth in this Chapter upon the particular precepts, in relation to the duty to be shown to servants, and the regulation of conduct, in many circumstances of social life.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a holy, pure, and undefiled religion is that which carries with it evidences of its divine origin and authority, in attending to the most minute circumstances of what is right and just. And what a gracious, merciful, compassionate, and ever-attentive GOD to the happiness of his creation, must the LORD our GOD be, who thus enjoins a system of laws, the very observance of which promotes universal welfare. Oh! my GOD, dispose my heart by thy grace to works of love and tenderness, both to man and beast. Do thou enable me to put on, as the elect of GOD, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. And may the peace of GOD so rule in my heart, that I may follow peace with all men.

Reader! let us not close the Chapter, without first asking grace and wisdom to discern the outlines of the LORD JESUS in it, as the voluntary servant of his FATHER, who, for the love he bore to him, and to us his captive wife and children, cheerfully consented to have his ears opened and would not go out free, until he had accomplished all the work to which he was called, and what he had graciously undertaken. Oh! thou precious GOD of my salvation, thou who, though rich, yet for my sake didst become poor; and though in the form of GOD, and with whom it was no robbery to be equal with GOD, yet didst make thyself of no reputation, and didst take upon thee the form of a servant; mercifully grant, that the same mind may be in me which was so strikingly displayed by thyself: may it be the language of my soul, 'I love my LORD, I love my Master, I love his service, in it I would dwell: I will not go out free, but I will abide in it forever.'

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

The same subject as in the former Chapter is pursued through this. Here is a further explanation of the social duties and obligations, as comprised in the second table of the law, given on Mount Sinai: of thefts, of trespasses, of borrowing, of fornication, of witchcrafts, and idolatry, and various other commandments.

REFLECTIONS

Let the perusal of those scriptures lead my soul to those devout reflections, that if the grace of GOD hath indeed appeared unto me, then hath it taught me, and by divine aid enabled me so to conduct myself by its holy power, that *denying ungodliness and all worldly lusts, I should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* And if the grace of GOD hath indeed appeared unto me, then hath it taught me, that as the LORD is my portion, there is enough in him to satisfy all the desires of my soul. Dearest, and ever blessed JESUS, be thou all in all to my soul! Do thou keep me from all covetous and inordinate desires, bring every thought into the obedience of thyself, that, with simplicity and godly sincerity, I may have my conversation in the world, and in all things behave myself as becometh thy blessed Gospel.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

This Chapter, like the two before it, contains an explanation in detail of the law given on Mount Sinai. The precepts against false witness, and false judgment, are enlarged upon: those relating to the regulation of conduct towards enemies and strangers are explained. Some observations, in respect to the observance of the Sabbath, are also added; and the renewal of GOD'S promises to be with his

people through the wilderness, and conduct them safe to Canaan, are subjoined.

REFLECTIONS

Though, through the merciful bounty of a covenant GOD in CHRIST, I dare not seek justification before GOD, by the deeds of the law, yet as the grace of GOD, which bringeth salvation, hath taught me to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, may that grace enable me, to *live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world!* And may all my life, and conversation prove, that though I work not *for* life, yet by his grace enabling me I am *working from* life, even the hidden life which is *with* CHRIST in GOD, *that when* CHRIST *who is my life shall appear, I may also appear with him in glory.*

Reader! I would charge it upon your conscience, as upon my own, to be frequently examining the heart concerning these things. Oh! let us be very jealous, with a godly jealousy over those springs of action, and *keep the heart with all diligence*, and more especially beg of GOD to keep it for us, who alone can keep it, *for out of it are the issues of life.*

Dearest JESUS! let the view presented to me of thy presence going before thy people, however short and transient the view, revive in my heart everything that is tender and affectionate, humble and obedient, to the remembrance of thee, and of thy dear name. LORD! may I never lose sight of thee under this glorious character of the Angel of the Covenant going before me. May I rejoice in that sweet assurance that GOD my FATHER'S name is in thee; that thou wilt, by little, and little, drive out the corruptions of my heart before thee; that thou wilt subdue the whole of them at length by the conquests of thy grace; that thou wilt safely conduct me through the whole of this wilderness state, and I shall at last, under thy power, arrive at the heavenly Canaan, to see thy face, and dwell with thee forever. Oh! when will the shadows of the night pass, and the day break from my beloved!

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

This Chapter relates the interview between Moses and the people, when in his descent from the mount he delivered to them the law which he had received. Moses is again called up to the mount, where he continues forty days and forty nights.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let you and I learn, from the perusal of this Chapter, to prize the invaluable privileges to which we are called, in having our Almighty Mediator, even the LORD JESUS, to go in before the divine presence for us at all times, and upon all occasions. Blessed be that merciful dispensation, which brings us near in his blood and righteousness: so that we can, and do, behold him *as the brightness of his FATHER'S glory, and the express image of his person*. And may we never lose sight of that unspeakable mercy by which we have confidence, that the LORD JESUS having accomplished the redemption of his people, is now ascended up on high, hath led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea saith the HOLY GHOST, (as if we ought to take particular notice of that) *even for the rebellious that the LORD GOD might dwell among them*. Blessed LORD! while I read of Moses, in this interview, let thy grace direct me to behold thee, and by thy power enable me to keep it ever in view, that thou art gone up unto the mount to thy FATHER, and our FATHER; and there let my soul, by faith, continually ascend, and dwell until that hour shall arrive, when thou wilt return to take thy people to thyself, that where thou art, there they may be also.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

This Chapter relates to us the commands of GOD to Moses in the Mount, for the service of the sanctuary in the wilderness. The people

are to present their offerings. The plan of the building of the tabernacle, the whole of which is to be formed according to the pattern showed him in the mount.

REFLECTIONS

GRACIOUS GOD! help me by thy divine teachings, to behold the wondrous things of thy law, and to admire and adore thy gracious condescension in the appointment of the *sanctuary*, and the *tabernacle*, and the *mercy seat*, and the *ark of the testimony*, and the *table*, and the *show-bread*. Precious JESUS! may it be my happiness, like *Paul*, while beholding these *shadows* of the good things that were then to come, to see that the *substance and the body* is CHRIST. Do angels desire to look into those mysteries of the kingdom? LORD, make me earnest to know more and more of thee, and of *that love of GOD which passeth knowledge, that I may be filled with all the fullness of GOD*. And oh! do thou come and frequently commune with me from off thy mercy-seat! There do thou meet me, and speak comfortably to me. Let JESUS be everything to me, the *mercy-seat* of propitiation, the ark of the divine presence to bless me, the table and bread of life to feast my soul, at which I may sit down here below in sweet communion, until I come to sit down with him forever at the table which is above. Be this my portion, dearest LORD, that I may be *abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thine house, and drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life.*

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

This Chapter is but the continuation of the former. Moses receiveth further directions, concerning the furniture of the tabernacle. Particular mention is made of the vail, or hanging, which separated the outer part of the sanctuary from the most Holy Place.

REFLECTIONS

May it be my happiness never to read or hear of this Jewish tabernacle, without always being enabled by the HOLY GHOST, to connect with it and to keep in view that precious consideration, *that we have such an high priest*, (as the apostle speaks), *who is a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the LORD pitched and not man*. Blessed JESUS! May I behold in thee everything realized. Thou art indeed the tabernacle, the mercy-seat, the ark, the covering, the door, the curtains, the all in all. How richly furnished, how full and satisfying, how completely suited to all my wants in this wilderness state! LORD help me by the sweet and constraining influences of thy blessed SPIRIT, to be continually coming to thee for the supply of all my need. And now the vail is broken down, and true believers have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of JESUS, oh! may it be my portion to draw nigh with a true heart in full assurance of faith. May I live *upon* thee, and *to* thee, and *by* thee: and may thy blood and righteousness from which I derive pardon, and mercy, and peace, and wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, be so completely mine in this live, that it may form my everlasting source of consolation and rejoicing to all eternity in another.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

The interesting subject of the Jewish tabernacle is still carried on in this Chapter. Here are directions given to Moses concerning the altar, the court of the tabernacle, and the oil for burning in the lamps of the candlestick.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! what do I behold in this view of the Jewish church? Is it not as the apostle said, these are *a shadow of good things, but the body is CHRIST*. Blessed be GOD! we have an altar, and a tabernacle,

and a court, to enter into with praise. But what are all these if JESUS be not in them, and the sum and substance of all. Oh! may I, dearest LORD, accept thee as mine altar, that sanctifieth the gift, the sacrifice of atonement, and the high, priest to offer. And oh! may GOD the HOLY GHOST in all his sweet influences, be the enlightening purifying oil, to illumine the darkness of my mind, and enable me to see JESUS in every one. Lead me, HOLY SPIRIT, to flee for refuge to the horns of this altar, even to the crucified body and atoning blood of him that suffered thereon. And by him do thou enable me *to offer the sacrifice of praise to GOD continuing, even the fruit of my lips, giving thanks to his name.*

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

In the prosecution of the same important subject, the LORD gives Moses direction in this Chapter for the priests. Having prepared the hallowed spot for his worship, he here appoints the servants who are to minister in it before him. Aaron's dress, as the high-priest, is particularly described; and that of his sons in the priesthood is also mentioned.

REFLECTIONS

Look up, my soul, and see that great high priest of thy profession, that Almighty Aaron of the New Testament dispensation, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, going in, clothed in his holy garments of everlasting glory and of eternal beauty, before GOD and the FATHER; and still wearing on his precious person as a lamb that had been slain, the marks of thy redemption. And oh for grace in full exercise, to come trader the all-powerful, all-prevailing, all-atoning, all-sufficient merits and righteousness of his person an offering! Oh! do thou bear me on thine heart and on thine arm, when thou presentest thy memorial before the throne. Behold, thou blessed JESUS, what my wants are, and do thou supply them all. Let every case and every circumstance of my soul, and the souls of thy people, come in for a

part in thy remembrance. And when thou bringest me near my FATHER'S footstool, to receive the grace to help in every time of need, do thou put on, by thy blessed SPIRIT, those robes of thy righteousness and garments of thy salvation, that I may be accepted in thee, the beloved. For it is thy province to do all this, both to provide, and to put on, both to furnish and to make meet, thy people for thy salvation. I humbly pray for grace, into thy dear hands to commit all my concerns, for time and for eternity. Thou hast purchased our eternal redemption, and it is thine to bestow it, to preserve it, to carry it on, and to perfect it in us, unto the day of thy coining. Oh! *do thou keep that which I have committed unto thee against that day.*

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

The same interesting subject is continued through this chapter. Here are four more particular objects taken notice of. The first, of the consecration of the Priests. The second, is that of the consecration of the altar. The third, of the daily sacrifice: and the fourth, GOD'S promise that his presence and his blessing should be with the people, in their tabernacle service.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let us not think, in the perusal of this Chapter, that we are in the midst of shadows still; but bless GOD the HOLY GHOST, who enables us to look through the shadow, and see clearly the substance, to which the whole ministered. Do we not in Aaron see our Almighty Aaron, and in his sons those who are the sons and daughters of the LORD GOD Almighty, whom JESUS hath made kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER? Was Aaron thus washed, and arrayed, and anointed to the sacred service? and was not JESUS, our great high priest, consecrated to the work, when in the infinite purity of his nature he offered himself in all the glories of his person and his character, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people?

Dearest and ever blessed LORD! do thou go in before me, in all the parts of this precious character. Be thou my morning and my evening propitiation! Sanctify my soul with the continued pourings forth of all the graces, and gifts, and rich anointings, of thine HOLY SPIRIT. And may that first and unspeakable mercy be my portion, that being reconciled to GOD, even the FATHER, in thy blood and righteousness, he may according to his most sweet promise dwell in me, and be in me and with me; that he may be my GOD, and that I may be among the number of his people.

CHAPTER 30

SUMMARY

The communion between the LORD and his servant Moses, is not yet finished, concerning the ordination of the tabernacle furniture, and service; but is continued through this Chapter. Instructions are here given respecting the altar of incense, and of the ransom money: of the laver for the priests to wash in: of making the oil for anointing; and of the spices to be burnt on the golden altar.

REFLECTIONS

Come, my soul, look at the Jewish ordinances, and with an eye of faith behold thy Redeemer shadowed out in every one. He is indeed the golden altar, the ransom money, the true laver, or fountain for sin and for uncleanness; the sweet spices, the holy oil in the graces of his HOLY SPIRIT; and the sum and substance of all divine ordinances. Dearest and ever-blessed JESUS! on thee may I be enabled, as the altar of offering, to bring all my oblations: in thy all-sufficient merits, and death, to rest every hope of acceptance in the well-grounded assurance, that GOD my FATHER hath found in thee a ransom, and hath said concerning my soul, *Deliver him from going down into the pit*. May GOD the SPIRIT anoint me with the holy oil of his manifold gifts and graces; and may JESUS, my great high Priest, in his perpetual advocacy, present me in the sweet and all-prevailing incense of his merits, that being washed in his blood, and accepted

in his righteousness, I may at all times come boldly to a throne of grace, and find grace to help in every time of need.

CHAPTER 31

SUMMARY

The same interesting interview between GOD and his servant is continued, and the account of it is recorded in this Chapter. The LORD tells Moses who shall be appointed for the workmen in the tabernacle; the LORD again enjoins the holy observance of the Sabbath, and delivers to Moses the two tables of testimony which he had written.

REFLECTIONS

It is a comfortable consideration, suited to all ranks and orders of men, that what the LORD calls any man *to*, he graciously fits him *for*. If *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* be appointed to the curious construction of the tabernacle building, the HOLY GHOST will make them fit for the employment. And when JESUS called his poor fishermen of Galilee to be fishers of men, how soon were they qualified for the arduous work. My GOD! send me where, and how, and for what purpose thou art pleased; be thou but with me, and I shall soon demonstrate how thy strength is made perfect in human weakness.

But let me not close the chapter until, in the view of the qualified workmen for the tabernacle, I behold thee, thou first and last, thou Author and finisher of our faith, and of the true tabernacle, which the LORD pitched and not man. Hail, Holy JESUS! thou who art the foundation stone of the spiritual building; who hast reared up an everlasting tabernacle of redemption in thy blood and righteousness, and finished the work the FATHER gave thee to do. LORD, finish the work in my soul also, and make me as a fit stone for thy temple, now than hast, I trust, hewn me out of the rough quarry of nature; that, being built upon thee as the chief corner stone, and fitly framed together, I may be found an habitation for GOD through the SPIRIT.

CHAPTER 32

SUMMARY

This is a most interesting Chapter, but no less distressing to read. We have therein related to us, that GOD, by his divine foreknowledge, having seen, that in consequence of Moses being with him longer in the Mount than the people below in the camp expected, they fell away to idolatry: the LORD commands Moses to go down to the people: the LORD informs his servant what had taken place during his absence; Moses intercedes for the people: Moses descends from the Mount; arrives at the Camp: beholds the idol of the people: his anger is so great that he casts the Tables of Testimony, which the LORD had given him, out of his hands, and they are broken; the conference between Moses and the people, and Moses returns unto the LORD.

REFLECTIONS

In perusing this account of Israel's shameful apostacy from the LORD GOD of their salvation, after the many mercies which they had received, both in their deliverance from Egypt, and especially the tokens of his divine presence on Mount Sinai, what do we read in it but the same melancholy account of our poor, sinful, fallen nature, ever prone to depart from GOD, and making to itself idols of its own corrupt fancy. Oh! LORD, may it be mine and the Reader's mercy to know, that in ourselves we are not better than they, but of the same stock and root, of whom it is truly said, that *there is none good no, not one.*

But chiefly in the perusal of this chapter may I behold him of whom Moses was a type, standing up in the glorious character of our intercessor, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people. Yes! thou dear Redeemer, thou art he whom the man of GOD here represented: thou didst, indeed, take the whole weight of our guilt upon thyself, when, in the eye of GOD's righteous law, thou didst undertake our salvation, by consenting to become sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in thee. Oh! bring me, by the sweet influences of thy blessed SPIRIT, under thy shelter; and

since thou hast done away sin by the sacrifice of thyself, may my soul rejoice in thy great salvation, and triumph in the name of the LORD my GOD.

CHAPTER 33

SUMMARY

Moses receives a command from the LORD to deliver to the people a message that he will not go with them; but he will not wholly leave them without a witness of his mercy, for he will send an angel before them. This chapter relates to us this message, and the effect it wrought on the minds of the people. Preventing grace opens a renewal of communion between the LORD and the people; and Moses obtains a promise of GOD's presence with his people, and a special token of the LORD's favour to himself.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! think, seriously think, in the view of the LORD's withdrawing the symbols of his divine presence from Israel, how truly awful must that state of the soul be, from whom the LORD hides his face, and taketh away the influences of his HOLY SPIRIT. How will the heart grow hardened, and the conscience become stupid and secure, through the deceitfulness of sin, if GOD restrains his grace, and remits the awakening calls of his love. Blessed GOD! I would say with thy servant of old, Take not, O take not, thine HOLY SPIRIT from me! Whatever beside thou art pleased to recall, (for all thy mercies are but lent, not absolutely given), though thou takest my strength, my health, my property, my children, nay all my comforts, take not, O take not thine HOLY SPIRIT from me!

Teach me, LORD, also, in this history of thy church before me, to see the sweet effects of returning grace. Here I behold how GOD inclines the hearts of his people to pray: and how preventing mercy even outruns their petitions. Thus, LORD, let thy grace descend upon me. Carry me not up hence, not even from a wilderness, to *Canaan*, except thy presence go with me. Dearest JESUS! every place is

Canaan with thee; and without thee heaven itself would be no heaven to my soul. Place me in the clefts of the rock, even in thy wounded side, dearest Redeemer; and in thee, and thy complete salvation, shall I behold thy glory, even all the goodness of my GOD passing before me.

CHAPTER 34

SUMMARY

The LORD having in his great mercy received Israel again into favour, commenceth the treaty afresh, which had been interrupted by their idolatry. Moses is commanded to prepare two tables of stone, and to come up to GOD into the mount: there the LORD proclaims himself a gracious GOD, in covenant with his people. GOD renews his promise of Canaan: appoints certain offerings, which the people are to offer: in the return of Moses to the people, the skin of his face shone. These are the contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

What a precious scripture is that, and what a full explanation doth it afford, to this whole Chapter: *The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by JESUS CHRIST.* LORD I would pray, write thy laws upon my heart, and while, by the sweet influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT, I am made both able and willing to run the way of thy commandments, now thou hast set my heart at liberty, may my soul be constantly strengthened and established in that precious assurance, that CHRIST *is the end of the law for righteousness* to me, and to *every one that believeth.*

Blessed GOD! may the perusal of thy servant's privilege and enjoyment in the holy mount of communion with thee, make my soul long after such sweet and reviving manifestations of thy glory, in covenant mercies, that I may know what it is to enjoy fellowship with the FATHER, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST. Oh! let the continual actings of faith, and the exercises of grace, be going forth by the SPIRIT'S work, in my heart, on each of the persons of the

GODHEAD. And may the frequent communications of JESUS' love have this blessed effect on my heart, that, as the face of Moses shone, so the conversation of my lips may denote with whom I have been most in communion. Grant, blessed GOD, this may be my mercy, *that from beholding with open face as in a glass the glory of the LORD, I may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the SPIRIT of the LORD.*

CHAPTER 35

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with Moses' commission, concerning the tabernacle, and its furniture, agreeably to the instructions he had received of the LORD in the Mount. After pointing out to the people again the ordinance of the Sabbath, he calls their attention to the order of the LORD for erecting a tabernacle, for the due observance of the religious duties of the Sabbath: mention is made of the contributions of the people towards the building: their readiness in the offering: and workmen are appointed to execute the building.

REFLECTIONS

Who can meditate on the grace of GOD, in thus furnishing his servants for the work of the sanctuary, and giving the congregation such a willing mind to make contributions to the building, without being struck with the conviction, that in the spiritual building it must be the same Almighty GOD that can alone work in us, both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure. Gracious GOD! ever dispose my heart to thy service, and give me grace to consecrate all I have to thee; my time, my gifts, my life; for all is of thee, and in the dedication of the whole, it is but returning thee thine own. Accept them, dear LORD, in CHRIST JESUS, and pardon the unworthiness both of the gift and giver.

Let me not close this Chapter in the review of the preparation for the tabernacle, and the furniture of it, without eyeing afresh that blessed minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which

the LORD pitched, and not man. Dearest JESUS! it is thou that art the true tabernacle of thy people. Upon the foundation of thy FATHER'S everlasting love, thy salvation is built for them: and in thy righteousness and blood, the spiritual temple rests for ever: LORD grant, that as thy mercy is built up forever, the top stone for my soul may be brought forth with shoutings of "Grace, grace," unto it.

CHAPTER 36

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the relation of the progress of the work, in the building of the tabernacle: the liberality of the people is so great, that Moses desires them, to refrain. Here is the account of the fine curtains of the tabernacle being finished, the boards, and bars, and partition vail, and the vail for the hanging at the door.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! dost thou behold the readiness of the people to bring their offerings unto the LORD, even while approaching GOD in a tabernacle state: and wilt thou not seek grace to bring all thou hast to his service, since JESUS hath come down and tabernacled in thy nature, to bring thee nigh by his blood and righteousness? Oh! thou precious GOD and Saviour! the tabernacle of my soul, and my hiding place; may I live in thee, and be built upon thee. Thou art indeed the true tabernacle, the gold that perisheth not, the pearl of great price; be thou to me all I stand in need of, in this tabernacle state, until thou shalt bring me home to thy temple, which is above, where the gates are one pearl, and the street of the city is pure gold: but where infinitely above all these, the LORD GOD Almighty, and the LAMB are the temple of it. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, be thou my GOD, and my guide, even unto death.

CHAPTER 37

SUMMARY

The relation of the work is still carried on through this Chapter; the principal things mentioned in it are, the ark, and mercy-seat; the table of show-bread with its vessels; the candlestick, with its lamps; the altar of incense, the holy oil, and the incense.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! do not hastily pass over this Chapter, but pause, as you read, and remark as you go, how very precious ought he to be in his Church, and among his people, whom GOD the HOLY GHOST was pleased to shadow forth by such a variety of representations. Oh! blessed SPIRIT, thou that art the glorifier of CHRIST JESUS, since thou hast been pleased to represent the Redeemer to thy Church by such a diversity of imagery, do thou unfold him to my heart as he is, and give me to look through the shadows to him who is the substance of all. Enable me to be looking at him, as my mercy-seat, my propitiation, my table of living bread, my altar of incense, my all: and so to live upon his fullness, and depend upon his righteousness, that I may be growing, up in him an holy temple to the LORD.

CHAPTER 38

SUMMARY

The account of the building is continued through this Chapter. Here is given the particulars of framing the altar of burnt offering: the laver of brass: of the pillars and hangings for the court of the tabernacle; and a account of the sum which the people willingly offered.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! still keep your eye steadily fixed on the LORD JESUS, all the way through, while looking over the furniture of the tabernacle. And as Moses wrote of CHRIST, may it be your happiness and mine, in every part of his writings, to behold him. Here, would I say to my soul, while looking at the altar of the burnt offering, here I see JESUS, the altar of all my offerings, represented. In him, and his sacred person, righteousness, and salvation, do I find all that can be needed, as an offering for sin. In the laver of regeneration, by his HOLY SPIRIT, let me wash and be clean. And as the people offered willingly, in the Jewish tabernacle, so LORD JESUS, having found thee, and thy righteousness, I would willingly part with everything beside, and desire to count all but dung and dross, that I may win CHRIST.

CHAPTER 39

SUMMARY

In this Chapter we have the account of the work of the tabernacle being finished. The last things in order among the tabernacle furniture, are the forming the holy garments for the priests: the ephod, the breast-plate, the robe of the ephod; the coats, bonnets, and girdle, and the plate of the holy crown. Moses examines, and gives his approbation of the whole.

REFLECTIONS

In the review of the finishing the Jewish tabernacle, let every Reader of the account call to mind the glorious work of redemption our great High Priest hath finished by his complete atonement. How costly the work! how great the undertaking! how precious thy building, thou dear Redeemer, when the temple of thy body, being according to the Jewish cruelty, supposed to be destroyed, thou didst raise it again in three days. LORD JESUS! raise up thy power in my soul. Consecrate all I have to thy service. And may I know the

power of thy resurrection, and the fellowship of thy sufferings, being made conformable to thy death!

CHAPTER 40

SUMMARY

The tabernacle being all finished, is now, at the command of GOD, to be set up in its place: then consecrated: Aaron and his sons to be sanctified. The command is executed. And the LORD gives the symbol of his taking possession of it by the token of a cloud covering it. These are the contents of this Chapter, with which the Book of Exodus concludes.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! before we take our leave of this precious book of *Exodus*, pause once more, and remark with me in what a multitude of instances *Moses wrote of CHRIST*. Blessed book of GOD I would say, mayest thou be my constant guide under the teachings of the HOLY GHOST, to lead my soul unto JESUS: and do thou, Almighty Teacher, be frequently taking of the things of JESUS that are in it to show unto me.

In this tabernacle let me behold a type of my adored Redeemer, founded in the eternal counsels and purposes of GOD my FATHER, and reared up in his glorious work of redemption, for the everlasting salvation of his people. In him all the holy furniture, the altar, ark, mercy-seat, show-bread, anointing oil, and incense, have their completion, for in him it hath pleased the FATHER that all fulness should dwell. And may I not consider this sanctuary opened for divine worship, as a resemblance also of the gospel tabernacle, the church of the living GOD, which he hath pitched among men. Here may my soul be frequently found waiting at the throne, and seeking for communion by means of his blood and righteousness, which are the laver, light, and purification of all gospel worship. And here, LORD, may I find my solace, and my joy, rejoicing in the manifestations of thy presence and favour, until I have forever done

with the worship of my GOD and Saviour in the shadow of ordinances, and am sat down at the fountain head of divine and everlasting realities, in the temple that is above. Hasten LORD in thine own time these felicities, that the enjoyment of JEHOVAH, in his threefold character of persons, may be my portion, with all the church of the firstborn forever, and ever. Amen.

LEVITICUS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

I MUST not forget to remind the Reader, that he place over this *third* Book of Moses, as in the *two* former, the same Motto, *Moses wrote of CHRIST*. For here, in every part of this Volume, in a very eminent degree, under types, and figures, may be discovered the most striking allusions, to the Person, and Offices, and Character, of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Book itself, is called *Leviticus*, because it contains, the laws and ordinances of the Levitical Priesthood: in which department, the tribe of *Levi* particularly ministered. Here are contained, all the special rites and ceremonies relating to purification, which belonged to the Tabernacle service. And, as the Apostle, under the gospel dispensation, had it in express authority from the *HOLY GHOST*, to tell the Church, that these were *the shadow of good things to come, but the body was CHRIST*; it may serve to teach us, with what awakened attention, and earnestness, accompanied with prayer to the *LORD*, to be directed in our perusal of it, we ought to read this holy Book. Colossians 2:16, 17. Hebrews 7:11. 10:1.

It will be readily acknowledged, by every lover of this precious Book of *Leviticus*, that to an unenlightened, carnal Reader, there will appear, many things in it, dry and uninteresting. But to a soul truly taught of GOD the *HOLY GHOST*, whose blessed office it is, *to take of the things of JESUS, to show unto his people*, he will find so many delightful sketches of the great Redeemer, marked here and there through the whole Book, in type and shadow, as will abundantly refresh the mind, in the contemplation of Him *who is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*. Reader! look steadily at the character of Aaron, as he is represented in this Book of GOD: consider him, as peculiarly *called* of GOD, to be an high Priest:

anointed to the service: *going in* before the people, in this great office, in all his ministrations: behold him and his offerings accepted; and divine blessings following: and then turn to the Gospel, and trace him, whom Aaron represented; and I venture to believe, that if the *HOLY GHOST*, be your teacher, you will discover, such a striking resemblance as will overpower your mind, with the most absolute conviction, that in all *Aaron's* ministration, it was the *LORD JESUS* in his priestly office, whom he typified, and represented.

It will be proper, to inform the Reader, before he enters upon the perusal of this book, that as it is a book of laws and ordinances, he must not expect to find anything relating to the history of the Church in it. Indeed, there is nothing of the kind in it, excepting a short account, in the 8th, 9th, and 10th Chapters, and also in the 24th Chapter, which can be considered as historical. The Reader, will recollect therefore, that as the Church's history, to the close of Exodus, brought on the era of Creation, to the year 2514, that is about 1490 years before the coming of *CHRIST*; the beginning and close of Leviticus leaves it just the same.

I will detain the Reader no longer, from entering upon the perusal of *Leviticus*, than just to observe to him, that if, as he goes along, he finds his mind exercised, as well he may, in beholding the long, tedious, and painful train of sacrifices, of the law, which as the apostle saith, was *a yoke, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear*; (Acts 15:10) I pray *GOD* to give him grace, at the same time, both to behold in it, *GOD'S* unalterable displeasure at sin, which those sacrifices manifested; and to feel his heart drawn out, yet more and more in every review of them, in love to him, who alone could *do away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, and who hath by that sacrifice of himself once offered, *for ever perfected them that are sanctified*. Hail! thou holy *LAMB* of *GOD*! thou great High Priest, the altar, and sacrifice, for thy people!

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

The book of Leviticus, opens with the subject of sacrifices, and particularly of that which is among the first of them, burnt-offerings; from what herd the sacrifice is to be taken from among beasts; or from what bird among the fowls.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE my soul, over the perusal of these shadowy representations, and under a most perfect conviction, that neither the blood of beasts, nor of birds, can take away sin, behold in them the most lively types, of the ever blessed *JESUS!* He was brought, indeed, to the Altar, a *willing* sacrifice. He was led, *as a lamb to the slaughter.* Upon his sacred head, by faith, his people now lay their hands; and confess over him those sins, which merit the punishment he suffered. His soul and body were indeed divided, for the moment of death, but soon united together, to see no corruption. And when he had made his soul an offering for sin, he ascended in the offering made by fire, of his own merits and death, as a sweet smelling savour of propitiation, for his people before *GOD.* Oh! thou holy, immaculate, precious *LAMB* of *GOD,* which taketh away the sins of the world; may it be my portion to have an everlasting interest in all the merits of thy sacrifice. And since I am poor, and wretched, in all pretensions to divine favor, may my offering, at the door of the tabernacle, be this, to bring *JESUS,* in the arms of my faith, that in him, and his precious redemption, I may find favor with *GOD.* Oh! may thy blood, be sprinkled, upon my guilty conscience, and my whole soul be washed in the laver of regeneration; and that the *LORD* the *HOLY GHOST* may enable me to present my body, *a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD, which is my reasonable service.*

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This Chapter, in prosecuting the law of ordinances, relates the appointments respecting of the meat-offerings; which consisted of flour, with oil, and incense: the method to be used, in the preparation of the offerings, is also here pointed out; and some regulations noticed, respecting the of the first fruits in the ear of corn.

REFLECTIONS

READER! In every offering, oblation, and sacrifice, seek for JESUS. Whether among the fruits of the earth, in the fine flour, the oil, and frankincense, or among the daily lamb of the Israelite: all pointed to him, and in him had their object completed. And while you pray, for the *HOLY GHOST*, thus to enlighten the eyes of your understanding, in the knowledge of him, pray no less for grace also, that in all your offerings to GOD by faith in him, no leaven may be mingled with the all-perfect oblation of JESUS. Seek nothing, bring nothing, depend upon nothing, know nothing, in a way of acceptance with GOD, but *JESUS CHRIST*, and him crucified. And while this grand and only means of salvation, is made the security of your soul, beg of the LORD also, that all your sacrifices, be salted with the salt of the covenant of your GOD. Oh! for the *LORD JESUS*, to preserve, by his purifying salt of spiritual grace, both your soul, and my soul, that we may have *this salt in ourselves, and peace one with another.*

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

In pursuing the order of appointments, under the Levitical dispensation, this Chapter contains the account of the institution of

peace-offerings; which are to be taken from the herd, a bullock or an heifer; or from the flock, either a lamb, or a goat.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! I would charge it upon thee to behold in these scriptures, how great stress is continually laid upon the priest's putting his hands upon the head of the beast offered in sacrifice. As if, that it might be suitably impressed upon the minds of the people, the pleasure *JEHOVAH* had in this shadowy transfer of sin, from his people to the sacrifice. Oh! most holy blessed *GOD* and *FATHER*, how gracious was it in thee thus to silence all the fears and apprehensions of thy people, of the right and justice of the thing itself, by thus repeatedly manifesting that it was from thine own appointment. Yes, blessed *GOD*! though it be not in the power of any man to transfer his sin to another, yet it is not beyond thy right and prerogative as *GOD*. And since the glory of thy holy law, by the obedience and sacrifice of thy dear *SON*, is so abundantly secured and glorified; now may every poor sinner take comfort in the assurance, that *GOD can be just and the justifier of him that believeth in JESUS*.

How sweet is it to behold, in every ordinance, and under every sacrifice, the leading features of him, who in his *one sacrifice, once offered, hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified!* Blessed *JESUS*! be thou my peace-offering for thou hast made my peace in the blood of thy cross. Oh! grant me grace to rest my soul, as the priest rested his hand on the devoted sacrifice, on thy precious merits, blood, and righteousness. And may my soul be so thoroughly satisfied with this complete redemption of thine, that I may seek no other. May I know, by heartfelt experience, under the teaching, and application of *GOD the HOLY GHOST*, that *there is salvation in no other; neither is there any other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

The interesting subject of the law of ordinances, is continued through this Chapter. Here are instructions, concerning sins of ignorance; and the offering to be made in consequence thereof. Moses is taught, by the LORD himself to instruct the Children of Israel, how to prepare, and offer those sacrifices; and of the difference in the ordinance, when it concerns a ruler or private person.

REFLECTIONS

How beautiful is it to behold the *LORD JESUS* thus set forth by the *HOLY GHOST* to the view of the church, under that grand and important part of his divine character our great high priest. But how equally beautiful is it to observe at the same time, what an everlasting distinction the blessed *SPIRIT* hath drawn between *JESUS* and all his types, in his servants. Here under the law, as an apostle truly saith, we see men that have infirmity, made high priests: but under the gospel, the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the *SON* who is consecrated for evermore.

Here Reader! let you and I pause over those solemn representations. Here let us behold the great evil of sin, which alike in priest, and in people, among the rulers and the poor, exposes all without distinction, to the just and merited punishment of Almighty *GOD*. Is your heart, like my heart, under a deep sense of sin, and the consciousness of deserved wrath, prompted to ask with him of old, *Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High GOD? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, or give the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* Oh! how infinitely precious, to every truly awakened heart that is asking the way of salvation, in those anxious enquiries, is that soul-reviving answer; *Behold the LAMB of GOD which taketh away the sins of the world.* Dearest *JESUS!* may I know by the sweet application of the *HOLY GHOST's* work in my heart, that thou hast taken away my sin, and art become *the LORD my righteousness.*

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

In continuation of the same subject, of ordinances, this Chapter relates the rite concerning the trespass-offering. The cases are particularized to which this religious ordinance had reference, and the offering itself stated; whether of a lamb, or kid; or in poorer circumstances, two; or if very poor, an omer of flour.

REFLECTIONS

SEE Reader! how ruined a state our whole nature is considered in by reason of sin. Oh! what a mass of uncleanness must man as man appear in before GOD! Truly as the prophet hath marked it, *from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores!*

Look up, my soul, and behold the gracious provision the covenant of redemption hath made for sins of all descriptions both of omission and commission; both of willful and unintentional guilt. Blessed GOD! how are we surrounded with mercies in the blood and righteousness of thy dear SON. Let me never lose sight of that sweet scripture, nor want faith to depend upon the precious record; *all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.* Teach me, HOLY SPIRIT of all truth, to depend upon this saving truth, and may my mind be constantly directed into a full enjoyment of the FATHER'S love, the Saviour's merits, and thy pardoning grace, that *my heart may rejoice, and my joy no man take from me.*

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

Part of this Chapter is but a continuation of the former, concerning the trespass-offering: to this are added, laws concerning burnt offerings, and meat offerings; the law of the consecration of the priest, and of the sin offering.

REFLECTIONS

IN the perusal of this Chapter, still seeking grace to be forever keeping my eye steadily fixed on him, who is the only true, and real sacrifice for sin, and *the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that believeth*; I would desire to feel also, the full sense of the baleful malignity of sin, as it must appear in the eye of GOD; whose justice could not remit the penal effects of it, with a less sacrifice than the blood of his dear SON. LORD! *keep thy servant from presumptuous sins*; and in the common transactions, between man and man, in life, may I be enabled, like him of old, whom the LORD JESUS converted, and called from the customs of this world, to be his follower, in the regeneration; may I say, *If I have done any wrong to any man I restore fourfold*. But while doing restitution, to the utmost of my power, may I have grace never to seek justification by the deeds of the law, but by the alone blood, and righteousness of GOD my Saviour.

Reader! let us not close the Chapter before that we have bent the knee in praise and thanksgiving to our gracious GOD and FATHER in CHRIST JESUS, for the wonderful provision he hath made both for sins of ignorance and presumption; and indeed the whole mass of evil, by that one glorious offering of the body of JESUS CHRIST once offered, by which he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified. Precious JESUS! may our whole souls be everlastingly looking unto thee, and taking consolation from thee; *for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood*.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

The same subject is continued through this chapter of the law of offerings. Here are appointments respecting the peace-offering, and the free-will offering; together with some further directions concerning the meat-offering. This chapter concludes the subject of those ordinances.

REFLECTIONS

STILL, my soul, keep thine eye steadily looking unto JESUS, and pray for the precious teachings of *GOD the HOLY GHOST*, whose office it is, to glorify the *LORD JESUS*, that he may enable thee to behold the Redeemer typified through the several parts of this Chapter. And as JESUS was and is the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, may my heart rejoice, and participate with him, in all the sweet things of his altar. May it be my portion, LORD, to feed *on* thee, to live *to* thee, to rejoice *in* thee! Never may I presume to bring anything of my own to mingle with the all-sufficient sacrifice of the *LORD JESUS*; but desire to come, or rather to be led, by the *HOLY GHOST* to GOD and my FATHER, *in the new and living way of JESUS's blood, and make mention of his righteousness, even of his only*. But Oh! thou LAMB of GOD! how blessed is it to see thee both the Sacrifice and the Priest. Thou hast made all thy people kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER. And as thou art our great Peace-offering: so art thou our glorious Paschal Lamb. On thee we feed. By thee we live. Through thee we are nourished and sustained, and made partakers of an everlasting life. Precious LORD! give us so to eat of thy flesh, and drink of thy blood, that we may have eternal life abiding in us! Amen.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

This is an interesting chapter, in that it relates to its the solemn consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood; the congregation of Israel are present; an account of the ceremony; the washing and anointing observed upon the occasion; their sin-offering; their burnt-offerings; and a ram of consecration; the holy solemnity continues seven days.

REFLECTIONS

READER! do not close the sacred book after the perusal of this chapter, until that you have again and again besought the *HOLY GHOST* to be your teacher, concerning the many precious things signified in it. If the consecration of the *LORD JESUS* to the priesthood, be here all along represented, think how important was that office. Set apart as the blessed *JESUS* was from everlasting; *called to be an high priest*; not as the priests under the law made without an oath; but *with an oath, by him that swore and will not repent*, when he said unto him, *thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck*; anointed to the work by the *HOLY GHOST*, and to whom *the SPIRIT was not given by measure*; *holy* in himself; *harmless* to all others; *undefiled* with the least shadow of guile; *separate from sinners*; though bearing their sins, yet untouched with the pollution of them; and *made higher than the heavens*. Oh, for the work of *GOD the HOLY GHOST* to be powerful in the Reader's heart, to *consider this apostle and high priest of our profession CHRIST JESUS*.

And while we pray for grace to be always in lively exercise, by faith, on the person and priesthood of the *SON of GOD*, in all the circumstances in which that precious office relates to his people, may it be our happiness also, as the tabernacle of old, and the ordinances of worship were included in the consecration, to partake, as the members of his mystical body, of the same holy anointing. And while they who minister in holy things may learn from this chapter, how very solemn and sacred a service they are called to, and with what sanctity of life and conversation they are more particularly expected to go in and out before the people; may every renewed soul recollect also that *JESUS* by his great undertaking, and by virtue of his blood and righteousness, hath made them kings and priests to *GOD* and the *FATHER*. *LORD!* (I would pray for myself and reader), may our souls and bodies be sprinkled with the blood of sprinkling, and may we be enabled by the *HOLY GHOST* to present them a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to *GOD* which is our reasonable service; that by being dead unto sin, and living abstracted from all the carnal lusts and pursuits of this world, *we may have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life*.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

Aaron and his sons having in the preceding chapter been solemnly ordained and set apart to the ministry, are in this chapter introduced as entering upon their holy office. Moses, at GOD's command, appoints an assembly both of the priests and elders, and enjoins them to bring their offerings before the LORD. This is done. Aaron first offers his sacrifice for himself, and then for the people. The glory of the LORD appears in the tabernacle. The divine approbation is manifested by consuming the burnt-offerings with fire. The holy joy of the people in consequence thereof. These are the principal things related in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

IN the perusal of this Chapter, may it be my happiness to look beyond the letter to the spirit of the sacred word; and here, I am sure, I shall see JESUS, my great High Priest, in everything signified. Was he not from all eternity set apart, consecrated, and ordained to be an Almighty High Priest in things pertaining unto man, to make reconciliation for the sins of his people? And did he not, in confirmation of it, in the fullness of time, offer himself unto GOD, a willing sacrifice, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing? And is he not, as Aaron of old, now gone into the tabernacle not made with hands, even into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of GOD for us? Hath he not again and again blessed his people, and afforded the most incontestable evidences of his unalterable love? Doth not his presence now, in the assemblies of the faithful, testify the FATHER'S approbation of all our spiritual services, however poor they are in themselves, yet truly valuable, in being accepted in and through him? And ought not the many love-tokens of his favor, which correspond to the glory manifested in the Jewish church, bring with them the surest evidences of his grace, and call forth our shouts of holy joy? Dearest JESUS! may we never, never lose sight of thee in all our approaches to the mercy-seat, but behold thee as our sacrifice, our altar, our high priest, our all. Hail! LAMB of GOD, thou

that takest away the sin of the world! Praises to thy name; thou needest not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for thine own sins, and then for the people; for by thy one offering, once offered, thou hast forever perfected them that are sanctified.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

A sad breach is made in the family of Aaron, in the death of Nadab and Abihu, his two eldest sons, who both are struck dead by fire from the LORD, for offering strange fire before the LORD. This chapter relates the awful event, as also the composure of Aaron's mind under this painful providence: the relation of the funeral: orders issued for the regulation of the priests' conduct in future: the law concerning the eating of holy things is also added, and the excuse of Aaron in the transgression of it.

REFLECTIONS

Who that reads this Chapter, and beholds the awful monuments here held forth to view, in the sons of Aaron struck dead before the LORD, but must feel himself constrained to cry out with the men of *Bethshemesh* upon another occasion, *Who is able to stand before this Holy LORD GOD!* 1 Samuel 6:20. Were these the very men whom the LORD admitted into the nearer view of himself in the holy Mount? Were these the same *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who went up by the *LORD'S* own command with Moses and Aaron to *Sinai*, and saw the GOD of Israel? Yes. Oh! learn, my soul, from hence, that the more highly favoured thou art from divine manifestations, the more humbly do thou walk with thy GOD. May the LORD in mercy grant, that neither gifts, nor graces, nor abilities, nor talents, nor station, nor character, may become snares to presumption. Dearest and ever-blessed *JESUS!* my eyes are up unto thee with an humble supplication, that no incense but thine, no fire but of thy kindling, may ever be found in my poor offerings. May all my approaches be under the blessed leadings of thine HOLY SPIRIT. Prevent it blessed

GOD, that ever I should kindle a fire or compass myself about with sparks. But may I come to thee, thou great High Priest of my profession! May the golden altar of thy nature, be the only hallowed sanctuary of my oblation; thy blood and righteousness the only sacrifice wherein I put my trust; thy precious offering of infinite and endless value, the only propitiation to justify my soul; and thy robe of salvation the only covering I desire to appear in before GOD. Thus clothed I shall not be found naked. And thus secured in thy righteousness, I shall neither approach nor make an offering presumptuously: but *receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, I shall have grace whereby I may serve GOD acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.*

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

The sacred historian in this Chapter, enters upon the subject of clean and unclean beasts, and shows what may be eaten and what may not. As the Israelites were to be separated and distinguished from all nations of the earth; the LORD was pleased to mark them also respecting their diet, in the flesh of beasts, of fishes, of birds, and of creeping things.

REFLECTIONS

DEAREST *JESUS!* enable me in every part of the law of ordinances to be looking through them unto thee. And while calling myself a member of thy mystical body, give me grace to be holy as thou art holy. Separate me, O my GOD, from all that is unclean. Let all filthiness and fornication, and uncleanness be driven far from me, and let it not be once named by me, or thy people, as becometh saints. And oh! do thou, by thy blessed SPIRIT, dwell in me and be in me. Make my body thy temple. Bring every thought into obedience to the captivity of CHRIST. And while walking *through* the world, LORD keep me from all the pollutions *of* the world. Be thou my ruler

and guide, that I may so use the world as not abusing it, because the fashion of it passeth away.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

The foregoing Chapter having stated what the divine law concerning clean and unclean food is, in this proceeds to lay down the law concerning the uncleanness of a woman in child-bearing. The time prescribed for her continuing in the uncleanness of child-bearing, and her burnt offering, and sin offering are pointed out.

REFLECTIONS

TRULY was it said to the woman in the garden, *in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception.* And thus from age to age the unalterable decree continues. But blessed be GOD since *JESUS* came, the sorrow is turned into joy. *JESUS* by his great undertaking hath *finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness.*

Blessed GOD! help both reader and writer to praise thee for the deliverance from this yoke of ceremonial bondage, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear. Praised be that mercy which saveth with *the circumcision made without hands.* And doubly praised be that grace which condescended to circumcision, and the fulfilling the whole law, and the death upon the cross, for the salvation of his people. Dearest LORD, grant that, *as in CHRIST JESUS, neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature;* may it be my happiness and the happiness of all thy blood-bought children, to *walk according to this rule, that peace may be on us, and mercy, and upon the Israel of GOD.*

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

The law concerning the uncleanness of the leprosy forms the subject of this Chapter. The method of discovery in ascertaining the existence of the disease, is very particularly pointed out. To which are added laws for the regulation of persons infected with the leprosy, and for due regard to their garments.

REFLECTIONS

How gracious was the *HOLY GHOST*, thus, in shadow and in figure, to teach the church the leprous state she stood in before *GOD*, by reason of sin. And how very precious is *JESUS* our Great High brought forward to our view, thus appointed by *GOD* our *FATHER*, to whom the convinced sinner might show himself and get freed from his leprosy. Teach me thou blessed teacher, in what a leprous state I was born by reason of sin. Give me to see that nothing but the fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness, in *JESUS'S* blood, can cleanse my soul. Lead me to Him by thy sweet influences, who alone can say, Fear not, for I am thy great Salvation. And when I am enabled to draw nigh his footstool, and to show myself before him, that he may search me, and try me; when under the deepest conviction of misery, I cry to the depth of divine mercy; *JESUS*, master; have mercy on me, oh? do thou hear, and answer, and cleanse me from my leprosy. And may I add, dearest *LORD*, this humble boon, and do thou in mercy grant it! that I may ever be found clothed in thy garments, and arrayed in thy covering. The *LORD* the *SPIRIT* give me strength to *put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of my mind: and to put on the new man which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

As the former chapter pointed out the tokens whereby the disease of leprosy was to be discovered: so this is directed to the rites and ceremonies to be made use of in the cleansing of it. As the cure is wholly from the LORD, nothing is said in relation to the cure, but only the ceremonial part belonging to the priest's office, after the signs of recovery were perceived. This chapter, towards the end, contains the signs of the discovery of the leprosy in an house; and also some laws relative to the state of leprosy in general.

REFLECTIONS

PRAISES to the covenant GOD of all our mercies, that when our poor nature was leprous, and past all the power of recovery by human art and contrivance; GOD our FATHER pitied our lost and low estate, and sent his SON to heal us of our leprosy. Praises to that gracious and most merciful SON of GOD, who by taking our sins and carrying our sorrows, hath opened deliverance for us in his blood. And no less may we ascribe praises to the eternal SPIRIT, by whose gracious application of the Saviour's merits and righteousness, all the leprosy of our souls is healed.

Dearest, and ever blessed LORD! may it be my happiness now, in being dipped, like the living Bird, in the blood of the slain, to mount up on the wings of faith and love to meet thee, thou LORD of my best affections, in the heavens. Rejoicing in the deliverance wherewith my GOD, and Saviour hath made me free. Oh! may every thought, every desire, every wish of my poor heart be the burnt-offering, my high priest will present for me before GOD the FATHER, in token of my renewed life. And when it shall please my GOD, to take down altogether the earthly house of thy tabernacle, which I now dwell in, where the spots and defilements of the leprosy of sin still appear; oh grant me *that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The subject of this chapter refers to the laws concerning uncleanness, both as to men and women.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! while thou findest continual cause to bless GOD, that thou art not under the yoke of carnal ordinances; seek grace also, to be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of GOD. And oh! thou holy Saviour, since thou hast taught me by the sweet teachings of thy blessed SPIRIT, that none can bring a clean thing out of an unclean; let a deep sense of sin, and even of those involuntary issues of evil, which flow from me I know not how, lay me low in the dust of self-abasement, crying out, *unclean, unclean*. May these things become the stronger motives to bring my soul to thee. May everything tend to endear thee to my heart. And may *GOD the HOLY GHOST* be continually making a renewed application to my polluted soul of the blood which cleanseth from all sin, that when thou comest the second time, without sin unto salvation, I may be found, *without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,—holy and without blemish before thee in love.*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This chapter, take it altogether, is perhaps, as interesting and important as any, in the whole Levitical dispensation. And if explained to us, by the gospel, will be found worthy the most serious and close attention of all real believers in CHRIST. It contains the memorable account of the appointed ordinance, to be observed once only in every year, of the day of atonement. How the high priest is to enter, on this solemn day, into the holy place: the prohibition of his ever entering there but upon that day; the service he is to perform;

the manner of performing it; the sin-offering he is to bring, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of his people: these things are all here particularly set down and appointed. The ceremony to be observed also respecting the scape-goat, forms a part of this chapter; and the attention to be shown by the people, upon this memorable occasion is pointed out.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over this precious chapter, and take another view of thy Great High Priest, in the type of him here presented on the day of atonement. Behold in Aaron the resemblance of him, who, in respect to his human nature, was taken from among men, solemnly called to the priesthood, and confirmed in the office by an oath. And do not forget, my soul, that it was the FATHER'S rich love, which both appointed and furnished thy JESUS, with every necessary gift and grace for the work, that his sacrifice might be of infinite value, and his person altogether competent to the arduous undertaking of bearing the sins of his people; an undertaking, the weight of which would have crushed the whole race of men and angels. Behold JESUS, fully qualified, entering upon the glorious service! See him as the great High Priest of thy profession, on the solemn day of atonement, going in before the mercy-seat. And fix thine eye, with steady faith, on this GOD-MAN *CHRIST JESUS*, while looking after him within the vail, because he entereth not with the blood of others, but with his own blood; and because he entereth not within the vail of an *earthly* sanctuary, but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of GOD for us. Hail, precious Saviour! all glory to thy name, now thou art gone before, and hast taken possession of the realms above in our name. Remember LORD, thy sweet promise, and may it be my portion, to feel the constraining influence of it in my heart. For thou didst say, before thy departure; and *I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me*. LORD draw my soul upward, heavenward, Christward and I will run after thee, for thou art the LORD my GOD!

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

The substance of this chapter, respects the appointed method of making the offerings. The blood of all slain beasts, must be presented at the door of the tabernacle. The blood is not to be eaten, neither must the flesh of what dieth alone, or is torn by beasts, be taken for food.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! help me by the leadings and influences of thy good SPIRIT to be continually bringing all my offerings unto thee, and in thee, and through thee, may they be presented to GOD, even thy FATHER. Thou art the true tabernacle and the altar, and the sacrifice, and the offering, and the great high priest by whom alone they are accepted. Oh! may everything center in thee, as every good gift and every perfect gift cometh from thee. And while I find cause to bless the Author of all my mercies, that I am not under a covenant of works, but of grace; may I still have respect unto all thy commandments, when thou hast taught my soul thy statutes: never forgetting what thy servant the apostle hath said, that we are not without law to GOD, but under the law to CHRIST. Dearest LORD! how delightful is the thought, that *thou art the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains cautions against being seduced to the commission of heathenish practices. Particular laws are enjoined against various pollutions, such as unlawful marriages, unlawful lusts, and the like; and the ruin of the men of Canaan from the indulgence in those things, is mentioned as a means to deter others from the commission of them.

REFLECTIONS

READER! when you have perused this chapter, pause and contemplate with me, to what an awful state of sin and corruption is our nature fallen! Is it possible to consider these precepts as truly necessary to have been given, to consider our nature universally capable of perpetrating such horrid crimes and bestialities, without being smitten with a deep sense of our miserable state by reason of the fall. Is the hand that now writes, and the eye that now reads, equally full of the same malignity, unless restrained from these several corruptions by Almighty grace? Dearest and ever-blessed JESUS! how increasingly precious ought to be thy person and holiness in the conscious sense of sin to all thy people! Oh! may it be my happiness to be drawn the nearer to thee, from the conviction of my want of thee. LORD, enable me to mortify the deeds of the body by thy HOLY SPIRIT, that I may live! And while beholding, as I do, in the polluted sinful world around me, the many deplorable instances of sin and uncleanness among the ungodly; may I feel the sweetness of that blessed scripture, brought home personally to my heart, and speaking to my own experience: And such were some of you. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a continuation of the same subject as the former. Here are many precepts of a moral and religious nature.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! learn hence thy noble privileges, in the contemplation of that gracious state, into which thou art brought by faith. Oh! for faith, in full exercise, from the SPIRIT's work in the heart, to live wholly upon JESUS'S fulness. And since thou, LORD, hast prohibited, by so many precepts, everything that hath a tendency to seduce the

soul from thyself, LORD, I beseech thee to put thy fear in my heart, that I may not depart from thee. Keep me, blessed SPIRIT of truth, and lead me into all truth; enable me to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts, and since he who hath called me is holy, may I be holy in all manner of conversation and godliness.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a continuation of the former, in a repetition of certain laws, with the addition of the threatened punishment to the breaches of them; and concluding with a more comprehensive demand of uniform holiness.

REFLECTIONS

As there is no part of scripture but what, under divine teaching, will become profitable, so here is opened to us much profit, much improvement, and a continual source for thanksgiving. My soul, I charge it upon thee, while reading the dreadful effects of sin, in the blinded ignorance of other nations, who sacrifice even their offspring to *Moloch*, that thou learn to esteem thy mighty privileges. Corrupt and fallen nature is the same in all; and but for the distinguishing mercy of a gracious GOD, thou mightest have been like them, sacrificing to devils, and not to GOD; or under the fears and misgivings of a wounded conscience, offering even to the GOD of heaven *the fruit of thy body for the sin of thy soul!* Oh! what everlasting praise do I owe to thee, Almighty GOD, FATHER, SON, and *HOLY GHOST*, in that thou hast both taught me the evil of sin, and the sure way of deliverance from it. LORD, grant that I may have grace *to adorn the doctrine of GOD my Saviour in all things;* and as I am graciously taught that *no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of CHRIST and of GOD:* may I have *no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them;* and be enabled *by the SPIRIT, so to mortify the deeds of the body, that I may*

present myself a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to GOD, which is my reasonable service.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

This Chapter hath a peculiar reference to the priesthood, and contains precepts by which they who ministered in holy things, were to be regulated in certain particulars. An ordinance is appointed, by which the priests that have blemishes are disqualified from the service of the sanctuary.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let you and I pause over this chapter, and with an eye of faith, behold that great high priest of our profession sweetly pointed out. Let us not forget that this JESUS of ours, is, and hath been, our Priest forever; for he hath an unchangeable priesthood. And while, therefore, we read of these priests, taken from among men, who were not suffered to continue priests, by reason of death, thus prohibited from all ceremonial uncleanness; let you and I look beyond the letter of the law to him who is the Spirit of it, and contemplate his immaculate unspotted holiness, whose human nature united to the *GODHEAD*, forever separated him from all uncleanness. He could and did bear our sins, in his own body on the tree, and while borne down on the cross with the burden of sin, partook of none of its defilements. His church he betrothed to himself, as a chaste virgin: and all the mystical members of it, are now as chaste virgins presented unto CHRIST: without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; being brought before him as holy in his holiness, and without blemish, before him in love. Dearest JESUS! be thou my holiness, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. And since thou hast so loved all thy people, as not only to wash them from their sins in thine own blood, but hast made them kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER; Oh! give both to thy ministers and people, grace to separate themselves from the

pollutions of the world, and to come out from among them, touch no unclean thing. We would pray to be holy, as thou art holy, and that through thy righteousness and salvation, the gracious acceptance of our persons and our prayers, may come up before GOD; that that sweet promise may be our portion, in which the LORD hath said; *I will be a Father you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the LORD Almighty.*

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

This chapter is but a continuation of the former. Here is the law for the observance of the priests, carried on in relation to themselves, and their household; together with a precept at the conclusion of it, respecting the unblemished nature of things offered in sacrifice.

REFLECTIONS

IN every typical representation under the law, earnestly would I pray, that *GOD the HOLY GHOST* would enlighten my understanding, that I may discover the allusion to JESUS. Surely in the sanctity required of thy priests, O LORD, I behold thee. And surely in the unblemished object of every sacrifice, thy spotless nature could only be implied. Oh! may it be my portion, in every approach to GOD, to bear in the arms of my faith none but JESUS. Gracious GOD! keep me from bringing any thing of my own, by way of acceptance: for all that is in me, or from me, is, as the prophet describes, *torn, and lame, and sick*. May I never thus sacrifice to the LORD a *corrupt thing*. But looking wholly to thee, thou LAMB of GOD, in thine infinite holiness, purity, and soul-cleansing oblation, may the LORD accept this one all-sufficient offering at my hand, and sanctify my soul by thy precious merits and death!

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

As the preceding chapters related to the solemn appointments of the LORD concerning places and persons; so in this, the same laws are carried on in relation to times and seasons for those services. The feasts of the LORD are here set down; the sabbath, the passover, the sheaf of first fruits, the feast of Pentecost, the feast of trumpets, the day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles.

REFLECTIONS

READER! may it be your happiness and mine, while perusing this chapter, to experience the divine teachings of GOD the SPIRIT; whose office it is *to take of the things of JESUS to show unto us*: and may we find cause to bless GOD for so many sweet memorials of the ever blessed *JESUS*. And, dearest LORD, I would say, both for myself and Reader, let us but find CHRIST in every one of them, and discover his glorious person, and his finished righteousness, as the great end to which they all ministered, and we shall then have all that we can desire. It is JESUS that we want, both as our Sabbath, as our unleavened bread, as our first fruits, sheaf-offering, passover, pentecost mercy, trumpet season, expiation, and all-sufficient sacrifice! And while leaning on thee and thy fulness, like Israel of old, may we be ready to leave our dwellings and live in tabernacles, or without the camp, so that we do but live with thee. And dearest LORD, in all our rejoicings, and our feasts, be thou the sum and substance of all; and may we receive them, and enjoy them only so far as they include JESUS. For thus becoming pledges and tokens of thy love *here*, we shall then hope to rejoice in the complete ingathering of thy fruits which shall be *hereafter*.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

This chapter is a continuation of certain laws relating to the temple service, particularly of the order to be observed in the burning of the lamps, and supplying the show-bread. This Chapter is rendered the more remarkable, in that it hath introduced in the body of it, a short historical relation of Shelomith's son being convicted of blasphemy, who is in consequence thereof stoned.

REFLECTIONS

READER! may it be your happiness and mine, to have our souls kept alive by the quickening influences of *GOD the HOLY GHOST*. I would bring, O LORD, continually, as the Israelite of old, the pure oil for thy service. I would present myself, my soul and body, a living sacrifice, a reasonable service before GOD, through JESUS. But all I have is incompetent to serve; and everything too impure to offer. LORD, undertake for me, and let the lamp of thy grace in my soul be kept alive by thy power. Dear JESUS! be thou the show-bread to me, and in thee, and thy complete salvation, may I see a constant and never-ceasing supply to feed, not only *my* soul, but all thy church and people. May thy ministers, who serve in holy things, be enabled to bring forth things both new and old in thy sanctuary. LORD! give me grace, in reading the awful account of the blasphemer in this chapter, to drop an earnest prayer before the mercy-seat, that our GOD may turn the heart of blasphemers in this guilty land. Oh LORD! in judgment remember mercy. Turn thou us, and so shall we be turned.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

This forms a most interesting chapter, even in its moral sense, but much more so in its spiritual. And as an enlightened eye will he

enabled to discern in it, that Moses spake of CHRIST, the attention ought to be the more awakened. Here is GOD's appointment of every seventh year to be a year of rest to the land, that the holy land of Canaan, which was the glory of all lands, should be distinguished from every other by a Sabbath year. Here is also GOD's appointment, for every seven times seventh year to be a year of jubilee, in which the captive and the bond-servant among the Hebrews should go out free. This chapter hath also some very gracious laws contained in it, for the treatment of the poor, and of debtors.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT motives of thanksgiving and praise pour in upon my soul from every quarter, in the perusal of this chapter, while I consider and compare my privileges and my happiness to those of the *LORD's* people of old. They had, it is true, their *seventh* year of Sabbaths to remind them of the Sabbaths in Paradise, which Adam's transgression deprived his children of; but I have in that second *Adam*, the *LORD* from heaven, (as the Apostle most properly stiles him) an everlasting Sabbath, in him and from him to enjoy. Oh! may the blessed *SPIRIT* give me by his sweet influences to rest in *JESUS*!

In this Jubilee season to the poor captive and bond-servant may I behold by faith, the lively emblem of that eternal jubilee in *JESUS*, wherewith he makes his people free. Oh! thou kinsman Redeemer, that hast caused thy gospel trumpet to be sounded, never may I lose sight of what I was by nature, and what I now am by grace. Thou didst find me, O *LORD*, a bond-servant, indeed, to Sin and Satan, serving divers lusts and pleasures; and even in love with my chains, and averse to freedom. Eternal praises to thy dear name, that thou hast both proclaimed liberty to the captive, and made me *willing to be redeemed in the day of thy power*. Oh! may it be my happiness to return, as the redeemed *Israelite*, to my *FATHER's* house, and now the mortgaged and sold inheritance is ransomed; *LORD* keep me from being ever again entangled *in the old yoke of bondage*. And while I behold so many all round me in nature's chains of sin, *LORD* give me grace, to adore the distinguishing mercy of my Deliverer.

Let it be wholly to *the praise of the glory of thy grace, wherein thou hast made me accepted in the beloved.*

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

This chapter seems to form a brief summary of the arguments, by which the laws contained in the foregoing chapters are enforced; in that it points out the blessings to obedience, and the curses which will follow upon disobedience. The conclusion of it is very remarkable, in that it ends with gracious promises, even to the most rebellious, when their heart is turned to seek the LORD.

REFLECTIONS

OH! what a gracious merciful GOD is the GOD with whom we have to do, of whom it may be truly said, *he punisheth us less than our sins deserve.* May it be my mercy, O LORD, through thy sovereign grace, to walk with thee in all thy statutes and in all thine ordinances, with a jealous eye to thy glory; that the LORD may give me all these blessings both in a temporal sense and in a spiritual; that my heaven may never be iron, nor my earth brass. But chiefly, while a bountiful GOD and Saviour gives me all things richly to enjoy, neither the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, nor the precious things put forth by the moon, may be half so precious to my soul as *the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.*

And, dearest LORD, in all thy rebukes, for the manifold departures of my soul from thee; oh, give me grace, that the most gentle of thy chastisements may call my heart home from its rebellions. LORD! evermore give me *to hear the rod, and who hath appointed it.* May it never be my case to seek comfort by hiding or lessening my transgression; but in *confessing and forsaking it:* and so to seek peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST. And blessed *JESUS,* let me add, may the precious teachings of thine HOLY SPIRIT continually lead me to this sure conclusion; that all my pardon and peace is obtained, not for anything that I have done or can do;

but from the covenant righteousness of GOD in *CHRIST*; what thou hast done and suffered; and what the FATHER of mercies hath engaged to perform, for his own sake, and for his righteousness sake, to whose holy name be all the glory!

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

This chapter seems to be added by way of appendix to the whole Book of Leviticus. For the preceding chapter summed up what had been enjoined in speaking of the rewards to the observance, and the penalties of punishments, to the neglect of the whole law. This chapter, however, is subjoined, and relates to the subject of vows, and the method to be observed, where the person vowing desires to redeem it.

REFLECTIONS

READER! how delightful in lesser things, as well as in greater, is it to see the law still pointing to the gospel; and every sacrifice, even those of vows, and dedications of the most minute kind, referring to the redemption by JESUS. May the LORD give you and me to see this; and while we are enabled by grace, to give cheerfully and readily of our substance to him, still may we never lose sight of this leading doctrine of our holy faith; that it is JESUS, and he only, which sanctifieth both gift and giver!

Let us not close this precious book of GOD without once more taking a general and comprehensive view of it; and while we consider as we ought the state of the church in the wilderness, thus veiled under what the apostle calls *the shadow of good things to come, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation*; let us thankfully contemplate the happiness of GOD's people now, in being delivered from such a yoke of bondage, *which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear.*

But while we find cause thus to bless GOD, that we are come to this better dispensation, *founded upon better promises*; let us never forget that in those types and shadows the gospel was preached unto them, as well as unto us. *CHRIST* then was, as well as he is now, *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*.

Dearest and ever-blessed JESUS! give me to see that all the ordinances in thy sacred book, and the numberless rites, both moral and ceremonial, there appointed, were *the shadows of good things to come, but the body was and is CHRIST*. Be thou the sanctuary, the altar, the mercy-seat, the sacrifice, the offering, the priest, the all in all of my poor oblations! And may this be my highest and most encouraging consideration in every approach to GOD my FATHER, that *having such an High Priest over the house of GOD, I may draw nigh, through thy blood and righteousness, with a true heart in full assurance of faith*. Amen and Amen.

NUMBERS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

IN opening this *fourth* Book of the writings of Moses, I must again request the pious Reader to call to mind, that *Moses wrote of CHRIST*. And if the HOLY GHOST shall be graciously pleased *to take of the things of CHRIST*, and show them to the Reader, no doubt he will find here, as in the former books of Moses, that *he hath testified of JESUS*.

The book of Numbers, hath its name from the circumstance of its containing the numbering of the children of Israel. It forms a very interesting volume on that account; in that it carries with it in its bosom, an evidence of the fulfillment of GOD'S promise. The LORD had assured Abraham, that his seed should be as the stars of heaven for multitude, Genesis 15:5. And here we find the accomplishment.

In respect to the period of time the book of Numbers contains, it is somewhat about thirty-nine years. The history commences in the second month of the second year, after the Israelites left Egypt; and ends in the eleventh month of the fortieth year.

There is a mixture of laws and of history in this book, of which it is composed. The Reader will very easily distinguish the one from the other. But here, as in all other instances, in searching the sacred oracles, it must be GOD the HOLY GHOST, which can alone enable the Reader to discern spiritually, and convey his divine teaching to the mind, so as to make us wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS.

I only pray, that Holy and Eternal SPIRIT, under whose inspiration all scripture is written, that he will be both with Writer and Reader, while going through the sacred pages, that we may discover CHRIST to be the sum and substance of the whole law of

Moses, and the *end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

This sacred volume opens in this Chapter, with the LORD's command to Moses, for the numbering the people: the persons appointed to this service; and exception of the Levites.

REFLECTIONS

Who can behold the LORD's attention to Israel, as recorded in this chapter, in commanding the people to be numbered and registered; without calling to mind the blessed and distinguishing privileges of the LORD's Israel in all ages. Oh! the happiness of that people and that person, whom the LORD marketh for his own, and of whom the LORD of hosts hath said, they shall be mine in that day, when I make up my jewels. Reader! I charge it upon thine heart and mine, that we both look well to that feature, by which the LORD's Israel are known: a separate, a chosen, a distinguished, a peculiar generation. *Lo the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.*

Be not cast down, my poor afflicted brother, whosoever thou art, that through the temptations of the enemy, and the unbelief of thine own heart, art prompted to fear, as if there were but few which shall be found among the true Israelites. Read this chapter, and see how numerous they then were which were numbered: think what multitudes have been added since, from among the children which were then unborn; and though the *carcasses* of so many from that deadly sin of unbelief, *fell in the wilderness*, yet never forget that the LORD hath in all ages *a seed that shall serve him*. See how in the short period of a few years the people multiplied, and comfort thyself with this assurance, the LORD's promise must be fulfilled; the Redeemer must see *of the travail of his soul and be satisfied*. *Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of*

Israel! But chiefly may my soul be led to look unto thee, thou dear Redeemer, through whose gracious undertaking thy people, which were far off are brought nigh; and from whose complete and finished salvation alone, their names are recorded in thy book of life. Hail! precious JESUS! It is thou who hast purchased for me this glorious privilege: It is by thy blood and righteousness secured for me; It is confirmed both by the FATHER'S gift, and the HOLY SPIRIT'S seal: and shall I at length, not only read my name written there, but enter thereby into the joy of my LORD? Oh! may I rejoice more in this, than if *the devils were all subject to me through thy name*. For, by and by, I shall awake to the full enjoyment of the promised possession, and have a real, intimate, and soul-transforming communion, with all the persons of the GODHEAD, in the face of JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

As the former Chapter contained an account of the numbering of Israel; so in this, here is the divine appointment for the arranging the people into distinct and separate battalions, and tribes.

REFLECTIONS

SEE, my soul, thy GOD and Saviour is himself thy standard, ensign, and banner! Behold how he is lifted up to draw thee unto him! LORD give me grace and a discerning eye, to view thee in thy person character, and office as the standard of my Father's house! Let me behold thee in thy faithfulness, in thy love, and in everything that may tend to endear thee to my heart. Let me see thee set forth in type, in all the Old Testament shadows; and realized in all the New Testament substance. And, O my GOD, give me power in thy strength, to fight under thy banner, against sin, death, and Satan, and all the enemies of my salvation. And dearest JESUS! do thou go before me through all the warfare, that I may feel in my own experience, that glorious promise of my GOD and FATHER fulfilled,

wherein he saith, *Behold I have given him for a witness, a leader, and commander to the people.* Even so, Amen.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

As the preceding Chapter related to the numbering Israel in tribes, and families; so the present hath reference, to the ordering the Levites, as the more immediate servants in the LORD'S ministry. The close of the Chapter, contains the order for the redemption of the firstborn.

REFLECTIONS

HERE again, blessed JESUS! while reading the separation of the Levites to the service of the sanctuary, here let me behold thee in thine unequalled office; consecrated, and set apart to thy Father's service, in the salvation of souls! With what earnestness didst thou enter upon the work; with what diligence and faithfulness perform it; with how much tenderness to us, didst thou take upon thee the form of a servant, when thou wast LORD of all, and with whom it was no robbery to be equal with GOD: and with how much obedience to thy Father didst thou magnify the whole law, and make it honourable; never desisting from thy labour of love, until thou couldst say unto God the Father; *I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.* Hail again and again, thou ever adored Redeemer! LORD, number me among the sons of Levi, and purge my soul as gold and silver, that I may offer to the LORD, an offering in righteousness. And while I behold my GOD and Saviour, though LORD of all, thus set apart, and becoming the servant of all; may my soul be so devoted to thy service, that with one of old, I may cry out as he did: *Truly, I am thy servant, I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds.* Psalm 116:16.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

The same subject as occupied the former chapter, is continued through this. The numbering and ordering the several branches of the Levites, *the Kohathites, the Gershonites, and the Merarites; together with the number and particular service of each.*

REFLECTIONS

HERE my soul! pause and behold, how the Levitical service of the sons of Aaron shadowed forth thy Saviour in his gracious ministration. He it was, indeed, that alone could remove the face of that covering, by which, our nature was hid, and lost from all his people. Oh! that my eyes were more enlightened to behold this Great High Priest, in all his blessed offices, and characters! Thou art indeed the true tabernacle, dearest LORD, without a covering; for by thy precious undertaking, thou hast opened a new and living way for us in thy blood, and righteousness; thou hast opened, and none can shut: neither will the covering be any more upon it, but on all the glory shall be a defense. And oh! what a glory, what an inconceivable weight of glory, will break in upon the soul, when this earthly tabernacle of our's shall be taken down, and the pins, and the sockets, with their silver cords and instruments, be broken at the cistern: and JESUS shall again raise it up, a glorified body, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing! What rapture will break in upon the soul, when our vile bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body; and when those dear partners of affection, the soul and body shall again unite, never, never more to part; and never, never more to thwart each other, being both redeemed together by his great salvation! Dearest Saviour! be thou now by faith my joy, and then by sight, wilt thou be mine everlasting light, and my GOD, my glory.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This chapter contains an order for the removal of the unclean, from the Camp. Here is also a repetition of the law, concerning the restitution to be made in cases of trespass; and the mode of trial to be observed, in the instance of a wife suspected of adultery.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED GOD! here let me learn the sanctity, which ought to be preserved in those that approach thy church, and the place where thine honour dwelleth. LORD! do thou enable me to keep my foot when I go to the house of GOD; and do thou keep my heart from all defilement. Precious Redeemer! here again let me behold and rightly prize thy invaluable redemption; by which alone, my soul, which hath deserved to be banished without the camp, by reason of the uncleanness I have contracted; yet being cleansed from all sin by thy blood, is brought within the vail, and come within the holy place! Oh! GOD of my salvation, let me upon earth be forever singing the glories of the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed poor sinners to GOD by his blood; and by and by, I hope, through thy grace, most loudly to proclaim it, amidst the glorified inhabitants of heaven. And do thou, dearest LORD, who hast paid all the fine of trespasses *for* me, graciously rule, and so govern every affection of my heart, that there may be no allowed trespasses *in* me. To thee I look up, with the same awakened earnestness of prayer and supplication as one of old, and cry as he did: *Search me, O GOD, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

And blessed Redeemer, since thou last graciously condescended to make me thine, and hast betrothed me to thee forever. Oh! let nothing tempt me to go aside or wander from thee; no LORD not in thought, or word, or deed. But like the church of old, let it be my glory that I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine, and thy desire is toward me.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

As the preceding chapter contained the law respecting, unclean persons, in this we have the law concerning the Nazarites who were devoted to the LORD by their vows. The chapter is rendered interesting also, from another consideration, in that it closes with the blessing, wherewith the LORD enjoined the priests to bless in his name the people.

REFLECTIONS

HERE, my soul, let me stand and view, in the contemplation of the Nazarites, that holy Nazarite, that unequalled spotless SON of GOD, who for my sake separated himself from all that was corrupt in our nature, when in that nature he undertook and accomplished, the salvation of his people. Well is it for me that thou, blessed JESUS, hast fulfilled all righteousness on my behalf; for I groan daily, being burthened with the weight of corruption in my nature; and I feel that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. LORD, what power hath the remains of indwelling corruption in my nature over me! How little of the principles of the true Nazarite do I find in my heart! And yet, how earnestly do I desire to be dedicated unto GOD. Oh! precious JESUS! how sweet and endearing is it to my soul, that thou art here, as in every other instance, the LORD my righteousness.

Reader! let us not close the chapter, until that we have jointly bent the knee of prayer together, that our great High Priest and Saviour may pour upon us the precious blessing contained in it. Father of mercies! do thou bless us and keep us! Holy Saviour! cause thy face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us! Eternal Spirit! lift up thy countenance upon us, and we shall be whole. LORD give us peace, even that peace in the blood of the cross, which shall both in time and in eternity keep our hearts and souls, in and through JESUS CHRIST. Amen.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the account of the offerings of the princes of Israel, at the dedication of the tabernacle, and of the altar. It is rendered the more remarkable, in that it relates the gracious condescension of GOD, in speaking to Moses from the mercy seat.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED LORD! while I here behold the rich offerings of the princes, and thy gracious acceptance of them: and while I look into myself, and perceive that I have nothing to offer but my sins, and transgressions; how shall I venture to hope the finding favour with thee. But my soul be encouraged. The poor widow's offering was a costly gift in the sight of GOD; and a broken and contrite heart, the LORD hath said he wilt not despise. It is in JESUS alone all must be accepted. The rich have nothing truly valuable, but as they are rich in him; and the poor can need nothing while *rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.*

In the contemplation of the LORD's speaking to his servant *Moses*, from between the cherubims; let me steadfastly behold thee, thou ever gracious Redeemer, speaking to thy people in all the tender tokens of thy love. It was thy love which led thee to engage as our surety; it was the same love which prompted thee to assume our nature; it was the same love carried thee on through all the interesting circumstances of redemption work; and it is by the effects of the same everlasting and unchanging love, that all the sweet tokens of communion with our FATHER are conducted now. Thou art GOD still, and still thou dwellest on the mercy seat, between the cherubims, to communicate blessings to thy people! Oh! then speak to me, and tell me thou art my great salvation. Dearest JESUS! be thou my portion now, and my glory forever.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

As the golden candlestick in the tabernacle consisted of seven lamps; this chapter contains directions for the lighting of them. Here is also the order for the consecration of the Levites, to their particular office, by the purifying of their bodies and garments: with some other circumstances of the like nature.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE my soul, while by faith thou walkest in the sanctuary of the Old Testament dispensation, and in viewing the golden candlestick with the lighted lamps, behold thy adored Redeemer, as divinely represented shining forth, in and through all his New Testament revelation, under the fulness of all the HOLY SPIRIT'S influence. Oh! how gloriously did *he* shine, of whom this golden candlestick with its seven lamps was but the faintest image, unto whom the Spirit was not *given by measure*. Hail! thou ever blessed, ever glorious JESUS! thou that art both the light, and the life of thy people. From thee and thy precious influence, do all the lights of the temple derive their lustre. By thee they shine; for thee they minister; and to thy glory they serve. LORD! communicate to my dark and benighted heart the rays of thy grace. Shine in precious JESUS, on my cold and lifeless soul, and warm my frozen affections; be thou my *everlasting light, and my GOD my glory*.

And while I thus look up to thee my GOD and Saviour, as the fountain and source of all that is truly glorious, may my soul behold in the dedication of these Levites to the temple service, how high a dignity those souls are called to, who, by the LORD'S appointment, minister in holy things. Let me offer a prayer before the mercy seat, for all of this description and character, who are the true Levites before GOD; I mean such as are of the HOLY GHOST'S commissioning, that He who hath called them may qualify for the work. Oh! LORD, consider their earthen vessels: pity and compassionate the weakness of their frame; and by the powerful influences of thy grace, do thou give in unto them that they may give out to thy people! may a

gracious GOD and Saviour make them faithful, to shine as lights in thy church here; and, by turning many to righteousness, may they shine as the stars in the church above, forever, and ever!

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

In this Chapter, we have a repetition of the law concerning the Passover. Here is also, a provision made for such of the people as, by reason of any ceremonial uncleanness, were prevented from the observance of it at the season appointed. The Chapter concludes with an account of the journeying of Israel through the wilderness.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED LORD! in the perusal of this chapter, let me chiefly discern by thy HOLY SPIRIT's teaching, Him who is the passover of his people; and may a gracious GOD enable me not only once a year, but every day, to keep the feast. May it be my desire, like those whose souls melted within them with an earnestness of longing, when at anytime kept back from rejoicing before my GOD in his ordinances, to seek those renewals of love; and may I esteem every pledge of a Redeemer's kindness in the several means of grace, and especially at his table and his supper, more than my necessary food. Oh! may my soul cry out under the enjoyment of those privileges; *blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will be still praising thee.*

Hail! thou glorious pillar of cloud! thou holy JESUS, who art both the light and the life of men: be thou my constant, uniform director, guiding me by day, and sheltering me by night. In every season of darkness, ignorance, corruption, and trouble, do thou manifest forth thy glory, and shine as the sun of righteousness, with healing in thy wings. Grant me grace by the sweet influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT to follow thee wheresoever thou goest. Go before to guide me in the way, and cause me to rest wheresoever thou shalt be pleased to intimate thy will for any remaining. Never may I run unsent and

uncalled: and never may I loiter in the heavenly way when JESUS calls. Dearest LORD; may it be my portion to follow the LAMB whithersoever he goeth, until at length JESUS shall come and take me to himself, *that where he is, there I may be also*. Amen.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

This is an interesting chapter. It treats of the form and uses of the silver trumpets for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the people. Herein is also contained, the account of the removal of the people from Mount Sinai to Paran: an affecting relation of Moses's entreaty of Hobab, not to leave him: and Moses blessing and prayer, at every removal or resting of the Ark.

REFLECTIONS

HERE, my soul, let me pause a little, and in the relation of the silver trumpet service, calling the LORD'S people to the assembly of his saints, ask my heart whether I have heard and known *the joyful sound*, which is proclaimed in the gospel, of JESUS' blood and righteousness! and am now walking in the light of the divine countenance? If I am thine, thou dearest JESUS, then do I know thy call, both for the assembling with thy people, and for my journeying with thee! LORD do thou go before me in my pilgrimage through life. Thy presence, whether in removing from *Sinai* to *Paran*, or from one border to another, (for every removal is but a wilderness state here below), will make everything to smile. Be thou but with me in every resting place, or setting forward, and all will be well, my delight will be found in JESUS, amidst his ordinances and people.

And no less do thou, ever blessed Spirit, excite in my soul an earnestness like thy servant Moses, to invite others to partake of the grace which is in CHRIST JESUS. Well satisfied as my soul is, of the inexhaustible fulness that there is in thee, for the many thousands of thy Israel, may it be the daily language of my heart to call upon the unawakened around me, *to come, and taste and see how gracious*

the LORD is. And oh! grant, LORD, this unspeakable mercy both to him that writes and him that reads, that from a conviction of the infinite importance of salvation by JESUS, we may gladly leave a world from which we are daily journeying, with all its perishing connections, and go forth by faith, like faithful Abraham, at the call of GOD, not knowing whither he went, to the sure possession of that city of foundations, whose builder and maker is GOD.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains a melancholy relation of Israel's disobedience, and the LORD'S displeasure. The people murmur. Moses' meekness forsakes him; and in his fretfulness he ventures to expostulate with GOD. The lust of Israel is gratified, but the LORD'S judgment follows.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! pause over this Chapter, and behold in Israel's murmuring and disobedience the picture of thine own heart. How often hast thou repined at thy GOD'S appointment, when matters have for a short space appeared a little thwarting to flesh and blood? Many a time since grace renewed thy heart hast thou looked back to the days of thine unregeneracy, and like Israel, to the flesh pots of Egypt, seemed to think, in an angry hour, it was better with thee then than now. LORD! give me grace to admire and adore, in the reviews of thy forbearance and long-suffering, how unchangeable thy love is to thy people. Well may it be said concerning the sovereignty of thy tender purposes, as thou didst to the church of old, *I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*

But my soul, chiefly in the view of this Chapter, do thou contemplate him in his everlasting priesthood, whom Moses personated when the people cried unto him in their distress, and he prayed unto the Lord. Yes! thou ever precious JESUS! thou wert made our great High Priest with an oath; and our GOD and FATHER hath in

the most solemn manner anointed thee to be our priest forever, *after the order of Melchisedec*. Help me then in all my afflictions and distresses by reason of sin, to be looking unto thee who art mighty to save. Help me also to be feeding on thee by faith, and never, never slight or despise this heavenly manna; nor covet the flesh pots of a carnal appetite. May a gracious GOD and FATHER take of his HOLY SPIRIT, and put upon me, as upon the seventy elders: and may this be my happiness under such gracious influence, to be living in the constant apprehension of the knowledge and enjoyment of *the mystery of GOD, and of the Father, and of CHRIST*.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the relation of the further exercises of Moses. Miriam and Aaron join in speaking against Moses. GOD himself takes up the business, and Miriam is smitten with a leprosy. Moses intercedes for her. She is restored to her former health, but punished by being shut out seven days from the camp.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT an interesting character is Moses, and in how charming a light doth he appear in this Chapter! To all the unprovoked unkindness of his brother Aaron, to whom he had been so friendly, we find he made no unkind return, but recompensed the cruelty both of Aaron and Miriam with his prayers. But here again, my soul, as in a thousand other instances, pass over the contemplation of creature-excellencies, to behold the unequalled loveliness of Creator-love, and mercy, manifested to thy ingratitude in the person of the LORD JESUS. Oh! thou holy Redeemer! how dost thou unceasingly intercede at the right hand of power, for me, and for all thy unworthy ungrateful people; who in the very moment that thy blood, and righteousness, is pleading for our salvation, are causing thee *to serve with our sins, and wearying thee with our iniquities*. SON of GOD! compassionate the leprosy of my soul, and shut me not out from thy

presence, but say to me, as thou didst to the poor creature in the gospel, who cried out, LORD! *if thou wilt; thou canst make me clean; I will be thou clean; and immediately my soul will be cleansed!*

Reader! do not close this Chapter without having an eye in the intercession of Moses for Aaron and Miriam, to the intercession of JESUS on the cross, for those who crucified him. Oh! what a volume is folded up in that one prayer of JESUS to comfort poor sinners, and to show the all-prevailing efficacy of JESUS'S advocacy. FATHER! forgive them for they know not what they do. Oh! LAMB of GOD! let this first cry of thine upon the cross, be the first and last of my soul-reviving consolations under all the discouragements by reason of my unworthiness and neglect of thee. Surely, dear LORD! when I sin against thee, I know not what do.

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

In this Chapter we have recorded the account of Israel's plan, in prosecuting their journey. Being arrived, to the very borders of Canaan, Moses is commanded by GOD to send a man of every tribe of Israel, to spy out the land. The persons deputed to this office are here mentioned, and an account is given of their journey: after forty days search, they return, bringing with them some of the fruits of the land: but all, excepting two of them, report unfavorably of the ability of Israel to conquer the country.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! in the sad picture this representation holds up to thy view of unbelieving, distrustful Israel, do thou behold a true image of thyself. Hath not my GOD and FATHER promised to bring all his people into the promised land? Is there not *a rest for the people of GOD*? Is not this at once both the gift of the FATHER'S love, and the purchase of the Redeemer's grace; and is not the HOLY GHOST most graciously engaged, by the conquests of his power, to drive out all my enemies before me, and to bring me in by his own sovereignty?

And yet, in the midst of all these positive assurances, am I not frequently questioning the reality of heaven's joys, the sufficiency of JESUS'S redemption, and the suitableness of what that blessed Redeemer hath done and suffered, to answer my own personal wants therein? Dear LORD! how just would it have been to me, hadst thou dealt by me as I have richly deserved; and, if considered without reference to my interest in thy righteousness, to have given me up to an hardened, unbelieving mind. SON of GOD! I beseech thee cause my soul, through the softening influences of thy blessed Spirit, to be humbled upon all occasions for the weakness of my faith! And while I look back, by the HOLY GHOST'S aid in that precious part of his character, as the Remembrancer, to bring to my recollection through what a series of mercies, like Israel from Egypt, to this wilderness of *Zin*, the Lord hath brought me; oh! may I hear thy gracious voice, in the tender expostulations of thy love, saying personally to my heart, as to his disciples of old, Oh! *thou of little faith wherefore dost thou doubt*. LORD! grant that the many tokens of thy love in quickening grace, reviving grace, confirming grace, may be to my soul in recollection, as the gapes of *Eshcol*: and may my GOD give me the spirit of *Caleb*, to know and believe that I shall at length overcome all the enemies of my salvation, and be more than conqueror through thy grace enabling me.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

This is a most interesting Chapter, and as an apostle had it in commission from the HOLY GHOST, to tell the church that the written account of Israel's history was intended for our example, that we come not into the same condemnation through unbelief; it demands our attention the more. Here are contained, the relation of the murmurs of the people at the evil report of the spies; the ineffectual attempts made by Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, to still the minds of the people; the LORD'S interposing; his awful sentence: Moses interceding: the immediate death of all the spies excepting

Joshua and Caleb: the presumptuous attempt of some of the people, in going up without the LORD's command to the conquest of Amalek: and their discomfiture in consequence thereof, before the Amalekites and Canaanites.

REFLECTIONS

I WOULD charge it upon my soul, while reading in this chapter the unhappy conduct of Israel, to seek continually for grace, lest I fall after the same example of unbelief. For am I better than they! No! in no wise. They sinned, it is said, *ten* times, in tempting GOD, and not hearkening to his voice. Whereas my rebellious and unbelieving heart, hath made it a life of disobedience to the voice and call of GOD all the way along. Oh, thou gracious GOD and FATHER in CHRIST JESUS! how precious to my view is that endearing character in which thou art represented, as not executing the fierceness of thine anger, because thou art GOD and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thy people. And thou, no less ever precious, ever blessed JESUS, by whose unceasing merits, in the complete work of thy redemption, and thy perpetual pleadings, in which Moses as thy representative upon earth stood up for the people, thou ever livest to make intercession for sinners; how increasingly dear art thou in thy person, offices, and character, to my soul under all the renewed convictions I am continually receiving, of my unworthiness and unbelief before thee! LORD JESUS! undertake for me, and by the sweet constraining influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT, guard my poor heart from all murmuring, lest being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, wilderness frames extend the continuance of wilderness dispensations, and even, when in the very view of the promised land, the Lord lead me back again, instead of carrying me up to immediate possession.

Oh, thou HOLY SPIRIT! thou comforter of thy people, and guide into all truth, grant me the same inestimable blessing as *Caleb* thy servant, that I may follow the Lord fully. And then, under thy divine influences I shall be enabled as he and Joshua did, to stand up for the cause of a faithful master, amidst the gainsaying and evil slander of ungodly and profane men. Oh! for this new heart and right spirit within me, which are both thy free unmerited gift. For then gracious

Lord shall I not come into condemnation with the ungodly and unbelieving world, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; but through the FATHER'S gift, and the Redeemer's blood and righteousness, I shall surely be brought by thee, thou HOLY SPIRIT, into the good land, and attain that rest *which remaineth for all the people of GOD*. Amen.

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

There seems to be a most gracious design in the HOLY GHOST'S introducing the law for sacrifices, immediately after the melancholy relation of the rebellion of the people. And, inasmuch as all the sacrifices under the law were typical of JESUS, surely it ought to be a great relief to the mind of the sinner, to see the ever blessed JESUS thus again represented as set forth, a propitiation for sin by the sacrifice of himself. Here are contained—the order for the meat offering and the drink offering; provision for the stranger also in those offerings: together with the law respecting the heave offering: sacrifices appointed for sins of ignorance: and the punishment appointed for sins of presumption. A short history is introduced into this chapter relating to a sabbath breaker. The chapter concludes with the law respecting the fringes and borders of garments.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! in the view of the many things appointed in this Chapter to the church of GOD, when they were to come to the promised land; let me contemplate the vast privileges of that better country, which theirs only typified; and by faith anticipate what offerings I shall have then to offer, what presentations there to make, and what heave offerings of acknowledgment, both for the stranger and the new born soul in JESUS redeemed by his blood, all the happy multitude will have continually to bring before the throne of GOD and the LAMB. Oh! the vast, the inconceivable glory which will then break in upon the soul when we come to receive the end of our faith.

Neither sins of ignorance nor sins of presumption, neither a corrupt world, a deceiving heart, nor all the powers of darkness will any longer interrupt or defile the soul: but one continued day in one uninterrupted enjoyment of felicity, will then employ the mind to all eternity. Blessed GOD! in the full prospect of these unspeakable joys given to thy people by the FATHER'S everlasting love, purchased by the Redeemer's grace, and made ours by the precious application of the HOLY GHOST; may my soul live and my body die, until faith shall be swallowed up in fruition, and my GOD shall be openly revealed to all the sons of light. Amen.

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This is a most interesting Chapter, not merely as an historical relation of man's rebellion and GOD'S awful judgments following, but principally as herein we behold as glorious a representation, typically considered, as perhaps the Old Testament scripture contains of JESUS, represented by Aaron exercising his priestly office of intercessor; and by his person and righteousness making atonement for the sins of his people. In the perusal of this Chapter throughout, let the Reader remember our motto, Moses wrote of JESUS. The Chapter contains the rebellion of Korah and his company, in contending for the priesthood: the awful inference of GOD: the dreadful visitation on the rebels, by the LORD'S doing a new thing and causing the earth to open her mouth and swallow up the insurgents; and by fire at the same time consuming those that had dared to take upon them the priestly office of burning incense. The Chapter further relates, that these judgments having tended to harden the minds of the rebels, and their ill-conduct breaking out afresh, the Lord smote them by pestilence. Aaron is commanded by Moses to offer incense for the people until the plague was stayed.

REFLECTIONS

HERE stand, my soul, and contemplate the melancholy effects of a fallen nature, manifesting itself in such astonishing instances of rebellions, and murmurings, and disobedience, and ingratitude. And when thou hast duly pondered over the awful subject in the dreadful example of Korah and his company, turn thine attention inward to thyself. Alas! are not the same seeds of sin there, and do they not continually break forth and bud, and bring forth the same deadly fruit; and what is the world around thee but evidences of the same? And what the examples of suffering and sorrow, but proofs to the same amount? Full of misery because full of sin.

Precious, precious JESUS! relieve my soul in the view of those things, in turning mine eyes to thee and thy great salvation. Oh! thou almighty Aaron, thou great high Priest and Saviour of thy people, may my soul never cease looking unto and upon thee! Thou camest indeed from thy throne of glory, and didst leave the regions of the blessed to visit our miserable world. The plague of sin and the horrid ingratitude of thy people, even the wrath of thy Father issuing forth in fiery indignation in the destruction of sinners, did not stop thy love in prosecuting the wonderful deliverance of thy chosen; but thou didst run in among the people, and didst put on the incense of thy merits, and both by thy blood and righteousness didst make an atonement for them. Thou stoodest then between the dead and the living, and now thou interposest still between dead sinners and the living; GOD; and wilt continue in thine unceasing everlasting priesthood until the plague of sin, hell, death, and the grave is stayed, and thou hast rescued all thy redeemed from everlasting misery. Lord, grant by thy Spirit's work in my heart, my soul may be made willing to come under the preserving influence of thy censer; and as the dying Israelites were sheltered by the ascending offering of Aaron's incense, so I may take refuge under the covering of thy blood and righteousness, from all my sin and the sin of this ungodly wicked world, and be found in thee to the praise of the glory of that grace wherein I am made accepted in thee the beloved.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

A further interference of divine authority is related in this Chapter, in which the Lord is pleased to manifest thereby, that Aaron was to be the high priest to minister in holy things. The Lord condescended, by way of testifying his pleasure in this business, to settle it by the budding of Aaron's rod, while the rods of all the other heads of families are dry and withered. The event is ordered to be recorded by laying up Aaron's rod as a testimony before the Lord.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, in the perusal of this chapter, and behold in how sweet a manner thy GOD and FATHER manifested to the church of old the everlasting priesthood of thy glorious intercessor! None but the rod of JESUS, nothing but his Almighty righteousness and sin-offering atonement can bring forth the blessed fruits of salvation for his people. As all our righteousness are filthy rags, so all our rods of created strength, however laid up before the testimony, will be found unfruitful, dead, and withered. But in the various manifestations of thy grace, in the buddings and blossoms and fruit-bearing excellencies of thy mercies, as our souls respectively stand in need, how graciously doth my GOD and Saviour show forth the rod of his strength, in convincing, converting, strengthening, refreshing, and establishing his people.

Dearest JESUS! may I find grace from thy HOLY SPIRIT, to rejoice in thee, as the rod of all gospel mercies laid up for me in time and to all eternity. And though thy glory was veiled from many when on earth, and thy priesthood is unacknowledged and unknown by thousands now thou art above, yet to me in all thy precious offices and characters, be thou ever blooming forth, in every suited grace, and every seasoned mercy, in all my time of need. Let murmurers now, if they dare, dispute the sovereignty of thy GODHEAD, and despise, because they know not, the preciousness of thy great salvation and priesthood; Lord, be thou to me and all thy children the never-failing almond tree of righteousness and peace, which

neither drought nor storm, nor all the wintry dispensations of my heart and the powers of darkness can destroy; but by the influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT being enabled to abide in thee, may I bring forth fruit to the praise of thy holy name; and as thou hast said, *because thou livest I shall live also.*

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This chapter contains some interesting particulars relating to the priesthood, and the service of the Levites: together with the appointed portion for both.

REFLECTIONS

Oh! thou Almighty Aaron of our Gospel profession, thou dearest JESUS! who hast indeed, in thine own precious body on the tree, borne the burden of the sins, and of the most holy things, of thy people! In what I read in this chapter of Aaron and his sons, I behold thine unequalled person represented. It is thou, and thou alone, who hast sustained the dreadful pressure of sin and transgression. It is thou alone to whom the Lord JEHOVAH could say, Thou shalt bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, and the iniquity of the priesthood: for when neither the blood of bulls nor of goats could take away sin; then did the Saviour cry, Lo! I come. Oh! do thou still bear for me, and all thy ministering servants, both our sins and sorrows: do thou bear, Lord, the care of all thy churches; do thou bear our names upon thine arm, and upon thine heart, when going in before the mercy-seat; and when thou hast borne all thy people safely through every temptation, do thou bear them home to thy throne of glory, that where thou art there they may be also. Amen.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

In this chapter is contained, the law concerning purification in the water of separation, made with great preparation from the ashes of a red heifer burnt with cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet wood. The best comment on which, we have in the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. The method of use, and the office of the priest, in the performance of it, are here also appointed.

REFLECTIONS

ONCE more, my soul, contemplate the gracious condescension of thy GOD, in thus manifesting the infinite work of thy divine Redeemer, by shadowing forth the outlines of his great salvation in continued type and figure! everything I view in the Old Testament scripture, in relation to sacrifices and offerings, doth but the more point out the infinite love of the Father, in giving his Son; and the infinite love of the Son, in coming as a propitiation for the sin of his people. And oh! thou ever-blessed, ever-precious JESUS, thou, who like the red heifer, wert offered without spot or blemish to GOD, for the sins of thy people, and didst suffer without the gate, as the heifer was appointed; oh, enable me by the influences of thy blessed Spirit, to go forth unto thee without the camp, bearing thy reproach. Thanks be to GOD, that his people are now brought under that mild dispensation that though we are all in ourselves polluted, both by the death of our friends, and the dying state of ourselves, yet in the LORD JESUS, we are washed, we are sanctified, we are justified, by the Spirit of our GOD. Lead me to see, O Lord, in consecrated ashes, the incorruptible and everlasting efficacy of the righteousness of God my Saviour; and in the running water, the preciousness of that all-cleansing grace of the HOLY GHOST, the streams of which river makes glad the city of our GOD. May it be my portion, thus, to be cleansed daily from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, that I may perfect holiness in the fear of GOD.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This Chapter commenceth afresh the historical part of Israel's journey through the wilderness. From the end of the second year after the children of Israel's going forth from Egypt to the close of the thirty-ninth year, there is but little relation. But now, in the fortieth and last year which this chapter opens with, the history of the events which happened to them is more circumstantially related. Herein is contained the death of Miriam, and of Aaron: the people's murmurings for want of water: Moses's conduct on that occasion: the refusal of Edom to let Israel pass through his land: the succession of Eleazar to the priesthood after the death of Aaron, by the LORD's appointment.

REFLECTIONS

AMIDST the dying scenes of a pilgrimage like Israel's, and amidst the dying circumstances of the present world around me, Lord let my soul be directed to thee, and to the contemplation and enjoyment of that salvation and eternal life which is in thee, who liveth and abideth forever!

Oh my soul! from the divine chastisements which this chapter exhibits, in the LORD'S correcting his people, learn to consider thy sins and the many provocations of thy multiplied transgressions. Ah! how many *Meribahs* hast thou passed through, and yet thy life hath been spared to thee: for the LORD'S mercy endureth forever!

Farewell, Aaron! thou great high priest of the Levitical Priesthood! thy death adds one confirmation more to the numerous evidences on every side, of the total incompetency of all ministrations under the law to bring the soul to GOD. Dearest, and ever-blessed JESUS, to thee I turn: thou almighty Aaron, thou great high priest of a better dispensation, established upon better promises. Thou alone art able to carry thy people in, and lodge them and secure them safe in an everlasting Canaan. Oh! grant, blessed JESUS, that like another *Eleazar*, my soul may be clad with the priestly garments of thy salvation, for thou hast made all thy people

spiritual kings, and priests to GOD and the Father. May my soul be clothed with thy robes of righteousness, and my whole person adorned with the vestments of thy salvation: that both here and hereafter it may form my glorious covering, and become my everlasting title before my GOD and FATHER, to all the blessings of eternity.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

In this chapter, as Israel is now approaching the frontiers of the promised land, here is related an account of the first campaign in the contest with Arad at Hormach. Interspersed with this history, is the relation of the people's murmuring afresh, and the LORD'S chastisement of them, by sending among them fiery flying serpents; the account of the brazen serpent appointed by GOD for their recovery; several journeys are recited; and the account of Sihon king; of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan; with Israel's conquest over them, and taking possession of their land.

REFLECTIONS

IN the perusal of this chapter, I would charge it upon my soul, to fix her meditation more intensely, while paying due respect to all the other interesting circumstances of Israel's history, upon that beautiful and most gracious type of the LORD JESUS, as explained by himself, which I beheld in the brazen serpent. What a delightful view doth it afford of the complete salvation by JESUS? Who would have expected, in an age so remote from the days of JESUS'S ministry, and so many generations before the SON of GOD became incarnate, who would have looked for such a striking display of his great redemption in a figure! But it was thou, Holy, and eternal Spirit of all to whose office it peculiarly belongs, to take of the things of JESUS and show unto the people! It was thou that thus wast pleased to instruct the church then, and to comfort thy people now, with such sacred and soul-comforting representations of JESUS! Blessed be

GOD the HOLY GHOST, for the mercy! And no less do thou, precious JESUS, who art still lifted up in thy gospel for the purposes of salvation, from the FATHER'S love, and by the Spirit's application of thy merits and blood to the souls of thy people, do thou ever more become the blessed object of my faith and hope, until faith is lost in the enjoyment of thee in glory. May my soul gaze on thee, and thee only, for all supplies of grace while here below, and for all the enjoyments of glory, when surrounding thy throne above. Yes, dearest JESUS, on thee would my soul fix her wondering eyes, amidst all the diseases of sin, and under all the venomous wounds of Satan, that great serpent, the devil. I would forever look unto thee, as thou hast graciously enjoined me, and be saved; for thou alone canst heal the fiery darts of the wicked: it is thy blood which is the true balm of Gilead. Oh grant by the sweet influences of thy Spirit, that my soul may be constrained to look stedfastly unto thee with the eye of faith, now thou art lifted up on the pole of the everlasting gospel: and may I so look, that, beholding thee in thy person and righteousness, and in all thy covenant characters, my soul may be saved with an everlasting salvation, until I awake up, after thy likeness, to be fully satisfied with it.

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

This is a very remarkable chapter, and merits particular attention. It commenceth the wonderful history of Balaam and his ass. There is much to be discovered in it of the LORD'S gracious dealings with his people. The contents of it are the fright and the consequent wicked and foolish attempts of Balak, king of the Moabites, to prevent Israel from invading his borders. The impious endeavours of the king to gain over to his interest, a noted sorcerer of Mesopotamia: the impious attempts of this sorcerer, who knew better, yet for the sake of gain hired himself out to curse a people whom he knew the LORD had blessed: the history of these characters, and their conduct upon this occasion, together with the

miraculous interposition of GOD, in causing a dumb ass to speak with man's voice, to forbid the madness of the prophet, are related in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, and with horror contemplate the character of the graceless, even in their highest attainments of knowledge, as instanced in the case of wretched Balaam! What a wretched service must be the service of sin, when in spite of better knowledge, a man will hire himself out to work iniquity with all greediness; and for the sake of a little honour of this dying world, or the sordid gain of it, will go forth in the cause of the devil, against the LORD and against his CHRIST. Dearest JESUS! what everlasting cause have I to praise thee, that when I was pursuing the wages of sin, thou hast granted me the gift of GOD; and by thy precious blood and righteousness, thou hast made me free from sin that I might become the servant of GOD. LORD, make me very jealous over my own heart, that seeing, in so awful an example, to what lengths men may arrive in the knowledge of thee, and of thy ways, and yet come short of the grace of GOD, my soul may take up with nothing short of this, that CHRIST *is formed in my heart the only hope of glory.*

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

The subject through this chapter is a continuation of the former. The idolatrous prince, and the impious prophet, are both busily engaged, in seeking how to curse the LORD'S Israel, whom GOD hath blessed.

REFLECTIONS

Is it possible, my soul, in the perusal of this chapter in beholding the LORD'S tender care over his church and people, in making their very enemies the unwilling instruments to testify his watchfulness over them, is it possible any more to call in question the faithfulness

of our covenant GOD in CHRIST? And shall I any longer doubt, any longer suspend my implicit faith and confidence in his mercy? Shall I, like the timid disciple of old, expect the fleece to be moist, and then again to be dry, and through all my life be forever demanding new tokens, new evidences, increasing miracles of my GOD and Saviour's faithfulness towards me, when my whole life is but one continued miracle of all that is gracious, kind and merciful! Oh! for faith to believe the record which the LORD, the Father, hath given of his dear Son! Precious JESUS! pity and forgive the weakness and unworthiness of thy poor servant! Do thou, gracious Saviour, by the sweet influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT, incline my soul to depend more upon thee, and to trust thee, even where I cannot trace thee. Cause me to learn from what I read in this chapter, that as all hearts are in thy disposal, and like rivers of waters thou turnest them withersoever thou pleasest, thou canst incline my heart if thou wilt, to believe in thee, and to depend upon thee, even as thou secretly didst constrain the mad prophet to bless, where he intended to curse. LORD! lead me to see, that thou usest even the foes of thy church and people as instruments for their good: that thou hast blessed thy people, and wilt bless them; and their very enemies shall be constrained to call them blessed. And do thou, dearest and ever-blessed JESUS, do thou cause all the opposition which my soul may meet with in the path of grace, from the foes of my salvation, to be overruled for good. Let it minister to endear thee still more and more to my heart; that my necessity *of* thee, my confidence *in* thee, and my dependence *upon* thee, as the LORD my righteousness, may be increasingly precious every hour, until thou shalt have subdued all the enemies of my salvation, and finally bruised Satan under my feet.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

We have in this Chapter, the continuation and conclusion of the history of Balak and Balaam. And never surely was there afforded a

more memorable evidence, than there is in it, of the LORD'S overruling the minds of men to his own glory, his people's joy, and his enemies' destruction. Balaam and Balak part in anger, and the former is constrained by the same power, under whose influence he had through the whole conference been guided, to inform the latter, what events, from the LORD and his people should befall him and Moab in the end.

REFLECTIONS

READER! do not take a farewell review of the history of Balaam and Balak, without first imploring grace from GOD to take with you the several most interesting improvements which it holds forth. Learn first, what lengths bad men will proceed to, like Balak, in order to accomplish their devices against the righteous. The seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent are, and ever must be, hostile to each other. But oh! for grace to be as much alive in the cause of GOD and CHRIST, as the foes of JESUS are in their fruitless attempts to overcome the Israel of GOD. Learn next, Reader, from the character of Balaam, what a miserable state must those be in, who minister in divine things with a mere head knowledge, void of heart influence. It is precious indeed to see, that our gracious head of his church is always superintending the government of it. And he can and will arrange and order even the ministry of bad men, so as to promote, in defiance of their wishes and inclinations, his own glory, and his people's welfare. But what must be the end of those men, and what can the wages of unrighteousness be but death, even spiritual and eternal death. And lastly, and above all, let the history of Moab's vain attempt to crush Israel, and the wonderful interposition of their covenant GOD, as is here most delightfully related, teach the Reader, (and may the instruction be impressed upon the Writer's heart also), how eternally safe and secure the fold of JESUS is through all the eventful periods of this world's pilgrimage. Yes! thou precious GOD of thy people, who art the same yesterday, and today, and forever; thy promise is like thyself; *thy people shall never perish neither shall any pluck them out of thine hand.* Unworthy, undeserving, and ill and hell-deserving as they are in themselves, they are beloved for thy sake, and they are beloved

for the FATHER'S sake. Oh! may we ever remember on what account it is our mercies are secure; and begin now, ere we come to sing it louder in glory, the song of salvation to GOD and the Lamb.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

A melancholy relation is contained in this Chapter. The children of Israel fall into idolatry. The LORD'S visitation in a way of judgment follows. Phinehas distinguisheth himself amidst the general corruption in his zeal for the LORD'S honor, and is solemnly blessed of GOD for it.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over this chapter now again in the close of it, and while taking a leisurely review of the sad consequences of a fallen state, look up for grace to keep thee from the stratagems of Satan and all his agents, lest thou fall after the same example of unbelief. I would convert the apostle's account of this sad history into a prayer, and say, LORD grant that I may not lust after evil things as they lusted, neither commit fornication as some of them committed; but grant gracious GOD that amidst all the variety of temptations, which beset my soul in this wilderness, a way may be made for me to escape, that I may be able to bear it.

And while I behold the zeal of Phinehas, who amidst the general corruption was found faithful to his GOD, oh! may I never forget thee, thou great High Priest of a better dispensation established upon better promises. Dearest JESUS! it is thou, whose ardent love for thy FATHER'S glory, and thy people's welfare, brought thee down from heaven; and in the destruction of sin, thou hast destroyed the works of the devil. Be thou my everlasting priest, thou great Melchisedec, and may I find in thee all the FATHER'S grace, and mercy, and love, displayed in thine everlasting priesthood.

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

The sacred historian records in this Chapter the number of the people previous to their going into Canaan. Particular notice is taken of the deaths of Dathan and Abiram; as also of the deaths of all that came out of Egypt, excepting Caleb and Joshua.

REFLECTIONS

IN the contemplation of the events recorded in this Chapter, I feel my heart constrained to cry out, LORD! what is man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of! Think, my soul, while thou here reviewest the dreadful ravages of death during forty years only, what destruction hath been made by death during nearly now six thousand years since sin first entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passeth upon all men, because all have sinned. But dearest JESUS! here again let me turn from the view of the desolations made by death, to behold thee in all the glories of thy redeeming character, as having by thy death overcome death, and opened the first view of the everlasting mansions of life, in thy triumph over the grave. Precious JESUS! thou art the Rock of ages. On thee may I be built, as a sure dwelling place. In thy book may my soul be found numbered! And when all the wilderness dispensations of a wilderness journey, and the wilderness itself, shall be destroyed, may an entrance into the Canaan of thy everlasting, unchanging love, be my portion among the numbered tribes of GOD.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the private history of the daughters of Zelophehad suing for an inheritance among the other tribes of Israel. The LORD'S determination in their favour. Moses is

admonished of his death: and Joshua nominated by the LORD, as his successor.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED LORD! make me as anxious for an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, as those daughters of Israel were for an inheritance among their brethren: and may it be my noblest ambition to be among the people of GOD, rather than among all the enjoyments, this side the land of promise hath to offer. And oh! thou blessed Spirit, from whose gracious influence all wisdom is imparted to the mind of thy people, give to me suitable grace, upon every occasion of difficulty, how to act in doubtful cases; lead my soul to imitate thy servant's example, and, like Moses, the man of GOD, bring the matter before the throne: and may thy promise of strength as the day is, be my portion.

But chiefly, dearest JESUS, now thou hast led me as thou didst thy servant Moses, to view by faith the promised land, oh! may I be as ready as he was to resign my soul into thy arms with full assurance of faith. Yes! my gracious GOD and Saviour, from the hill of Calvary and the Mount of Olives, thou hast opened indeed my eyes to behold fair views of that blessed country whither thou art gone before, to take possession of it for thy people. LORD! strengthen my faith every day in this well-grounded assurance, and until thou shalt be pleased to give the signal for my dismissal, may I be hourly waiting and longing for thy coming; and when the moment shall arrive, oh! enable me to die, as I pray to live, believing the promises; and at the very last crying out with him of old, LORD, *now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

As the people are now approaching Canaan, they are once more numbered; the sacrifices and burnt offerings again enjoined; and

the several services for every day, the Sabbath day, and the new moons, and the day of passover, particularly again appointed.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! may all these ordinances, statutes, and appointments of a shadowy dispensation, be made the means in thy hands, of leading me to thee, in whom I behold, through the Spirit's teaching, all ordinances, statutes, and sacrifices, having their fullness and completion. Thou art indeed, the morning Lamb, and the evening sacrifice. Thou art CHRIST, my Passover, sacrificed for me: therefore give me grace to keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. May I esteem thy person, thy favor, thy sweet communications of love, better than all new moons and feasts of the richest earthly enjoyments. Thou art thyself the very sabbath of my soul, and the only rest wherewith thou dost cause the weary to rest, and to become their refreshment. And LORD, grant that by thee I may be enabled to offer to GOD continually, the first fruits of my heart and of my lips, giving thanks in thy name.

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

The same subject is carried on, through this Chapter, which formed a part of the former, namely, the repeating the laws to be observed on the solemn seasons. Here are directions given concerning the festivals of the seventh month; the feast of trumpets; the feast of expiation; and the feast of tabernacles.

REFLECTIONS

LET neither the Writer nor Reader for a moment be led to suppose that the frequent repetition of these laws concerning the religious services of the LORD'S heritage, are superfluous or unnecessary: but rather let both therefrom be led, to remark, how

infinitely important must be that glorious liberty of the gospel to which they all ministered; and how ineffectual all other services are in themselves to bring the heart to GOD. If the Reader and the Writer should, under the blessed teachings of the HOLY GHOST, be directed to this improvement from the whole, every repeated precept and ordinance will be indeed made precious to the soul.

Do thou, my soul, seek grace from above to learn yet more and more, however slightly and inconsiderately viewed by others, the vast, the infinite importance of the full, free, and rich salvation by JESUS, as it must appear in the divine eye, to cause it to be ushered in through so many ages with such a wonderful profusion of sacrifices and offerings. Who indeed, can go through the perusal of so many Chapters concerning sacrifices, and behold them again and again repeated and insisted upon, in such awful terms, for obedience, without being wonderfully struck with the conviction of the infinite importance of the blood and righteousness of JESUS. Oh! thou precious, precious LAMB of GOD! who hast by the one all-sufficient, all-effectual offering of thyself once offered, forever perfected them that are sanctified. Oh! may I feel my heart more powerfully constrained to the love of thee, in every renewed perusal of these sacrifices of the law! Dearest JESUS! in every service, under every ordinance, in the feast days of holy rejoicing, or the fast days of humiliation; both when the gospel trumpet is sounded, of pardon, mercy, and peace, in the blood of thy cross; or when the laws of a broken commandment are read, to show my soul that by a covenant of works no flesh can be justified before GOD: in any and in all be thou my hope, my joy, my confidence, my righteousness, my all in all, to bring my heart to GOD. And do thou, blessed Spirit! whose work alone it is, to shed abroad a Saviour's love within me; so incline my every affection into the love of JESUS, that I may henceforth no longer live to myself, but to him that died for me and rose again.

CHAPTER 30

SUMMARY

This Chapter is devoted to the prescribing of laws concerning vows. Here are general rules, as well as particular cases, considered: such as the vows of daughters, and those of wives.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! do thou undertake for me, in all my earnest desires and strongest resolutions, to love and serve the GOD of my salvation, for otherwise I am well assured, that all my strength in the hour of trial will prove to be perfect weakness. I can do nothing, dearest LORD, nothing in myself but sin; but I can do all things if thou art my strength and confidence; and therefore, never can I trust myself too little, or my Saviour too much.

But may I not see, in this merciful exemption from rash vows ill undertaken and unfaithfully performed, a gracious exemption for the infirmities of thy people? Surely JESUS is the everlasting Father of his people: and surely thou art no less their husband also. Do thou then, blessed LORD! confirm and strengthen my soul by thy grace, to perform all I vow in thy strength, and enable me to accomplish it. And do thou rescind and do away the obligation to perform everything unprofitable to be done, by thy sovereign power, and right of dominion over me. For I trust, that by thy HOLY SPIRIT thou hast begotten me again to a new life; by which I am thine as thy child by adoption and grace: and that thou hast betrothed me to thyself forever, by which my Maker is mine husband, the LORD of Hosts is his name. And for the dedicating myself to thy service forever, LORD enable me so to vow, and so to perform, that I may say with one of old, I will pay my vows unto the LORD, in the presence of all his people; even in the courts of the LORD'S house.

CHAPTER 31

SUMMARY

In this Chapter we have the relation of Israel's war with Midian. The number of the army appointed by the LORD himself; the success of GOD's host; the event of the battle in the spoils brought with them: the purifying the people after the war; and the division of the booty.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over the perusal of this whole Chapter, and duly contemplate in the case of Balak and Balaam's confederacy against Israel, and the event which here so soon after followed, in the destruction of Midian, the truth of that Scripture, *The lamp of the wicked shall be put out.* And again: *Yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*

In the contemplation of the holy war of Israel, behold, my soul, the figure and similitude of that war in which thou art engaged. LORD, help me to go forth to every conflict in thy strength, making mention of thy righteousness, even thine only. Let not mine eye spare any of those lusts, in my corrupt members, which war against my soul; but do thou blessed JESUS, as the great captain of my salvation, go before, and by the precious influences of thine HOLY SPIRIT, drive them out before me, until they are utterly consumed. And grant, gracious GOD, that when returning from the slaughter, I may have so fully learnt the song of salvation to GOD and the LAMB, that the blood of JESUS may be my oblation for the atonement of the sin of my soul. Of my soul may it be said, as it is and shall ever be of all the redeemed in the holy army of the LORD, *They overcame by the blood of the LAMB, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

CHAPTER 32

SUMMARY

In this Chapter the history of Israel is pursued. Here is an account of the desire of the Reubenites, and Gadites, to settle on this side Jordan: Moses reproveth the thought; as if they wished to withdraw from the conquest of Canaan. They explain their intention, with which Moses is satisfied: and the lands of the kingdom of Sihon and Og, are conditionally appointed to them and their descendants.

REFLECTIONS

REMARK, my soul, in the case of those Reubenites and Gadites, how injurious to the pilgrimage state in thy pursuit of Canaan, is a love of worldly ease and settlement. Alas! what have we, who profess ourselves to be strangers and pilgrims upon earth, and are supposed to be seeking a better country, that is an heavenly, what have we to do with the things of time and sense? But how true is that saying of the apostle's; All seek their own, not the things of JESUS CHRIST. Precious Redeemer! do thou so endear thyself to my view, that I may esteem it my chief happiness to endure affliction, if need be, with the people of GOD, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; and like thy servant of old, esteem the reproach of CHRIST greater riches than all the treasures on this side Jordan.

CHAPTER 33

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the account of the journeying of Israel from Egypt to Canaan; and once more the LORD's command is repeated, that the people be sure to drive out the Canaanites from the land.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! pause here, and behold the wonderful love of GOD to his people. Behold, what a series of hazardous journeys, as they must have appeared to human nature, and impossible ever to have been accomplished by flesh and blood, unprotected by the LORD, were GOD's Israel brought through. Call to mind, in rehearsing these two and forty stages of their pilgrimage, what a train of miracles accompanied them, more or less, at every stage. Traverse, in idea, the inhospitable regions of uninhabited desolate places the LORD led them through, for forty years together, during the whole of which space their garments waxed not old, neither were their feet swollen, and surrounded as they were with beasts of prey, and fiery flying serpents, and scorpions. And behold the people at the close of their journey, as many in number at least, and as healthy, as when they first set out; and will not every beholder be prompted to exclaim, *what hath GOD wrought!* But while beholding Israel of old, forget not, my soul, to contemplate the true Israel of GOD now. Is not our JESUS carrying home his church through the wilderness? Are not his people in continued movements? Are they not exercised with the same wilderness dispensations? And is not JESUS himself always with them, driving out every enemy before them, and continually manifesting himself to them otherwise than he doth to the world? Oh! my soul, search diligently for thine own personal interest and part in this history; and do thou be continually inquiring for the evidences of thy journey in the spiritual warfare of JESUS, until the LORD shall have accomplished thy wilderness state, and shall bring thee home to Canaan, to behold his glory, and dwell with him forever.

CHAPTER 34

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the relation of the boundaries of the land of Canaan according to the LORD'S appointment of it: and the persons whom the LORD commissioned to fix the boundaries.

REFLECTIONS

HERE, my soul, pause, and meditate on the love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS! GOD had promised Abraham that his seed should inherit Canaan, and behold the assurance of GOD'S promises. Oh! for the faith of Abraham, to trust GOD in the certainty of an immortal Canaan, and like him, to go forth if needful, through the wilderness of this world, in the sure expectation of it, not knowing whither he went. Blessed JESUS! be thou the Canaan of my soul; and through every journey of the pilgrimage state towards it, do thou fix the bounds of my habitation, that in thee my whole desires may centre. Thou art the Priest, like Eleazar, and the Captain of my salvation, like Joshua, to go on before me to the promised land. LORD! give me grace to eye thee in every step; to live upon thee in every movement; and finally, to dwell with thee where thou art, to behold thy glory.

CHAPTER 35

SUMMARY

This Chapter may be properly considered as a continuation of the former. As the sons of Levi had no portion with their brethren, because the LORD was their portion; in this Chapter we have the part which the LORD assigned in Canaan for the possession of his priests. Forty-eight cities, with their suburbs, are marked out for them. Beside these, six cities are appointed as cities of refuge for the manslayer, which this Chapter takes notice of; and other laws for regulation concerning murder, to which those cities of refuge were not to reach.

REFLECTIONS

Blessed be that HOLY SPIRIT, the Teacher of my soul, from whose influence I am enabled to look beyond the Levitical dispensation, in those cities of refuge, and behold in them the evident emblems of him, and his complete security, who shelters all that flee to him from the avenger of poor guilty sinners. Oh! thou dear Redeemer, may I be led by thy Spirit's ministry continually to thee, and not stop short of the security thou hast afforded, in thy opened wounds, for the salvation of my soul. Neither shall I be in the danger which the people under the Levitical dispensation were exposed to, by the death of the High Priest; for thou blessed JESUS ever livest, and the efficacy of thy atonement is always the same.

CHAPTER 36

SUMMARY

The subject, relative to Zelophehad's daughters, is resumed. To prevent the inconvenience which might result from the inheritance of daughters, the LORD appoints a remedy in determining that the daughters of such tribes as possessed the inheritance of their fathers, should marry, in the elder branches of their own tribes.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD! my soul, in the perusal of this Chapter, how graciously the LORD watches over his people, in all their concerns. And is he less attentive now? Is his arm shortened, or his ear grown heavy? Must not the people of GOD be very dear to GOD, and doth he not watch over them for good, to guide them in all their ways, and to keep them, lest any hurt them, night and day.

Let the people of GOD learn from this Chapter how suitable and proper it must be, like the daughters of Israel, to be united only to their own tribes. And ought not every true believer in JESUS to be very attentive in the near and tender relations of life, to be united only to such as are united to the LORD? If JESUS cements the union

between souls, certainly those united to him will form the truest union with each other, *for they that are joined to the LORD are one spirit.*

DEUTERONOMY

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

THERE is the same cause, in perusing this *fifth* and *last* Book of the writings of Moses, to remind the Reader of what, in every one of the former, he hath been very earnestly desired not to lose sight of, that *Moses wrote of* CHRIST. And, indeed, if while going through the preceding writings of this inspired penman, the Reader hath not discovered JESUS in every page, there is but the more reason to implore grace, and the teachings of the HOLY GHOST, in his attention to this concluding book of Moses, that he may now discover that it is He, *of whom Moses and the prophets did write*, JESUS *of Nazareth*. May that Almighty Instructor, whose office alone it is to take of the things of JESUS, and show them unto his people, be the Teacher both of him that writes and him that reads.

The Book of *Deuteronomy*, which signifies the *second law*, is probably so called, because that this is the *second* enumeration of the precepts which Moses had in commission to deliver to Israel. It is not, however, so properly a *second law*, as a *rehearsal* of the former. And the reason for this repetition is abundantly evident. All that generation was dead before whom Moses had rehearsed it on their coming out of Egypt. And as very many of the precepts had a peculiar reference to the conduct of the people after their arrival to the promised land, it became highly proper that the laws should be rehearsed in the ears of the generation which had sprung up in the place of their fathers, and before whom they had not as yet been delivered.

As the Book of Deuteronomy contains what one of the prophets calls the *great things of GOD's law*, it should be recollected by the Reader, that it doth not contain much of history. Indeed the whole date of it, from beginning to end, compriseth a period only of two

months. One month previous to the death of Moses, and one after. See Joshua 4:19, compared with Deuteronomy 1:3.

The vast importance of this sacred book of GOD may be best implied from the singularity of the precept for attention to it, with which it was accompanied. It was to be read publickly every seventh year by the priest before all the people, at the feast of Tabernacles, see chap. 31:10. The king himself, when the people were settled in Canaan, and the LORD had appointed a king over them, was to write a copy of it with his own hand, and read it all the days of his life. See chap. 17:18, 19. And as a more public memorial of it, to which the *people* might refer, great stones were to be made smooth with plaister, and the law engraven upon them. See chap. 27:2, 3. All which imply the high esteem in which this sacred book was held. I only detain the Reader after this account just to add, that the honour and respect paid by our adorable Redeemer to this part of the divine word, is not inconsiderable; for all the answers with which he thought proper to repel the attacks of the devil, in the season of his temptations, were gathered from this book. Sweet testimony of its value, endeared as it is by so precious an example!

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

This sacred book opens with an account of the children of Israel just as they are entering the borders of Canaan. They had nearly completed the fortieth year of their wilderness journey: and now, before they enter the promised land, Moses addresseth them in a long discourse. This chapter is the beginning of it, which goes on without much interruption, (excepting at the end of the fourth chapter) until the close of the thirtieth chapter.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a most beautiful representation doth this chapter afford of a faithful, laborious minister, in the character of Moses! Who can behold this aged servant of JEHOVAH, thus sermonizing even to the

very close of life, and going over again and again in relation, all the great things the LORD had shown him and the people, without being struck with the loveliness of such a minister, and being led to admire yet more and more those holy principles which he laboured to impress upon the minds of the people.

But here again, as in every other instance, how doth the contemplation of the *servant* lead the heart yet more immediately to the *master*. It is thou, blessed JESUS, whose ministry is glorified even in the view of thy servant's zeal. Thou camest, full of grace and truth, to make known to thy people the everlasting counsel of peace in thy covenant righteousness and blood. And how art thou, even now, still reminding us, by thy SPIRIT, of the LORD'S continual mercies and our unworthiness. Continue, dearest LORD, the sweet influences of thy ministry still, until, like Joshua, thou bringest us where Moses and the law cannot lead, even over the Jordan of death, to behold thy glory, and dwell with thee forever.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This chapter is a continuation of Moses's sermon. It is full of memorials, in bringing to the people's recollection the events with which GOD had distinguished his mercy towards them, while passing the borders of the Edomites and Moabites; with the recapitulation of what referred to the of Israel's war with Sihon, King of the Amorites.

REFLECTIONS

MYsoul! cherish the thought (for it is a precious one) while beholding the revolutions of states and empires, recorded in this chapter, how happy the lot of those who belong to *a kingdom which cannot be moved*. What indeed can be wanting to give comfort to the heart of any man who hath a well-grounded assurance of an interest in the kingdom of GOD, and of CHRIST! Dearest King of Zion! do thou reign in my heart, in my soul, in my affections: and then am I sure thou wilt in thine own time, which is the best time, drive out

before me all the *terrible ones*, and all the *crafty ones*, which now stand in my way to Canaan. Blessed LORD! let thy HOLY SPIRIT wean my desires from *every* alluring object accursed, that I may covet nothing which belongs to the carnal, but having thee for my portion, in thee I may find everything, and in everything enjoy thee.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

The continuation of Moses's discourse is carried through this chapter. Here are described the victory Israel obtained over Og king of Bashan, with the division of his dominions, to the two tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh: the order given to Joshua, as the intended successor of Moses, to carry on the conquest of Canaan: Moses's earnest request at that time to the LORD, that he might go over Jordan with the people, and the LORD's refusal.

REFLECTIONS

AMIDST the various improvements which the perusal of this Chapter opens to my view, under the teaching of GOD the HOLY GHOST, while I behold, as in the case of the kings of Sihon and Bashan, that giants are but as dwarfs when GOD fights the battles of his people; and that, while going forth in the strength of the LORD GOD, making mention of his righteousness, even his only, I shall be more than conqueror through him that loveth me: let me desire like Moses, with an eye of faith, to see that goodly land, and yet more especially JESUS, the LORD of it, who is the greater Joshua, gone before to take possession of it in the name of all his people. Oh! thou LORD of the country, and of the true tabernacle, which our GOD hath pitched and not man, grant, by the influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT, that my soul may be ever longing, until faith is realized in vision, for the view of thee, and of thy glory. May my soul contemplate now by faith all ordinances, means of grace, and every institution of service, as pointing to thy Person, and having their consummation in thee;

and when thou shalt give the order for my dismissal from this region of shadows, LORD grant that I may awake up after thy likeness, to be fully satisfied with thee.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

This Chapter concludes the first part of Moses's Sermon, and a most pathetic and practical conclusion it is: in which he earnestly urgeth the people to the love and obedience of the LORD GOD of their fathers. In the close of the chapter Moses appoints certain cities of refuge for the manslayer on that side Jordan.

REFLECTIONS

SWEET and precious Chapter, when explained to my soul by the HOLY GHOST, in reference to my adored Redeemer. May the LORD give me grace to read it with all possible reverence and affection; and may he open mine eyes to see the wondrous things of his law. Oh! may I be enabled to see the vast claims there are upon me, by virtue of my covenant relationship in CHRIST JESUS; and as powerfully find grace to live in them. And as I trust the LORD hath stretched forth his Almighty arm, and assayed, as in the case of Israel, to go and gather me from another nation, greater and mightier than I am; and hath brought me out: Oh! may the same most merciful GOD in CHRIST, which hath called me by his grace, support and keep me by his power. Dear JESUS! be thou my city of refuge, my hiding place, my security, my GOD, my portion! LORD, I come to thee, and do thou remember thy sweet promise, for thou hast said, all that the FATHER giveth thee shall come, and him that cometh thou wilt in no wise cast out.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

In this Chapter, Moses reassumes the subject of his Sermon. He brings to the remembrance of Israel that great event, of the giving of the law at Horeb, when Moses acted as a Mediator between GOD and Israel. He repeats the ten commandments, and subjoins his observations upon them; reminds them of what they had said at that time, and takes occasion, once more, to enforce the great duty of obedience.

REFLECTIONS

OH! thou great law-giver, and law-fulfiller, of a better dispensation, founded upon better promises! May I behold thee in all thy precious offices and characters, while reading in this chapter thy servant Moses commanding the attention of the people. In the name of JEHOVAH thou camest personally once in the days of thy flesh; and now thou comest spiritually in the day of thy power, commanding all thy people to hear the gospel offer of thy blood and righteousness! Oh! give me grace, to receive thy precious word, and cry out, with the affection of one of old, Oh! how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day! Blessed JESUS! may it be my portion to receive the law of faith, which is obeyed, not by works of righteousness, which I have done, or can do, but by thine own perfect obedience, in a law-fulfilling, and law-satisfying righteousness. And grant, gracious GOD, that while I see myself justified by thy blood and righteousness from all things by which I never could be justified by the law of Moses, may I be enabled, by the sweet influences of the HOLY GHOST, so to live a life of faith, on thee and thy complete salvation, that though dead to the law, as a covenant of works, I may not be without law unto GOD, but under the law to CHRIST.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a continuation of the same subject as the former. The man of GOD is exceedingly earnest in enforcing obedience to all the precepts contained in the covenant.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED GOD! may it be my happiness to be distinguished from all carnal and ungodly persons, and to carry about with me, wherever I go, all the distinguishing features of character which should mark thy people. I rejoice, gracious GOD, in the recollection of the unity of the divine essence, and while I pray for continual grace to live a life of faith in the constant enjoyment of communion and fellowship with all the Persons of the GODHEAD, may it be my joy and comfort, the conviction of this first and most glorious truth, the LORD our GOD is one LORD!

Oh! that all who in the present hour are tempted to question, whether the LORD JEHOVAH existeth in a plurality of persons or not, would read those numberless passages, where the word LORD which is *singular* and means the one glorious JEHOVAH is joined with the word GOD in the *plural*: as if forever to silence the blasphemy of infidels and to strengthen and confirm the faith of believers. And oh! that all the seed of Abraham according to the flesh would consult their own scriptures on this glorious truth, that when they discover the sacred name of, Jacob's GOD joined with words that are *plural*, they might no longer doubt whether a plurality of persons exist in Him who is the glorious GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! Hasten thou great deliverer, and arise out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

LORD! I beseech thee give me grace, that the vital religion of my adored Redeemer, may be with me a family religion, a personal religion, A religion manifested to all the world. May it be my glory, and delight, to let everyone know whose I am, and whom I love, and desire to serve in the gospel of GOD's dear SON. Yes! thou blessed Redeemer, be thou my portion, my joy, my happiness, my delight;

and be thou my LORD my righteousness, that I may speak of it every day, and all the day, and wear thy holy and dear name as a seal upon mine heart, and upon mine arm; and as frontlets between mine eyes. And do thou, dearest LORD, own me for thine, both now and when thou comest to make up thy jewels.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

Moses continueth his discourse throughout this Chapter. In addition to the same general instructions to obedience, and adherence to the LORD, here are precepts of prohibition against Israel forming any alliance with his enemies.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! pause over the review which thou hast made in this chapter, both of the enemies of Israel, and Israel's GOD driving them out before him. Bring home to thine own heart the circumstances of their spiritual state, and examine thy case by Israel's. Have you discovered that the same foes are now opposing your eternal welfare, as opposed Israel's conquest of Canaan? Have you felt their power, seen their malice, and learnt your own total inability to fight your way through them? Have you, my soul, discovered JEHOVAH JESUS, as the glorious Captain of your salvation; as one mighty indeed to save; as the LORD your GOD in a covenant way, the LORD GOD that *can*, the faithful GOD that *will*, drive them out before thee, until they are all consumed? And hath thy GOD in CHRIST indeed begun for thee this holy war; and is he now going before thee, in subduing enemies both within and without; the powers of darkness and the world from without, and the corrupt lusts and affections from within; are these thy views and thy experiences? Then bless GOD for thy mercies, and let the precious precepts, and precious promises, beautifully blended as they are in this chapter, be thy comfort, and support thy mind through the teaching of the HOLY GHOST, during the arduous, but certainly successful, war.

Precious, precious JESUS! thou, whom the FATHER hath given as a leader and commander to thy people, to thee do I look up; and on thy dear arm would I wholly lean. Never, never, blessed GOD, do thou suffer me to make peace with any of these enemies, or for a moment enter into any league of amity with them. Here, LORD, in thy strength do I vow, that thy foes shall be my foes, and thy people my people. And as my eyes are towards thee, and any whole reliance is on thy great salvation, do thou carry me on, and bear me through all opposition, until thou hast put them all out before me; and then bring me into thine holy mountain, to behold thy glory, and to sit down, according to thy blessed promise, on thy throne, as thou hast overcome, and art sat down with thy FATHER on his throne. Even so, Amen.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

The subject of Moses's Sermon is continued through this chapter. The man of GOD makes use of some of the most persuasive arguments to enforce an observance of the holy precepts he had given to Israel.

REFLECTIONS

OH! thou matchless instructor of the LORD'S people; blessed SPIRIT! do thou graciously condescend to keep alive in my soul, by thy divine teaching, the remembrance of myself, and my own poor and low estate by nature, which thou hast taught me; and during the whole of my wilderness state, through which thou art bringing me, give me also to keep in view the infinite fulness, suitableness, and all-sufficiency of salvation in the LORD my righteousness.

Very gracious hast thou been to me, O LORD! Thou hast indeed humbled me, and proved me, and shown me what was in my heart, and given me in part to see what still remains there of sin and unbelief. Thou hast fed me, as thou didst Israel of old, with the manna of salvation, and with the bread of life. All the chastisements

of thy grace have been as the chastisements of a kind and wise father: and thou hast brought me into a fulness of mercies, and the riches of redemption, in CHRIST JESUS.

LORD, keep me by thy grace from all spiritual pride and self-confidence. Never, dearest LORD, never may I be prompted to say, or think, that anything in me hath in the least contributed to the obtaining so great salvation; that neither my might, nor my hand, hath wrought it; but may I be ever ready to ascribe the whole to the sovereignty and freedom of thy grace. Like one of old may the uniform language of my lips correspond to the feelings of my heart, and may his sentiments be mine; not by works of righteousness which I have done, but according to thy mercy, LORD, thou hast saved me, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the HOLY GHOST, shed on me abundantly, through JESUS CHRIST my Savior. And therefore not unto me, O LORD, not unto me, but to thy holy name be all the praise.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

Moses is still discoursing to the Israelites: and the leading point in the Sermon of this Chapter, is to impress upon the minds of the people, what the LORD's people in all ages need to be perpetually reminded of, that the distinguishing mercy of GOD not for any merit in them, but purely from the free grace and pleasure of GOD. Moses particularities certain instances of Israel's transgression in proof.

REFLECTIONS

LEARN, my soul, from the view of Israel's rebellion, all the way through their eventful history, what nature is in its highest attainment. And may the blessed SPIRIT convince me yet more and more, that it is not in the days of my unregeneracy only, that I am to look back for evidences of the sin of my nature, but since the LORD brought me out of spiritual Egypt I have had many *Horebs*, many *Taberahs*, and many *Massahs*, as well as Israel.

Blessed JESUS! let those views of the sin of my nature tend yet more to endear thee, who art the LORD my righteousness, to my heart. And while I beseech thee to drive out all my enemies before me, keep me, by such tokens of sin in my nature as every day's experience affords, humble in my own sight; and most gladly to refer all the victory, all the glory, and all the praise, to thine arm, which alone bringeth salvation.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

In the continuation of Moses's Sermon, the man of GOD, in this chapter, makes a beautiful digression from complaining, as in the former chapter, of Israel's rebellion, to remark in this the unmerited examples of the LORD's mercy. He points out some evidences of it in restoring the tables; continuing the priesthood; separating the tribe of Levi; and regarding Moses' intercession for them. He takes occasion, from all these things, in the close of the chapter to exhort them to obedience.

REFLECTIONS

THINK, my soul, from the perusal of this Chapter, what a gracious GOD thou hast to do with, who when thou hadst broken both tables of the commandment, hath graciously condescended to furnish thee afresh: and hath put his written law, as a covenant, ratified and fulfilled in the person of his dear SON, in the ark of mercy, as an everlasting security for thy perfect obedience. And think again, with heartfelt thankfulness and praise, that in thy glorious Surety and Representative, all that the LORD thy GOD requireth of thee be hath answered. JESUS is indeed the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Blessed SPIRIT! do thou circumcise my heart, and cause me to be no more stiff-necked. Unless purified by thee, and preserved by thy sin-subduing influence, what am I but a mass of corruption, and still

remaining in the uncircumcision of carnal nature? Oh! for thy purifying, preserving, and renewing influences, that being called out of the state of a stranger in Egypt, as all my fathers were, I may be found among the number of the children of GOD, and my lot may be among the saints!

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

We may consider the contents of this Chapter to be the conclusion of one branch of Moses's Sermon, in the arguments he had been bringing forward to enforce Israel's love and obedience to the LORD. Blessings and cursings are held forth in order to accomplish this great end. The man of GOD is very particular in reminding Israel of the many signal instances of favor the LORD had shown the people, and he carries this subject to a most extensive view.

REFLECTIONS

DEAREST JESUS! be thou everlastingly adored for all the great things which mine eyes have seen of thy wonders of grace, in the rescue of thy people from more than Egyptian bondage in sin and death. Oh! give me yet more and more to see and know my vast privileges, and be ever ready to ascribe the whole where alone it is due, to thine arm, and thy power, which alone bringeth salvation.

Oh, for an ardent zeal to be looking for that city of Canaan whither thou art gone before. Blessed JESUS! may the recollection that thou art there, prompt my soul to be sending forth its warmest affections and desires after the attainment of it, knowing that while I am present in the body I am absent from the LORD.

And do thou, HOLY SPIRIT, whose grace and influence alone can effectually direct and incline my heart to a right judgment in all things, do thou sweetly constrain my soul into the love of GOD and into the patient waiting for JESUS CHRIST; that while thy servant is here setting before me, the blessing and the curse, life and death, and

good and evil: JESUS himself who is the sum and substance of all blessings, all mercies, all good, may be my choice and my Portion forever.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This chapter differs in some degree from what went before. It is certainly the continuation of Moses's Sermon, but is not so much in a way of exhortation as in precept. He here directs to the observance of certain duties which the LORD had appointed to be regarded in Canaan; such as the throwing down all the idolatrous monuments the people should find in the land; appointing a certain spot to be peculiarly dedicated to the service of the LORD; cautiously abstaining from the use of blood in their sacrifices; and eating them, holy things in the precise place which the LORD had commanded; together with observing due attention to the person of the Levite; and being so exceedingly tenacious of their attachment to the GOD of their Fathers, as not even to enquire after the mode of worship which the idolaters of Canaan followed.

REFLECTIONS

HOLY and Eternal SPIRIT! be graciously pleased of thine infinite mercy so to write thy statutes and judgments upon my mind and in my heart, that I may live to JESUS in the enjoyment of them all the days of my pilgrimage upon the earth. Thou, dearest LORD, art both the lawgiver and the law-fulfiller of thine own sacred will. Oh! may I behold thee as the end of the law for righteousness to me, and to every one that believeth; and while, through the influences of the blessed SPIRIT, I live a life of faith *to* GOD and *upon* GOD, may I feel an holy jealousy to throw down all the idols of the heart wherever I find them.

Dearest LORD! make that place peculiarly sacred to my soul, which hath JESUS for its object. Here would I dwell, forever dwell, under the shining of thy divine countenance! Here would I bring my

poor offerings, and here alone present my sacrifices, seeking the acceptance both of my person and offering in him and his precious righteousness, who is the altar, the offering, and the high priest of all His people. And as I am not yet come to that rest which is thyself, blessed JESUS, in glory, and only behold thee now by faith; LORD, help me until the vail be removed, to walk more by faith and less by sight, that I may not do according to what the world is doing, whatsoever seemeth right in a man's own eyes; but that forgetting things that are behind, and reaching forth to those which are before, I may press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS. Return to thy rest, to thy JESUS, O my soul, for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee!

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a continuation of the same subject as the former. Particular and special precepts are contained in it to arm against the motives to idolatry; the persons tempting to it are to be stoned, and even the cities where this sin is committed, are to be razed to the earth.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! behold to what temptations thou art exposed, not only from false prophets and false teachers, but also from false friends and relations. How hath the GOD of this word blinded the minds of men and brought them over to his interests! How doth that prince of the power of the air, as he is called by the apostle, still work in the children of disobedience! And how doth he govern them, direct them, and influence them, by his secret insinuations, to dishonour GOD themselves, and prompt others by their counsel and example! Are not evil spirits and evil men of every description and character his ministers? And what are all those acts of men which we behold going on in life, in drunken clubs, riotous pastimes, revels, banquetings, interpreters of dreams, fortune-telling, and the like, but

so many sabbaths of his, and festivals to draw souls aside from the LORD GOD of their fathers. “My Soul! come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor be not thou united.” But dearest LORD! arm me with thy grace, and the power of thy HOLY SPIRIT, that I may flee from idolatry, and be found among the number of the faithful, in cleaving to thee, O LORD, with full purpose of heart.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

MOSES is prosecuting the same subject of GOD'S laws through this Chapter. Here are precepts concerning the persons of the children of Israel, concerning their diet, of what may be eaten and what not; together with the tithes of divine service, and of rejoicing in them before the LORD, and of the third year's tithes of alms.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED LORD! give me to see that thou hast *chosen* me to be one among thy people, that thou hast *adopted* me into thy family, that thou hast *sanctified* me by thy grace, and that I am thine in an everlasting covenant which cannot be broken: and help me to live to thy glory that I may be distinguished as thy people are distinguished, and then shall I live to thy praise and honour all the day long.

LORD! teach me to learn from the precepts in this chapter, how pure and holy all thy people ought to live, repeating things which are without. May I never wallow in those corruptions which the ungodly and carnal wallow in! May it be my meat and my drink to do thy will! May I use a sparing enjoyment of mere creature comforts, but constantly keep in view, and make it by grace the mark of my conduct, that *the kingdom of GOD is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

We have in this Chapter a continuation of Moses's discourse. Here are contained, the order for the release of debtors every seventh year: cautions to the people not to withhold lending to their needy brethren, on account of the year of release being at hand: some particularities respecting the Hebrew servant, and concerning the offering of the firstlings of their cattle to GOD.

REFLECTIONS

BEFORE I close the chapter, let me pause again and review the divine mercy in the appointment of the year of release. Let me contemplate the FATHER's everlasting love, the Redeemer's unequalled grace, and thy rich mercy, O thou eternal SPIRIT! from whose teaching alone it is that I behold, in this ancient representation, the everlasting free grace of JEHOVAH in the finished righteousness of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Oh! thou, who in the fulness of love didst come to give liberty to the captive, sight to the blind, and to proclaim the year of release to all thy redeemed! Hail, precious Saviour! blessed for ever be thy name, that when our poor fallen nature lay bound in the prison house, to have remained there forever, as debtors to the infinite justice and law of our GOD, thou camest full of grace and truth, didst restore us to our freedom, and not only didst send us out in happy liberty, but also full of the gifts and graces of the HOLY GHOST. By what name shall I call thee? or in what endearing point of view shall I look up to thee, O thou compassionate Redeemer, who in the accomplishment of this great work didst consent to have *his* ear bored to the door of thy FATHER's house, that I might be freed forever? Add one blessing more, O LAMB of GOD, to these unspeakable mercies, and cause the purchase of thy blood and service to be dedicated to thy glory: that as I am no longer my own, but bought with a price, I may glorify GOD in my body, and in my spirit, which are his.

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

The servant of GOD is prosecuting the subject of divine laws through this as in the foregoing chapter. We have here the precept for the observance of the three yearly feasts: of the Passover; of Pentecost; and of tabernacles. Beside these, here is a direction for the offerings of the people at those feasts, and the prohibition of making groves and images.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED GOD! give me grace to observe, with holy joy and thankfulness, the solemn seasons of thine appointment, in communication of thy mercies. I would pray indeed for the leadings of the HOLY SPIRIT, to observe the month of *Abib*, which pointed to JESUS, and his one, all-sufficient sacrifice, all the year; and since CHRIST, our Passover, is sacrificed for us, I would, all the year, keep the feast. And no less, thou blessed HOLY SPIRIT, would I beseech thee to pour upon me thy precious influence, that every day may be the renewal of the day of Pentecost to my soul. Oh! that thou wouldst come down as showers on the new-mown grass, to revive my drooping, languishing heart, by the soul-strengthening communications of thy love. And dearest LORD, when I appear before thee in thy courts, and house of prayer, oh! constrain my heart that I may not appear before thee empty. But, having so much communicated to me of thy fulness, my poorer brother may partake of my overflowing cup; and I may by grace be able, both in temporals and spirituals, to comfort others with the same comforts wherewith I myself am comforted of GOD.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

The subject of the divine laws is continued through this Chapter. Moses under GOD'S authority, points out the unblemished state required of the animals to be offered in sacrifice; of the punishment of idolaters: of controversies in judgment: of the election of a king; and of special duties required of him.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! thou art the unblemished spotless offering of my soul, and while I desire of thine own, O my GOD, to bring the best and choicest offerings, in token that all I am, and all I have is thine: it is JESUS himself, my sin-offering, my only righteousness, with which I would come to thine altar. And oh! how sweet and lovely art thou dearest Redeemer, in all thy person, offices, and characters! In purity, in comeliness, thou art not only fairer than the children of men, for grace is poured into thy lips, but thou dost infinitely transcend the angels. And is it not on behalf of thy people that thou appearest to our view, and art presented by faith to our GOD in the everlasting righteousness of thy spotless purity and holiness? Dearest JESUS! be thou ever my sacrifice of a sweet smelling savor!

Blessed SPIRIT! help me to look up to thee in the perusal of this chapter, and seeing thou didst enjoin the king of Israel, to copy with his own hand the sacred word, and to read therein all the days of his life; Oh! give me grace to meditate therein day and night; and like thy servant of old, may I be enabled to say, "Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I may be occupied in thy words. LORD, make the law of thy mouth dearer to me than thousands of gold and silver."

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This is a very interesting Chapter, because the HOLY GHOST in after ages of the Church, explained a striking passage in it as immediately pointing to JESUS. Besides this prominent feature, here are certain laws appointed respecting the Church revenue: the maintenance for the priests and Levites: cautions again repeated in relation to idolatry: and certain regulations in respect to prophecy.

REFLECTIONS

I WOULD pass by numberless other passages, how interesting soever they may be in themselves, to attend to this most engaging one, which contains the FATHER's promise of raising up a prophet to his people, whom they should hear; because his blessed SPIRIT is pledged and engaged to make such willing to hear in the day of his power. To thee would I look up, O thou great prophet, thou LORD GOD of the prophets, who hast indeed been raised up, in confirmation of the FATHER's promise, from among thy brethren! Thou camest, blessed JESUS, fully furnished and complete to the precious office, as the prophet of thy people! In all the great truth of salvation thou hast taught thy people, and thy people hast thou caused to hear thee by the sweet and constraining influences of thy SPIRIT. And how hast thou brought our dark, ignorant, and blind-minds, acquainted with the mysteries of thy kingdom! How hast thou revealed the FATHER's love to our hearts! How made known thy precious love! And how shed abroad the blessed SPIRIT's fellowship in the minds of thy people! Oh thou divine prophet! continue to my soul all thy sweet offices. Speak to me, blessed JESUS, speak to me in all my doubts, under all my fears, and when distressed by reason of the enemy! Is it not thine to do all this, and to speak a word in season to weary souls? And if GOD my FATHER hath graciously said, this great, this Almighty prophet shall be heard, be it my portion to hear thy voice, and to rejoice in this assurance, that JESUS hath been anointed as my prophet, to guide me, and to instruct me in the knowledge of himself, and his great salvation.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

Our ever adored Redeemer told the Pharisees in the days of his flesh, that on the two great commandments, of the love of GOD and the love of our neighbor; hung all the laws and the prophets; and accordingly, Moses having in the foregoing chapters largely pointed out the first of these, proceeds now, in this chapter, to enforce the duties of the second table of the commandments.

REFLECTIONS

HERE let me gaze on thee again and again, thou dearest JESUS, who art indeed the only City of refuge for all thy people, and who art placed in every avenue and way by which a poor slayer of himself and of his own soul by sin, may find shelter from the avenger. And while I look on thee as my sure hiding place from all the anger of my FATHER's broken law, and from all the accusations of my own guilty conscience, and from all the malice of Satan; Oh! may the HOLY GHOST give speed to my flight and earnestness to my desires, that before the avenger of blood can reach me, I may have taken shelter in thy person and righteousness. Oh! thou blessed Refuge of poor sinners, how fitly art thou prepared, how completely suited to all the wants of thy people! My soul even now, seems to feel an holy triumph in the security it finds by faith in thee! No plague shall come nigh my dwelling. In thee I feel a growing confidence of my everlasting security. Cease then your pursuits, ye ministers of evil, for my LORD hath shut me in like Noah in the ark, and housed me from your malice; and I am persuaded through his grace keeping me, that neither life nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate me from the love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to the military government of Israel among those who were more immediately appointed to fight the LORD's battles. Here are directions for their conduct, inspiring them with courage and making provision for those whose hearts failed them. While this chapter may be read with much profit, if considered with an eye to our spiritual foes in the cause of GOD, soldiers, and those whose profession in arms calls them to warfare, may derive under the HOLY GHOST's teaching, much to animate them in their conflicts, while fighting under the captain of their salvation, CHRIST JESUS.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us not shut the book after the perusal of this Chapter, without first looking up for grace to bless the LORD for our happy lot, in being brought within the peaceable kingdom of JESUS who hath gone before us, and driven out the enemies of our salvation before our face. But while we bless his holy name for the privileges we enjoy as a people, in the consciousness that in our own hearts enemies are found, which too often oppose our way in the path of grace; let us see that we give no truce to those everlasting foes which wage war against our GOD and against his CHRIST. Yes, dearest JESUS! I would say, do not I hate them, O LORD, of every description and character that hate thee, and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? Yea I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies.

Let the military character, and especially the ministers of JESUS, learn from this chapter where their strength and confidence is to be found, and in the sure presence of a gracious covenant GOD in CHRIST, and long experience of his faithfulness always derive courage to animate themselves and the holy army of GOD's people in their warfare with the enemies of their salvation. If the LORD of hosts be with us, the GOD of Jacob will be our refuge.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

Provision is made in this chapter for various circumstances, of such things as might arise in the government of Israel. Here are appointments for the discovery of murder: for the marriage of captives taken in war: for preserving the birth-right of inheritance to the eldest son of a wife not beloved: for the punishment by stoning of a rebellious son: and for the taking down the bodies of malefactors before sun-set. Such are the contents of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! may it be your happiness and mine, while perusing this chapter, to remark the superiority of the gospel to the law. Evidently we here see by the provision made for certain cases to which no outward restraints could reach, how infinitely transcending that spiritual worship is, to which believers in JESUS are called, who are not without law to GOD, but under the law to CHRIST. The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in a better hope did, by which we draw nigh to GOD.

But chiefly, Reader, in the perusal of this Chapter, may you and I derive grace from the great glorifier of JESUS, to behold him shadowed forth in those services of the law. Blessed spirit of truth! do thou guide our souls into all truth. Say, Holy LORD! is it not JESUS whose blood shed in the valley of this world, opens a source for the discovery of all our soul-murdering transgressions, by which we destroy ourselves? And is he not our peace in making peace, for us with our GOD, with our consciences, with our neighbours, with the world, with all things? Is he not the holy Warrior which hath conquered sin and death, and brought home our souls as captives to his salvation? Is it not he, who, for the love he hath to our persons, hath betrothed us to himself forever and ever? And was he not content to be made a curse for us when he hung on the tree and sustained the whole pressure of our sins, that in his righteousness we might be blessed! Hail, holy, blessed, dearest JESUS! be thou my

strength and song, for thou art become my salvation; my soul doth magnify the LORD, and my spirit hath rejoiced in GOD my Saviour!

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have certain laws respecting moral conduct, in the tenderness required to be shown to the brute creation: of distinction in apparel: and of the deportment towards the married and unmarried women, together with special laws for particular cases.

REFLECTIONS

HOLY SPIRIT of truth! enable me to see the precious designs of thy blessed will, in the compassion thou hast manifested by those precepts of tenderness, by which thy people are to show their affection to their brethren, in their regard to whatever is theirs. And as the one great character by which they are known, is, that they dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations: may I never mingle anything with the garment of JESUS's righteousness, but be found wholly the LORD's, both, towards him and all that are in the world. LORD, keep my soul chaste and inviolable to thee, and spotless among men. Oh! preserve me blameless to the day of thy coming, and may I walk in love, as CHRIST also hath loved me and given himself for me, an offering and a sacrifice to GOD, for a sweet smelling savour: but fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be once named, as becometh a saint of JESUS; and may the peace of GOD, rule in my heart, to the which I am also called, and be thankful.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

This chapter is but a continuation of the same subject as in the former. Here are certain laws for the preservation of Israel, as an holy people to the LORD, without blemish and without imperfection; laws, also, for the keeping in purity the camp, and the persons of LORD'S people; against whoredom, usury, the breach of vows, and encroachments on another's property.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! While thou beholdest the many disqualifications, by which men are kept off from the congregation of the LORD'S people, think of thy privileges, and bless GOD that thou art neither an Ammonite nor an Edomite, though a Gentile, and not of the original stock of Israel; and yet permitted to come into the congregation by the new and living way, opened for sinners in the blood and righteousness of JESUS. LORD! give me grace that I may not associate with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; and may I be always found cleansed from all my pollutions in the blood of JESUS. Dear LORD! I thank thee, that when by thy HOLY SPIRIT, I was enabled to flee to thee, from the rigorous and hard service of Satan; thou hast not given me back again into his power, but hast graciously promised that sin shall not have dominion over me, for I am no longer under the law, as a covenant of works, but under grace. May I not hope, blessed JESUS, that as sin hath reigned unto death, so shall grace reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD?

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

The Chapter before us is a continuation of certain laws, appointed to be observed in certain cases. Here are directions

concerning divorces; of the permission, for the newly married to refrain from war; concerning pledges; men-stealers; leprosy; hire of wages; of justice, and of charity.

REFLECTIONS

I BESEECH my GOD and Saviour, that he will enlighten the eyes of my understanding, that in reading those precepts of his holy law, I may be led to view somewhat either leading to JESUS, or pointing to him, in every one. If, dearest LORD, thou hast betrothed me to thyself, thou wilt not give me a writing of divorcement, though I am altogether unworthy of thy love, for thou hatest putting away, and thou hast said I shall be thine forever. LORD, give me grace to imitate thy tenderness, and in all my concerns with my poorer brother, forget not that thou hast condescended to call me thy brother; and even to strangers, may I never forget, that when in the bondage of sin and corruption, thou didst seek me out and free me, I was a stranger in the land of Egypt. Oh! for grace to manifest my love to thee, in the remembrance of all thine afflicted, tried, and distressed family. The LORD JESUS help me by his sweet constraining love, to do by others as he hath done by me; and to put on, as the elect of GOD, bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering: that it may be manifest to my own heart, and to all with whom I have to do, that the same mind is in me, which was also in CHRIST JESUS.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

The subject in this Chapter is similar to the former. Here are laws of direction, for the punishment of evil-doers: respecting the ox in his labour: the disgrace of him that refuseth to build up his brother's name: the punishment of the immodest woman: laws respecting weights and measures: a precept for the blotting out the memory of Amalek.

REFLECTIONS

I DESIRE grace to bless my compassionate GOD, that my stripes have fallen far short of my sins, and I may truly say to my soul with one of old, Know, therefore, that GOD hath exacted of thee less than thy iniquity deserved. It is thou, dearest JESUS, who hath been wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon thee, and with thy stripes I have been healed. LORD! grant me the teachings of thine HOLY SPIRIT, that in all thy dealings with men, I may bring no reproach upon thy cause, nor have divers weights and divers measures, but a just balance, which is thy delight. And for all the Amalekites and enemies of my salvation. LORD! endue me with strength and holy resolution, that mine eye may not spare, however delicately they may seem, but by the arm of my GOD, may I hew them in pieces before the LORD my Saviour.

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

As the man of GOD is drawing to a conclusion on the subject of laws, in this chapter he points out the form of words to be used in offering the basket of first-fruits; and the prayer with which the offering is to be brought; and then follows up both, with reminding the people once more, in whose name and authority he had acted, in the delivery of the commandments.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! thou art the first fruits indeed, and the first and last, and best offering of my soul, for acceptance with my GOD. Early do I desire to bring thee in the first of every year, and the first of every day, and the first of every morning of the day, and close of the day, as the sole cause of my rejoicing: for in the moment I do this, I desire with the Israelite to cry out, A Gentile ready to perish was my father, and from the Egypt of sin and death, hath the LORD

brought out soul. He remembered me in my low estate, for his mercy endureth forever. And will the LORD, indeed, condescend to avouch me for his own? Shall I be of his chosen ones! Will the FATHER of mercies look upon me as accepted in the beloved, and mark me as the object of his peculiar love? Hath my JESUS purchased me with the peculiar price of his blood? Hath the HOLY GHOST visited my soul with the influences of his peculiar grace? Am I, indeed, the object of the united mercy of the Holy Three in One: and are the peculiar blessings of the covenant, the portion of my soul? LORD! grant me grace this day to avouch myself, with all I have, and all I am, to be thine forever. Take my two mites (for soul and body are nothing more, compared to this vast treasury) and accept them, O LORD, in JESUS, for of thine own do I give thee. Witness for me, ye angels of light, that I will know no other GOD but the LORD GOD of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; that I desire to be distinguished from all the nations of the earth, that are not the Israel of GOD, as separated from them; and that henceforth I will make mention of his righteousness, even his only, who is the GOD of my life, and will be my portion for ever.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

As Moses had now nearly concluded everything relating to the precepts; he enjoins the people in this chapter to adopt a means of keeping alive in their remembrance the great things of GOD's law, by writing it upon stones. And the chapter is concluded in aiming to impress the whole still more upon their minds, by causing the Levites to pronounce curses upon all that disobeyed the divine commands.

REFLECTIONS

How sweet and refreshing to my soul are the views of JESUS, as the high priest and altar, and offering of my heart, in the moment that I read the solemn charges of GOD's law, and the dreadful penalty

of disobedience. My soul indeed cannot but subscribe with full consent to GOD's justice, in all these sentences of curses on the breach of his holy law; while my heart flies to the gracious offer of mercy in JESUS. And in the very moment I am constrained to say Amen, to every tittle of GOD's righteous law, Oh! how precious is it, dearest JESUS, to view thee as the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Thou art the altar my soul would flee to, for thou art my great deliverance, when both law and justice challenge me before GOD. Be thou my GOD, my guide, my peace, my joy, and my consolation forever!

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

This Chapter is a continuation of the former, and is in fact part of it. The curses having been proclaimed in the foregoing, the blessings are subjoined in this. But I conceive that this Chapter is partly prophetic, for many of the things spoken of; were fulfilled in the successive periods of the church. The christian Reader will find, under GOD the HOLY GHOST's teaching, much of gospel veiled under the several parts of it, which I hope the LORD will bless to his perusal.

REFLECTIONS

OH, my soul! let the awful review of the calamities here held forth to disobedient Israel, endear, with increasing love and affection, the person of thy ever-adored Redeemer; and his great salvation to thee; and may the perusal of this Chapter under the HOLY GHOST's teaching, constrain thee into his love, and to cleave unto him with full purpose of heart, for he is thy life. Oh! precious, precious JESUS, what eternal praises are thy due! Oh! what unspeakable mercies do I behold in that one view of JESUS, a GOD in CHRIST, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. I see, I feel, I stand convinced, that to this one cause, every blessing in time, and to all eternity is owing. LORD!

keep me, hold me, establish me in this most precious assurance, and may I never dare to taste a single joy until I see JESUS in it. If thou, dearest LORD, will give it me, it will be sanctified. But without thee, the best of creature comforts will prove a snare.

My unawakened brother! if GOD in mercy should cause my humble Commentary to meet the eye of one of this character, will you not in the perusal of this Chapter, stand convinced that the judgments of GOD are sure judgments; and the least of them most awful indeed! And is not GOD the faithful GOD, as fully pledged to perform his written threats to the ungodly, as he is pledged to perform his promises to his people. Oh! that grace may open the eye, convince the heart, awaken the affection, and induce sinners to flee from the wrath to come: for depend upon it, there is, there must be a day coming, when indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, will fall upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

There is a great solemnity in this chapter. Israel is presented as a body, by way of proof, that the LORD's covenant meets their most hearty and cordial consent. Here is a general recital of some of the leading objects of the covenant; and the chapter concludes with pointing out the striking distinction between the things which are secret, which belong unto the LORD, and those which are revealed, which belong unto his people.

REFLECTIONS

DEAREST JESUS! it is thou that art the covenant of thy people, for *with* thee, as their great head, the covenant is made; *in* thee it is fulfilled; *by* thee it is completed; and *from* thee, the full assurance of the blessings of it must come. Thou art given as a covenant to the people by the FATHER: and thou art the everything belonging to it . Oh! may I behold in thee, how all thy people stand complete in thy

righteousness. For it is not confined to the captains of the tribes, nor the elders, nor the officers: but our little ones and our wives, the stranger that is in our camp, and the hewer of wood, and the drawer of water, are all equally interested in the fulness and preciousness of thy salvation.

Endue my soul with suited strength, that I may never forsake the covenant of my GOD, nor turn my back upon the LORD of my mercies. LORD! grant, I pray thee, that there may never be in me an evil heart of unbelief; in departing from the living GOD; but daily, while it is called today, may my soul be strengthened with thy SPIRIT'S might, lest I should be hardened with the deceitfulness of sin. And Oh! do thou, blessed GOD, confirm me in all the privileges of thy covenant, that those things which are so graciously revealed, may belong to me and to my children forever.

CHAPTER 30

SUMMARY

This is a very interesting chapter. It contains much solemn exhortation: but it is full of divine mercies, as if the LORD intended to manifest to Israel, after what had been delivered of threatenings in the two preceding chapters, that it is in mercy the LORD delighteth. Here is a provision made for the penitent sinner to return, and life and death are set before him.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD! my soul, the earnestness with which Moses, the man of GOD follows up his Sermon, in the warm and impassioned manner he adopts in the close of it, so as to persuade the Israelites to duty and obedience. But, alas! what persuasion can operate until grace pleads in the soul? When thou hast fully viewed the solemn picture, and art become as fully satisfied from thine own feelings, that nothing less than sovereign grace, can be competent to restrain the corrupt passions of man's fallen nature; then, my soul, from Moses turn thy view to contemplate the LORD JESUS CHRIST: and

behold in him the only possible source to enable sinners both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Oh! thou ever-blessed JESUS, that art the first cause and final end of all the hopes, the strength, the ability, the holy desires of thy people. In thee we behold an adequate relief for all our wants. It is thou and thou alone, which by the influence of thine HOLY SPIRIT in the minds of thy people, dost first awaken eternal life; and as thou begettest, so thou alone canst maintain, support, preserve, and carry it on from day to day in the soul. Oh! enable me to cleave unto thee, for thou art my life, and the length of my days; thou art my hope, and my portion forever. Do thou, by the sweet constraining influence of thine HOLY SPIRIT, keep me close to thyself, that I may live upon thy fulness, have the lively actings of faith upon thy person, and live to thy praise here, until thou shalt bring me home, to rejoice in thy glory forever.

CHAPTER 31

SUMMARY

The man of GOD, having finished his sermon to the people, in this chapter makes a particular address to Joshua, whom the LORD had appointed as his successor: enjoins him to be valiant for GOD, and assures him of the divine favor: Moses gives the law which he had written to the priests, commanding it to be read every seventh year. By the LORD's foretelling Moses, he admonishes them of their degeneracy. He writes a song and rehearseth it in the ears of the people, which song is contained in the succeeding chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! pause over this Chapter, and behold in Moses the dying circumstances of all mankind. Both saints and sinners, ministers and people, even Moses, the highly favoured servant of the LORD, must go down to the grave, though as to the circumstances attending his death, he was peculiarly favoured in going up to the mount, to give forth his soul, as some have thought, upon the very mouth of GOD. Here again, dearest JESUS, let my soul, from the view

of the universal condition of mankind, turn my thoughts to thee, who by thy precious death hast overcome death, and by thy triumph over death and the grave, hast opened to thy people everlasting life. Sweet and refreshing is the thought, amidst the humbling prospect, of dissolution, that JESUS ever liveth; and though all our circumstances around are perishing, and we ourselves involved in the same, yet the hour is hastening, when death shall be swallowed up in victory!

In the view of Israel's perverseness, LORD, give me grace to behold the universal taint of all mankind. Am I better than they? No: in no wise. All are included under sin. Oh! thou precious sin-bearing LAMB of GOD! let everything and every view, both of the sin of others and my own, tend to endear thy person, and thy righteousness, to my heart, convinced, that there is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

CHAPTER 32

SUMMARY

This chapter is almost filled with that beautiful song of Moses, which, from its containing so much of gospel in it, hath warned and instructed the mind of GOD's people in all ages. Having finished his sermon, the dying pastor gives out this hymn at the close of it, before he dismisses his congregation, and is dismissed himself with the blessing. Here are contained some of the many gracious dealings of the LORD with Israel. Here are contained also, some of their many grievous dealings with the LORD. Here are blended promises and threatenings. The chapter concludes with the LORD's command to his servant Moses, to go up into the Mount preparatory to his death.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, and behold, the beautifulness of holiness, and of praise, in the conduct of a dying pastor, like Moses; and in the outlines of

this hymn, behold how becoming it is to be faithful. Heaven and earth must witness at the last day for every faithful servant of JESUS, if he hath kept back nothing that was profitable for the people; and though the people be not gathered, yet he hath delivered his own soul.

Reader! may it be your happiness and mine, in viewing the LORD'S love to his church, and the series of mercies manifested towards his people, to discover, in a spiritual sense, the same gracious hand bringing us out of Egypt, and bearing us as upon eagles wings all the way through of our eventful journey. Oh! thou most gracious GOD! in every view which my soul is enabled to take of thy love towards me; and in all thy three-fold characters of Person, thou hast been my FATHER, and the guide of my youth. My Saviour, and the Redeemer of my soul; my Sanctifier, and the helper of all my ways. Oh! grant that I may not, like Israel of old, forget the GOD of my mercies, and lightly esteem the rock of my salvation. Do thou perfect that, gracious GOD, concerning me, which thou hast begun, for thou art indeed a rock, and thy work is perfect. It is of thine own free grace thou hast planned salvation, by thine own power thou hast formed it, and wilt execute it. In thine everlasting love, in the eternal purposes of thy counsel, by the blood and righteousness of JESUS, and by thine own grace, and the influences of the HOLY GHOST, in the hearts of thy people, thou wilt accomplish and complete it: and shall I doubt thy gracious purposes concerning me? Be thou my rock, my JEHOVAH JESUS, to which I may always resort; for thou hast promised to help me; therefore into thine hands do I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O LORD, thou GOD of truth.

CHAPTER 33

SUMMARY

The man of GOD here finisheth the whole of his ministry with Israel. Nothing remained after the Song but to bless Israel in the LORD'S name; and this he doth partly in a spirit of prophecy, in

telling each tribe of Israel of some of the most remarkable events which would follow them; and partly in a spirit of prayer; of what he hoped the LORD would bless them with. He concludes the Chapter with a most animated apostrophe, both of the blessedness of the GOD of Israel, and of the Israel of GOD.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, My soul, over the perusal of this most delightful Chapter, and while the man of GOD is pronouncing these blessings over the people of Israel: see, whether you can now, by virtue of an union with the true spiritual LORD of Israel, claim an interest in these mercies, and call yourself by the name of Jacob, and surname yourself by the name of Israel.

Israel of old, was a chosen generation, for GOD the FATHER chose them in CHRIST JESUS before the foundation of the world. And if I belong to Israel now, have I not been chosen in him, and ordained by him to be of the chosen generation, an holy nation, a peculiar people, to show forth the praises of him who hath called me out of darkness into his marvellous light. My soul! is it so with thee? Am I the purchase of JESUS' blood, the subject of the HOLY GHOST's fellowship: and do I enjoy communion with the FATHER, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST? Then shall I, as Israel, dwell in safety. My GOD will thrust out the enemy from before me, and will say, destroy them. The eternal GOD is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

CHAPTER 34

SUMMARY

Here is related to us, the account of Moses' death. To whose pen we are indebted for the relation of it, under the HOLY GHOST, is not said. The LORD gives his servant a view of the promised land: to which is added, the account of his death and burial, the mourning of Israel for Moses, and the appointment of Joshua as his successor.

REFLECTIONS

FAREWELL, Moses! thou faithful servant of the most high GOD! thou highly favoured, highly honored herald of my ever adored Redeemer! Thy memory shall be ever dear to me: for under the sweet and precious influences of the HOLY GHOST, thou hast informed me of things which I knew not, and brought to my knowledge such truths as are past finding out. But chiefly do I desire to honour thy memory, in acting as a schoolmaster to bring me to JESUS. Here I value thee as more precious than gold; for whatever tends to reveal to my soul the person and righteousness of GOD my Saviour, would I esteem more than my necessary food.

The very thought of JESUS fires my soul. And when I trace in the eventful history of Moses, and in his writings, that he pointed only to JESUS, I long to have my soul brought yet more and more under the HOLY GHOST, in his teaching to discover JESUS.

And do I not see in Moses himself, and in all his ministry, somewhat, which by faint figures, or more pointed similitudes, testifies of JESUS! If Moses acted as the messenger of JEHOVAH; became, as occasions required, the prophet, the priest, the king of Jeshurun: if Moses stood between JEHOVAH, and the people as the Mediator: if this man led out the LORD'S people, delivered them from Pharaoh, wrought miracles, subdued kingdoms, appointed statutes, established ordinances, gave a law to Israel, and taught precepts to Jacob; what were all these and as many more, but so many representations of the LORD JESUS?

Didst not thou, blessed JESUS, act as the messenger of JEHOVAH, when thou camest to our spiritual Egypt, to deliver thy people out of captivity? In all thy ministry, righteousness, and salvation, wast not thou the sent, the sealed, the anointed of thy FATHER? And wast not thou the great prophet, priest, and king of thy people? If Moses stood between JEHOVAH and Israel, as a Mediator, how much more thou? for Moses never could have stood, but as thy representative, none but thyself could turn away divine wrath, or make atonement but in thy blood. If Moses, acting as the minister of JEHOVAH, opened a way through the Red Sea, what was this, but as typical of that new and living way, which thou hast opened in thy blood and

righteousness, for thy ransomed ones to pass over, when mountains of sin on every side, and the enemy, like Pharaoh, is behind, hastening on to destroy thy chosen? And if Moses' meekness forsook him not, amidst all the contumacy, ingratitude, and rebellion of Israel, what was Moses meekness compared to thine, Oh, thou patient LAMB of GOD, who, when thou wast reviled, reviledst not again; but in all the backslidings, coldness, and departures of thy people, never leavest nor forsakest them, but having loved thine own, which are in the world, thou lovest them unto the end! Hail! thou first, and best, and chiefest among ten thousand! thou holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens! If I forget thee, dearest JESUS, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: yea, if I prefer thee not above my chief joy! And Reader! may you, and every ransomed soul, publish his name, declare his doings among the people, ascribe ye greatness unto our CHRIST; let everyone, the fathers unto the children, declare his truth!

And now, Reader, having taken leave of Moses, and his sacred writings, I would desire grace to set up my *Ebenezer*; that hitherto the LORD hath helped me. May a gracious GOD accept everything that hath been here humbly offered, by way of Commentary upon those Five Books of Moses, and which the LORD hath made, or shall hereafter make profitable to his people; for that is the LORD'S, and of his own, do I with all humility of soul offer him. And may he as graciously pardon and blot out everything that is amiss; for that is wholly mine; and I desire to take shame and confusion of face, in the recollection. And finally, I beg once more to recommend all that is here offered, to the Reader, with myself, and poor services to his prayers, that a covenant GOD in CHRIST, through the influences of the eternal SPIRIT, may abundantly bless and own this feeble attempt to promote the LORD'S glory in the heart of the Reader, both while the unworthy writer is spared, a monument of sovereign mercy upon earth, and a long time after the hand that now writes, shall have returned to its original dust. To the sacred Three in One be endless, undivided praises. Amen.

JOSHUA

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

THIS Book of GOD takes its name from Joshua, not perhaps from his being the writer of it, for it is more than probable that he did not write it, more likely, as some think, to have been Phinehas: but because it treats principally of him and his victories in the conquest of Canaan, as captain of the LORD'S host. And as by name, as well as in this character, he was an eminent type of the Almighty Joshua, nothing could have been more suitable than that in the history of the church's taking possession of Canaan, it should be recorded in his name, who evidently in all he did in this great work, typified a greater than himself even the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In point of history, the Book of Joshua contains all, the great events which took place in the Church of GOD, from the death of Moses to the death of Joshua, a period of somewhat more than twenty years: during which time the conquest of Canaan, and the division of it among the tribes of Israel, were accomplished.

It forms a memorable period in the history of the church, and especially so when considered with an eye to the spiritual conquest of the church over her enemies by the true Joshua, in subduing all opposition, and bridging his people unto that rest which remaineth, for the people of GOD.

Reader! one request I have to make of you through the whole of the perusal of this history. Seek grace from him whose office it is to glorify JESUS, that in the conduct of Joshua in leading on the people of GOD to victory, you may look beyond the type, and behold the outlines of him, whose very office, as Joshua's was, is to save his people, to go before them, to conquer for them, and finally to give them all an inheritance among them that are sanctified. Oh thou Almighty Joshua! thou Captain of Salvation, who art bringing many

sons unto glory, may I behold thee going before me in all the victories over sin, death, hell, and the grave; and drying up the Jordans of affliction, trials, temptations and difficulties, through which thou art leading me. Dearest JESUS! do thou lead on, and lead me out, and give me grace to follow, until thou shalt bring me in to behold thy glory, and dwell with thee forever!

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

Joshua succeeds by the LORD's appointment to the government of Israel on the death of Moses. Joshua accepts the command. The people are pleased with it. Officers in the inferior departments are appointed. The Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites whose inheritance was on this side Jordan, are engaged to go over with their brethren to the reduction of Canaan. These are the contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! in the review of the death of one servant of the LORD, and the appointment of another, what a precious thought is it, that our JESUS lives forever. Moses must die, and Joshua must die, and all the servants and ministers of the church must be gathered to their fathers, and see corruption. But JESUS our dear Redeemer is the same, and his years shall not fail. Oh! what relief, amidst every dying circumstance of every faithful servant of the LORD!

In the prospect of passing over Jordan to the possession of the promised land, may my soul be enabled to act faith, in the certain assurance that, as Joshua was commissioned of the LORD to promise the people, so hath our Almighty Joshua promised and secured it to his. And here, as in a thousand instances, our glorious Joshua hath infinitely exceeded and outdone all that his type represented. Joshua, it is true, went before Israel, and went with Israel. And so doth JESUS in all the way, for he is ever with them, and his Almighty presence their support. But he is also gone before. He hath already taken

possession of the promised inheritance in their name. The battle is already fought and won. The conquest is finished, By and by he will return to take his people to himself, that where he is there they may be also. Almighty Captain of my salvation! as thou hast overcome and art set down on the seat of the conqueror in thy FATHER'S throne, so do thou enable me to overcome that I may sit down on thy throne. In all my warfare let me behold thee before me, and may I be enabled to stand still, and see the salvation of my GOD.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains that memorable history which is handed down to gospel times, with such honourable testimony of the harlot Rahab. Joshua having sent spies from Shittim to Jericho, Rahab in faith received them into her house, concealed them, and before she sent them away in peace made a league with Israel through them, for her own personal safety and that of her family. The return of the spies to Joshua, with the assurance they gave of the certainty of their success in the conquering of the country, from what they had seen and heard, is also related in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over this chapter, and contemplate the several parts of it, and beg of GOD the HOLY GHOST, who hath caused it to be written for thy instruction, to be thy teacher.

Do not I behold, in the instance of Rahab the harlot, the testimony of that blessed doctrine, that where sin hath abounded grace should much more abound: and as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Take courage, my soul, in this, and in every other instance of the triumphs of GOD thy Saviour. Even in Jericho the LORD will seek out and save his people, if a soul of his be there. The LORD knoweth them that are his. And from all their filthiness, and all their idols, JESUS will cleanse them. Through him shall

publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of GOD, while self-righteous Pharisees are cast out. Dear LORD! may thy precious blood be sprinkled on the door of my heart, as the scarlet thread was fastened to the window of the harlot's house, that in the hour of visitation, as in the destruction of Jericho, thy destroying angel may see that sweet token between my GOD and me, and spare my soul. And convinced of my security and shelter in thy blood and righteousness, may my faith stand firm within, and never go out while the judgments of my GOD are passing, as in the case of Jericho, on the ungodly: for sweet is that assurance, *he that believeth shall not make haste.*

But chiefly, dearest JESUS! may my soul pause over this Chapter, and contemplate thine unequalled condescension and love, in the instance of this woman. Was it not enough, O thou SON of GOD, in thy pity to our fallen nature, that thou shouldst leave the glories of eternity, and take upon thee our flesh; but that thou shouldst stoop to the lowest possible abasement in the assumption of our nature, and condescend to spring from a stock such as this woman! Was it not enough, that our nature, when thou tookest it upon thee, had been sunk to the deepest misery and sin, short of hell, but as if to surprize and overpower the mind both of angels and of men, even Rahab, was made choice of to be thine ancestor after the flesh! Oh! thou holy, harmless, undefiled LAMB of GOD, how hast thou endeared thyself to the most affectionate feelings of thy people, by such testimonies of thy love and mercy. And though, in taking our nature upon thee, thou hast taken none of the pollutions of it, yet in making choice of such channels, thou hast effectually put out the pride of all human glory: and hast most convincingly taught us by this process of grace, that in thy Gentile, as well as thy Jewish pedigree, all is grace; mercy, and love, in every act of thine concerning thy people. All flesh is corrupt before thee, and all alike filthy and polluted. It is thine own arm which hath brought salvation, and to thee alone be all the glory?

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

This is as memorable a Chapter of the LORD's dealings with his people, as perhaps any in the Old Testament. And as there can be no doubt but that it is typical of yet greater mercies to be manifested in the New, it demands the attention of every believer more particularly. We have contained in this Chapter, the miraculous passage of Israel under their commander Joshua, over Jordan: the assurance given to the people of this event before it came to pass: the preparation for it; the sanctifying the people against it: and the event fully accomplished.

REFLECTIONS

YE happy souls! whom GOD, even the GOD of the whole earth, is bringing in, and bringing through all the fords of Jordan, and all the difficulties which lay on this side Jordan, in the way to Canaan; here stand still, and see the salvation of GOD. How eternally safe, and how eternally secure, must they be, who have the ark of the covenant to go on before them, and the LORD himself their rereward!

Ye priests of JESUS, Levites of a better dispensation than that of Moses, and established upon better promises, with what fearless and undaunted zeal may you pass on, before the camp of GOD's Israel, surrounded with his ordinances and the ark of the covenant of the GOD of the whole earth, with you!

But chiefly thou, dear JESUS! who art both the ark and the resting place, the mercy seat and the security, the all in all of thy people. Oh! be thou ever with me in all places, at all times, in all the Jordans of difficulty, and in all the Canaan for happiness; for without thee nothing is safe, nothing desirable. Be thou my ark, my sanctuary, my covert, my resting place, for in thy person and righteousness, are the lives of thy people eternally secured and made happy. Unto thee, blessed JESUS, as my everlasting home, do I desire to come, for thou LORD hast dealt bountifully with me.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

The people having all passed over Jordan, the priests are commanded to come up out of Jordan with the ark of GOD, and pass over also. A memorial is commanded to be set up, both in Jordan, where the feet of the priests had rested, and also in the place where they lodged, of this great and miraculous event. Joshua is peculiarly magnified in the sight of Israel. These are the principal points recorded in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

HERE would I pause, and in the contemplation of Israel's passing over Jordan, look back upon that sacred stream, and cry out, What hath GOD wrought? Surely, not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD promised Israel. Well may they look forward to the sure conquest of Canaan, since GOD hath thus begun to magnify the riches of his grace towards them, and set up the pillars of remembrance to the divine glory.

My soul! hast thou no part in this history? Is not thy Joshua here beautifully represented? Was it not JESUS and his power over all the Jordans, which rolled to keep him and his people back which are here set forth? Fear not then. Set up thy *Ebenezer* in *Gilgal*. And when thy children ask thee in time to come, what mean these things? Point to JESUS. Direct them to the Red Sea in his blood. And let them know that all his people are more than conquerors through his grace helping them, that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, nor all the *Jordans* of sin and the grave, shall be able to separate from CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This is a very interesting Chapter, and contains several very memorable events. Israel is now entering the frontiers of Canaan. The Canaanites are alarmed. Israel is animated. The LORD, as if to remind them of his covenant engagements, commands the rite of circumcision to be renewed, which had been long omitted. The feast of the Passover also, after eight and thirty years neglect is again celebrated. The LORD victuals the camp with the good things of the land of Canaan. The manna ceaseth. The captain of the LORD's host appeareth to Joshua.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! in the perusal of this chapter, stand still and see the salvation of GOD! Behold how thy GOD puts terror in the hearts of his and thy enemies! when thy GOD, thy JESUS, shall have conducted thee over Jordan, their hearts shall melt away, neither shall they have the spirit any more to make their attacks upon thee. In the consciousness of this, I would say, LORD! grant me the true circumcision of the SPIRIT! lead me, blessed JESUS, to the banqueting house of thy love, and may my soul keep the feast of the true passover, testifying to the whole congregated world of angels and of men, that I seek salvation only in thy blood and righteousness. And when the manna of ordinances shall cease: when, O my Saviour, I shall have done with my day and generation here below: bring me to that country, that promised land and city, whose builder and maker is GOD: and give me to eat of that hidden manna, which thou hast promised to all thy people. Precious JESUS! do thou manifest thyself to me, as thou didst to thy servant Joshua, as the Captain of the LORD's host; and the captain of my salvation. Was it not in these several appearances of thine? Was it not to give Old Testament saints a token of thy favor, and of the good will thou hadst towards our nature? Was it not to convince them that thou wast longing for the time, when as really and properly man, thou wouldest bear our nature, and perform that great work, which for our redemption sake

thou hadst engaged to do, in the covenant made between thy FATHER and thyself? And now thou hast really and truly become man, and finished the work the FATHER gave thee to do, wilt thou not to me, and to all thy New Testament believers, agreeably to thy promise, manifest thyself to our souls, otherwise than thou doest to the world? Come dear JESUS, come to my soul in ordinance seasons, in the sweet promises of thy word, in the tokens of thy providences; comfort me, strengthen me, cheer my heart, revive my poor languishing frame, brighten up my evidences, warm my whole soul with thy love; and let me see, and my sole happiness be found in this, that thy love is shed abroad, from thine heart to mine, and that thou, and thou alone, art formed there, the only hope of glory!

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

This chapter is the continuation of the former. He which appeared to Joshua in the close of the foregoing chapter, begins in this to give directions, as captain of the LORD'S host, how Joshua is to proceed in the reduction of Jericho. Here is the progress of the siege, and the event of it, in the overthrow of Jericho. Joshua pronounceth a curse upon the builder of Jericho, whoever in after ages should attempt it.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE! my soul, again and again, over the several parts of this most interesting chapter, and beg of GOD the HOLY GHOST to give thee to see the gospel sense of it, in thine own history. How was my heart, like Jericho, shut up, when the LORD laid siege to my soul! when without were fightings, within were fears! But when the LORD seemed to delay the execution of his anger against me, and destruction did not immediately follow, my confidence, like the men of Jericho, revived, and my rebellious heart became again stout. Oh! thou dearest JESUS, thou Almighty Joshua, when by thy SPIRIT, thou didst break down all The walls and resistances of my carnal nature,

and didst cause the weapons of sin to fall out of my hands; then didst thou conquer my soul, and make me a willing captive in the day of thy power! Reader! let you and I, while contemplating with holy joy the victory of JESUS, rejoice with trembling, in beholding the inflexible justice of GOD over his enemies. Oh! the discriminating grace of GOD to his people. Oh! for an heart to love and adore such unparalleled mercy! LORD! give us grace to lay low in the dust, in token of our nothingness, and be ever ready to ascribe the whole of salvation, from beginning to end, to GOD and the LAMB.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

We have a sad interruption to the conquest of Canaan related in this chapter, in one of the children of Israel disobeying the commands of GOD, and taking of the spoil for himself; for which sin the LORD manifested his displeasure against Israel, and causeth the men of Ai, to be victorious over a party of Israel. Joshua's distress upon this occasion is related also, and his prayer to GOD. The LORD informs Joshua of the cause; enquiry is made for the transgressor. And he and his house being found, are stoned in the valley of Achor.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, in the dreadful example of *Achan*, the ruined state of our corrupt nature: and, while justly condemning him, learn to search thyself. Oh! who can stand in GOD's sight, and challenge strict enquiry. LORD! I would say; *Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight can no man living be justified!* Teach me, thou blessed SPIRIT of all truth, teach me to look into myself; to lay my hand with trembling and godly fear upon my heart, and ask how my GOD is sanctified? How are his commands revered? And how his name and majesty honoured? Alas! I fear from the principle of self-love and self-deception, I shall make no discovery equal to what the state really is. Teach me then, thou HOLY SPIRIT, so to stand convinced, of the multitude of transgressions

which are secret to my own knowledge, but which are all open to the light of GOD's countenance, that solemnly condemned in my own heart I may fly to JESUS, take refuge in his all-atoning blood and justifying righteousness; that I may plead this, and this only, before the throne, under all the self-reproaches of my own mind, the charges of Satan, the curses of GOD's broken law, and the holy demands of his justice. Here, dearest JESUS, do I fix my hope. On thee do I hang all my expectations of pardon, mercy, and peace, through thy blood. And when the demand is made, what I have to say, this shall be all my plea: *Thou shalt answer for me, O LORD my GOD.*

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have an account of the renewal of Israel's victories. The LORD encourageth Joshua, and the holy army conquereth Ai: the king of Ai is taken and hanged: Joshua erects an altar to the LORD: writes the law on stones; causeth the repeal of the blessings, and cursings, and of the law to be read in the ears of the people.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! while I behold *Ai* and her king, and everything appertaining to her subdued, brought down, and destroyed, under thy servant Joshua, as thy type and representative, oh! give me to see, and as firmly to believe, that all the *Ai's* of the present moment, shall bow down and be vanquished, which oppose the salvation of thy people. Lead me on, blessed Captain, conquering and to conquer: from grace to grace, and from strength to strength. And like thine army, which I here behold, teach me by thy HOLY SPIRIT, to pause over the several victories and the redemptions which thou workest for me, to offer my sacrifice and to bless my GOD, as I go on, even in the presence of my foes. Do thou, blessed JESUS, who hast with thine own arm, gotten thyself the victory; do thou only

hold me up, and bear me on, and carry me through, until thou shalt bring me in to the full possession of the Canaan which is above; be thou my sun and my shield, my hiding place and my covert, and then shall I assuredly know, that my GOD which giveth grace, will assuredly give glory.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us, the confederacy formed by the several kings of Canaan to fight against Israel. The subtilty of Gibeon, to make peace with Israel; and the event of their craft, in being made servants to Israel.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over this chapter, and in the review of the conduct of Gibeon, behold and see, what an earnest concern this people manifested for the preservation of their lives. And wilt not thou feel a more awakened concern for thine everlasting welfare? Is it not said in GOD'S most holy word, as it was told the Gibeonites, that the LORD hath given commandment, to destroy all nations that are not his Israel? Is it not a most sure and certain truth, that the hour is hastening when the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget GOD? And wilt not thou arise, and flee for thy life, and seek peace with thy Joshua, in the covenant promises of Israel?

Oh! thou Great and Almighty Joshua, thou sent, and sealed, and anointed of thy FATHER; behold I am come to thee, and am come from a far country indeed, for who so far from GOD as the sinner, until brought nigh by the blood of JESUS. My own garments and my own covering are old, like the Gibeonites. They were indeed once new, when my nature in my first parent was erected in GOD'S image; but now rent and torn, and worse than nothing. Make thou a league with my soul, I desire to be thy servant forever: far better wilt it be to be thy servant in the lowest place, a door keeper in thine house, than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness, though in a royal city, like

Gibeon. If I am thy servant, I shall be the LORD'S freeman. And to be but a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water, for the service of thy sanctuary, will I esteem an higher honor than to enjoy all the pleasures of sin for a season. Thy reproach will be greater riches to me, than all the treasures of Egypt.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the relation of wonderful events: five kings wage war against Joshua, in the south of Canaan. Gibeon is made the seat of war, in the first instance, because of their league with Israel. Joshua hasteneth to the rescue of Gibeon, and carrieth on his victories, in taking and destroying six royal cities: the sun and moon at the voice of Joshua stand still: hailstones are sent from heaven, to aid Joshua in the destruction of the kingdoms: after his victories Joshua returneth unto Gilgal.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, in the distresses brought upon the Gibeonites, by reason of their league with Joshua, what a lively picture it affords of every renewed soul, in the conflicts it is sure to be engaged in, whenever it is brought to seek fellowship with the FATHER, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST. Do I not know the truth of that scripture by heartfelt experience, that they who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS shall suffer persecution. Oh! happy experience! blessed testimony! Be it my joy to suffer all things, so I may win CHRIST! Dearest JESUS! vouchsafe to make a league with my soul! grant me an interest in thy covenant, and then will I not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

Behold again, my soul, with holy joy in the perusal of this chapter, the victories of Joshua, and contemplate in them, the representation of the victories of thy Joshua over all the host of foes, and in the sure possession of Canaan. Yes! JESUS hath conquered all.

In vain have all the confederate powers united. The sun was darkened at his triumphs, and the moon shall be turned into blood, in the completion of his redemption. The stars from heaven shall fall, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, in token of JESUS'S victory and the conquest of his redeemed ones. Oh! thou dear Redeemer, thou Almighty Joshua, great Captain of my salvation! GOD thy FATHER girded thee with strength unto the battle; and thou hast not only cast down all principalities and powers, but thou makest thy people to put their feet upon the necks of their enemies. Lead me on, dearest LORD, to thy victories. By the sword of thy SPIRIT, even thine holy word, and by the armour of thy salvation, give me grace to subdue all the remaining enemies of corruption within me, as well as the foes without; and wake me more than conqueror through thee, and thy grace helping me: that it may be said of me as of the armies of heaven: *they overcame by the blood of the LAMB, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death.*

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

The account of the holy war is continued in this Chapter; and in this is concluded the conquest of Canaan. In the former is related to us, the carrying on of the war in the Southern provinces of Canaan: in this, of the Northern. The kings of the North, like those of the South, join in confederacy against Joshua. The LORD encourages Joshua. He conquers them all, and destroys the Anakims.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, in those wars of Joshua, the lively similitude of the victories thy Joshua hath accomplished, in the attainment of the heavenly Canaan. How did JESUS wade through difficulties, and contend with principalities and powers, in the accomplishment of thy salvation! Oh! thou great Captain of the LORD'S host, may I look beyond the Joshua of the camp of Israel, to behold thee to whom Joshua ministered, and of whom he was but the type; and view thee

shadowed out, by all, that he accomplished, in thy victories, resurrection, and glory. Thou, thou art the standard and ensign thy FATHER lifted up for his people's conquest, in all ages of thy church. This was the holy war, which thou didst maintain in thy FATHER'S name, with hell, death, and the grave. And now, having triumphed openly over them all, and nailed them to thy cross, thou art our everlasting banner, by whom we triumph, and in whose name we are more than conquerors, and shall finally inherit the heavenly Canaan. Dearest JESUS, may this be my confidence when, like the *Hazor* kings, all my foes join in confederacy against me, that thou wilt go before me and subdue all things to thyself: and not only break down the force of the enemies from without, but break down within all the strong holds of sin, and the lusts of the flesh; and make my soul strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

In this chapter the HOLY GHOST is pleased to have brought into one view, the catalogue of the conquests both of Moses and Joshua. Those of Moses on the East of Jordan, and those of Joshua on the West. The extent of the boundaries of the kingdoms which were conquered are marked, and the number of the kings, with their territories, are mentioned, in number one and thirty.

REFLECTIONS

HERE stand, my soul, again, and see the salvation of GOD; here seek for grace, to put thy feet upon the necks of all those kings, for in them behold thy JESUS conquering not only thirty-and-one of thine enemies, but the earnest of all thine enemies being put under thy feet. And, my soul in this view, beg of GOD the HOLY GHOST to engage thee anew, with increasing vigor, under JESUS'S banner, and to arm thee with the whole armour of GOD: that beholding what thy Joshua hath done for thee, his HOLY SPIRIT may work in thee, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure. Remember, O my soul, that it is

a badge of thy holy calling, to endure hardness, as a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST: to be separated from the men of Canaan, and distinguished from their customs: to follow the LAMB whithersoever he goeth: and to count not thy life dear unto thyself, so that thou mayest finish thy course with joy, fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold of eternal life. Blessed JESUS! do thou, for thou alone canst accomplish it, arm me with thy strength, so shall I be more than conqueror through thee, who art the LORD my righteousness.

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

This Chapter begins with the account of the division of Canaan, to the several tribes of Israel. After the subjugation and conquest of the promised land, the LORD'S promise is to be fulfilled in the enjoyment of it. A remarkable event is recorded in this chapter well worth the record, in order to manifest the fulfillment of divine judgments, as well as mercies; and that is, the death of Balaam the sorcerer, whose awful history hath this termination.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, in the advanced years of Joshua, how all things, and all persons in nature, tend to decay. Well may we exclaim with *Zechariah, our fathers where are they, and the prophets do they live forever?* But oh! how precious in the contemplation, thy JESUS, thy Joshua, ever liveth, and is the same yesterday, and today, and forever. Blessed JESUS! thou art the life-giving, the life-preserving, the life-rejoicing source of thy people! And because thou livest thou hast said they shall live also, and when heart shall faint and strength shall fail, thou wilt be the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Let me as *Levi*, have no portion with the Reubenites on this side Jordan. But may JESUS be my portion, GOD my FATHER, and the HOLY GHOST my comforter and sanctifier. Give me, heavenly LORD, all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS: pardon, mercy, peace and joy in

the HOLY GHOST here, and life forever in the world to come. Cause me in this sense to inherit all things, be thou my GOD, and make me thy adopted child in the LORD JESUS.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

The same subject is continued here, as in the former Chapter, in the division of the land. Caleb desires to have Hebron, as had been assured him. Joshua consents to his request.

REFLECTIONS

IN beholding the LORD'S division of Canaan to his people, my soul would fain cry out, thou LORD shalt choose my heritage for me, and thou shalt be my hiding place forever. Instructed by thee, thou blessed SPIRIT, like *Caleb*, may the mountain of the spiritual Hebron be my portion, and there may I rest in JESUS in whom all fulness dwells. It is the well known character *of the inhabitants of the gardens*, to hearken to thy voice, to associate with thy people, to sit down at thine ordinances, and to dwell in thine house. LORD JESUS! let this be my employment while passing on and passing through this pilgrimage state. Thy GOD and FATHER will be my GOD and FATHER, and thy HOLY SPIRIT will be my guide; then shall I sweetly drink out of the wells of salvation: then shall I be continually refreshed in the Hebron of my GOD, until having passed on from strength to strength, and from one manifestation of grace unto another, I shall at length with all the redeemed of the LORD appear before my GOD in Zion.

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The division of the land is again prosecuted in this Chapter. Judah's lot is marked out, Caleb's part in Judah's portion is also again mentioned. The marriage of his daughter and her portion; and the cities named which were assigned to Judah.

REFLECTIONS

IN reading this Chapter, my soul feels disposed to cry out with the Patriarch Judah, Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise! But oh! how doth Judah, how do all the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles sing to nothing, when compared to thee, thou LORD of Judah, thou dear Redeemer, the Saviour of all men, but especially of them who believe!

Let the spirit of Caleb be upon me if it please my GOD. If he who took *Kirjath-Sepher* be thus esteemed, what shalt be the lot of him who by violence taketh the kingdom of Heaven, and hath his name written in the Book of Life! Oh! dearest JESUS, may my name be written in thy book, and may it be known in that day of victory, that I am chosen in, and saved by, the LORD JESUS!

LORD, I would say, give me as *Achsah*, a blessing, and who but JESUS do I require? Men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed. In him are contained all the upper springs and the nether springs of every joy. LORD JESUS! let all my fresh springs be in thee!

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the account of the portions of Joseph and of Ephraim. But inasmuch as they expelled not the Canaanites from among them, they bear the reproach.

REFLECTIONS

IT was the language of the dying Patriarch, concerning his son Joseph, that he was, and should be, a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. And here we see how his children broke out in fruitfulness, on the right hand and on the left. But oh! my soul, in him, to whom the son of Jacob ministered but as a type, how fruitful are thy boughs, O JESUS, and how dost thou run over the wall of thine enemies. Here indeed I see the blessings of heaven from above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, and blessings of the breasts of the womb. All nations shall call thee blessed! Blessed JESUS! be thou my portion, and do thou, for thou alone canst accomplish it, drive out all enemies from before thy face.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

This is but a continuation of the former chapter, inasmuch as the same subject is continued. The children of Joseph, in the half tribe of Manasseh, have their portion assigned them. They petition for more. Joshua gives them an answer.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! in the view of the several boundaries of the tribes of Israel arise and behold those everlasting possessions, which thy JESUS hath purchased for thee by his blood. And oh! pray for the sweet offices of the HOLY GHOST to be realized to thy experience, that they are thine in an everlasting covenant, which cannot be broken. And while the daughters of Joseph's tribe sue for their earthly inheritance, do thou plead for JESUS himself to be thine, and then he will bring with him all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings. Dearest LORD! while Joseph's sons murmur because they have but one portion, oh teach me to seek no more! Be thou my portion, LORD, and never, never will I desire any other. In thee I have

enough, and all the chariots of the enemy will not dismay, for in thee I shall discomfit an host of men, and by the help of my GOD leap over a wall.

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with an account of the setting up the tabernacle in Shiloh. The remaining part of the land is divided. Benjamin's lot particularly marked out, with the cities belonging to it.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! while beholding the Israelites busily engaged, as this Chapter represents them, setting up the tabernacle in *Shiloh*; do thou let thy meditation take wing, and behold that true tabernacle which the LORD pitched, and not man. See, gaze, contemplate, look upon it, and view well the glorious building. And when the whole of its splendors have passed and repassed in delightful review before thee, look within the sacred temple, and behold JESUS, thine own JESUS, the Almighty minister of this sanctuary, even the Shiloh himself, to whom the gathering of the people shall be. Oh! thou dear Redeemer, than great High Priest of our calling! give me to hear that voice which John heard, and to know my personal interest in it. *Behold! the tabernacle of GOD is with men; and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and GOD himself shall be with them, and be their GOD!*

I would call to mind, while looking over Benjamin's portion, what the man of GOD prophesied concerning this lot. He called him *the beloved of the LORD*. He prophesied that *he should dwell in safety by him; that the LORD should cover him all the day long; and that he should dwell between his shoulders*. Oh! for an interest in the same love, the same assurances of safety, the same Almighty covering, and the same dwelling under the GOD of Jacob. Dearest JESUS! make me the object of thy love, the object of thy care, thy

protection, thy safety. Witness for me, ye angels of light, and above all, thou HOLY SPIRIT of all truth, do thou witness to my spirit, that I prefer these mercies of my GOD and Savior, beyond all the riches of the earth. Oh! may I be found so justified in the blood and righteousness of him, that is the Surety and Defence of his people, that I may be like Benjamin, the beloved of the LORD; and like John, *the disciple whom JESUS loveth.*

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

The division of the land occupies the contents of this chapter. More are the lots of Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan. After the division to the several tribes is ended, Joshua hath an inheritance assigned him by Israel.

REFLECTIONS

STILL, my soul, in beholding Israel's resting places, and their several portions of an earthly Canaan, do thou follow on to know the LORD, and the power of his might, that thou mayest arrive at that heavenly rest which remaineth for the people of GOD. I see here, in the draught of Israel's bounds, extensive plains, lofty mountains, verdant lawns, and wells of water. But what are these to the tree of life, to the mountain of GOD, and to the river of the living SPIRIT, whose streams make glad the city of my GOD! Here in JESUS' righteousness I view mountains of myrrh, and hills of frankincense; mountains dropping with new wine. And what endears these ravishing views of all my covenant right, made over to me not as an earthly Canaan, but an everlasting inheritance; not subject to the interruption of foes, but eternally secured in the gift of GOD my FATHER, the purchase of my Redeemer's blood, and sealed to my soul by the HOLY GHOST; I behold the whole, as given to me with a love that is perfectly unchangeable, and coming in a way which makes the whole doubly sweet, as centered in the Person of JESUS! Dearest LORD! do thou as the Joshua of Israel, take up thy settlement in our

midst. Take to thee the *Tinnath-serah* of my very soul, and form thyself there *the hope of eternal glory*.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This chapter is but short, but the contents of it are interesting. The LORD appoints, and the children of Israel set apart, six cities for refuge. And as those cities were evidently a shadow of good things to come, the relation of them is made the more particularly.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! pass over all inferior considerations in the perusal of this Chapter, to attend to that grand, and most important one which the HOLY GHOST hath here held up to thy view in the city of refuge, as a lively similitude of thy never-failing and always open refuge the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And do thou learn from the care which the blessed SPIRIT hath shown, in causing it to be among the first things regarded, in the division of Canaan, that its importance must have been great indeed. And as a whole chapter in the history of Joshua's victories is here appropriated to this subject, and no other suffered to make a part in it, do thou give it thy whole attention, and suffer nothing to break in upon thy meditation, until thou beholdest JESUS, as thy city of refuge to which thou art fled, and in whom thou art fully delivered from the wrath to come.

Yes, blessed JESUS! thou art, indeed, a refuge from every storm and a covert from every tempest. Raised up and appointed by our GOD and FATHER, thou shelterest poor sinners who through sin and ignorance and unbelief have destroyed their own souls, and savest them from the malice of hell, the threats of a broken law, and the avenging cries of their own awakened consciences. Haste then my soul, flee for thy life, take refuge in the person, the blood and righteousness of thy crucified Saviour; and as thy High Priest liveth forever, abide in him, and forget thine own home, and thy father's

house: for he is thy rest forever, and in him thou mayest dwell as thine eternal habitation.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

The portion of the Levites forms the particular heads of this chapter: eight and forty cities in number are assigned to them; and the chapter closes with an observation on GOD'S faithfulness in the fulfillment of his promises.

REFLECTIONS

DEAREST JESUS! cause me to, learn from hence thy tender care of thy more immediate servants. Thy Levites shall be well provided for, whom thou hast set apart to thy service. And if they have no portion among their brethren, is it not, because thou thyself art their portion? And though to the eyes of an unfeeling world, some of thy most faithful labourers are sent without scrip or shoes as thy first disciples, yet having thee for their portion, they lack nothing, but are full and abound. Oh! let me learn from hence to reverence thy servants, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and for the sake of their ever-blessed Master.

Pause, my soul! and remark the faithfulness of JEHOVAH to his people. And if there failed not aught of any good thing which the LORD had spoken to Israel, but all came to pass; will not this prompt thee to believe thy GOD to be faithful to thee also? Will not GOD thy FATHER fulfil all his covenant promises? Will not thy JESUS be still JESUS in all his love and favor? And will not the HOLY GHOST continue his faithful influences, in directing thy heart into the love of GOD, and into the patient waiting for JESUS CHRIST? Oh! for faith in lively exercise to believe GOD'S word: to trust him now in the moment of trial, and not to hesitate, until it be seen, how things will go. Is he not still the holy one of Israel? And hath not all the faithful gone before, bore testimony to his faithfulness and truth? Oh! sweet thought! Blessed be the HOLY GHOST for teaching it to the church: if

we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot, he will not deny himself. LORD! in this firm persuasion let me live; and in this assured hope may I die.

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

Joshua having, as the captain in Israel under the LORD, accomplished all the purposes for which the two tribes and a half of Israel, whose possession was assigned them on the other side of Jordan, had accompanied Israel to the war, now dismisses them with a blessing to return. In their return they build an altar to the LORD, which, at the first, gave great offence to the rest of the tribes, when they heard of it, fearing that it savoured of idolatry. But when they heard the cause, that it was intended to commemorate the glory of GOD, they were well pleased. These are the principal contents of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! in this contest of Israel learn to remark how exceedingly disposed by nature the best of men are to form misconceptions, and draw unfavourable conclusions of each other's conduct. Alas! what a veil of ignorance hath the fall thrown over our minds. While I admire and pray for grace to copy after the zeal of Israel, in everything which concerns GOD'S honour and glory, I would no less seek grace also, to imitate the children of the two tribes and half over Jordan, and think it not enough to do right, and to seek the LORD'S countenance to it, but very cheerfully explain all my motives, when those motives are with an eye to GOD'S glory, to the inspection and approbation of men.

But is there not an higher improvement to be made in our view of the subject? Do I not behold in the *Reubenites* and their companions, the representation of all awakened believers on this side Jordan? Are we not all, as they were, remote by situation from the tabernacle, and the precious things in Canaan? Though JESUS

graciously condescends to visit us, and warms our hearts with the sweet visits of his love, yet do we not need continual monuments to tell our hearts, that this is not our home; and these are not the objects on which our affections here below should be placed? How often do even the ordinances of holy worship prove unsatisfactory: and the wells of salvation we cannot draw from by reason of our earthly, barren and lifeless frames! Precious JESUS! I would not erect an altar, nor offer a sacrifice, nor make mention of a burnt offering! I would not bring, if I had them, thousands of rams, or ten thousands of rivers of oil: but I would look to thee; my longing eyes should fix on thy person, and my soul look to thee in the most dependant assurance of salvation, in thy blood and righteousness; for thou art the one only altar, the high priest and sacrifice; thou art all and in all. Be thou my witness, my hope, my portion, all the day. And although I am as yet on this side Jordan, yet, bye and bye, thou wilt come and take me to thyself, and I shall behold thy face in glory, when I awake up after thy likeness.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

In this chapter we are drawing towards the close of Joshua's ministry. Like all the other servants of the LORD, his work being finished, his death succeeds. He is represented here as convening the LORD'S heritage together, to make his farewell discourse to them. This chapter hath the leading heads of his sermon; and it should seem by what follows in the next chapter, that this is closed before that he ends his discourse.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED JESUS! In the close of Joshua's ministry and labours, I see that all things and all men come to an end. But though Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and Joshua must die, yet thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. Oh! the sweet consoling thought! the

LORD liveth, and blessed be my strong helper; and praised be the GOD of my salvation.

But though the saints and servants of my GOD go the way of all the earth, yet through thy grace, O LORD, the fruits of their labours, their zeal and patience, their prayers and examples, are left behind. Here would I, for myself and Reader, pray that the dying words and legacy of the man of GOD, might live in my remembrance. Oh! for grace to cleave unto thee, thou dearest JESUS, for thou art indeed my life. And in the awful day of idolatry, and the pleasure-loving age, in which the LORD hath cast our lot, Oh! for faith to resist stedfastly all the enemies of our salvation. Make them, O LORD, thorns and briars in our path; hedge up our way with thorns if need be, that we may never find such lovers. Keep our souls close unto thee, and so powerfully restrain us, by the sweet influences of thy SPIRIT, that we may be more and more dead unto the world, but alive unto GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

We are now arrived to the end of Joshua's history. This chapter contains the finishing of his sermon, and the finishing of his life together. He dies, as he had lived, in the act of praising GOD, and most earnestly and affectionately entreating the Israelites to the love and obedience of the LORD. The chapter closes also with an account of the death of Eleazar, and of the removal of Joseph's bones.

REFLECTIONS

READER! in closing this sacred book of GOD, and in reviewing the many precious things contained in it, let us with increasing diligence look up for the teaching of the HOLY GHOST, that beside the historical relation in it as the proof of GOD'S faithfulness, we may spiritually discern the great tendency of the whole in pointing out the heavenly Canaan, under the typical representation of an earthly land of promise. Joshua, as the minister of GOD, hath indeed

brought the LORD's people over Jordan, and brought them in, and divided them their inheritance, as was promised. But Joshua and all Israel found that land to be but the land of an earthly inheritance. Though they had the signs and symbols of worship, and the refreshing views of the divine presence, yet these were only suited to a transitory state. Beautiful and conclusive is the apostle's reasoning upon it. If Joshua (says he) had given them rest, then would the LORD not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of GOD. And what is that rest but JESUS himself, who is the very sabbath of the soul to his people, and who hath promised to give all them that come to him, to find rest unto their souls. This (saith the prophet) is the rest wherewith ye may pause the weary to rest, and this is the refreshing. Isaiah 28:12.

But before I take a farewell of Joshua, as the servant of the most high GOD, and the captain of the LORD's host, I would pause and contemplate some of those precious views thy person and character afford, as a type of my almighty Joshua, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Methinks I see in thee the faint outlines of his glorious person and character, who was, and is, indeed, the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the LORD pitched, and not man.

In name as well as office, surely, Joshua, thou were a lively representative of our precious JESUS. He, as captain of the LORD's host, hath brought, and is still bringing, many sons unto glory, and to the division of their inheritance in the heavenly Canaan, as thou didst under his command to the possession of an earthly. It was at Jordan thy ministry commenced. And here it was also, in the very spot JESUS entered on his labours, when anointed with the HOLY GHOST, and under the baptism of the SPIRIT without measure. Here JEHOVAH began to magnify the earthly Joshua in the sight of all the people. And here both the persons of the FATHER and of the HOLY GHOST, glorified the LORD JESUS in their united testimonies to his person and office.

And as the earthly Joshua brought the people over Jordan; circumcised the house of Israel anew; led them on to sure victory and to conquest; and never left them, until the LORD had given them rest from all their enemies round about: so the heavenly, the

almighty Joshua, brings all his people through every river of affliction, and all the Jordans of sin and tribulation; takes away the foreskin of their heart, that they may be no more stiffnecked, makes them more than conquerors through his grace helping them, and never gives over until he hath brought them into that everlasting rest, which remaineth for the people of GOD. Hail thou great, thou Almighty Joshua, thou captain of our salvation. Thou hast indeed proved thyself to thy church, to be the true Joshua, the real Saviour, for thou hast saved thy people from their sins. Thou hast led them on to sure victory, and hast arrayed them with the robes of salvation. It is thine, and thine alone, O blessed JESUS, both to purchase and bestow, both to put into the possession and secure thy people in it, even of an everlasting possession; and not, like Joshua, when the work is wrought, to leave them by reason of death: but thou ever livest to receive the grateful praise from thy people, and to see the work of JEHOVAH prosper in thine hand. In all that remains until thou shalt take me home to behold thy glory, do thou cause me to rest on thine arm, and to standstill and see the salvation of GOD. And be it my portion to live in thy faith, and to die in the assurance, that where thou art, there shall I be also to the praise of the glory of his grace, who hath made me accepted in the beloved. Amen.

JUDGES

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

IT is not very certain who was the immediate Penman of this book. Some writers have supposed that it was *Samuel*. However this cannot be depended upon. The subject itself contained in it is much more interesting for us to regard. And the object intended from the records here presented to the church, seems to be directed to those two grand purposes; namely, to show how unsuitably GOD'S people conducted themselves to the privileges they enjoyed; and yet, in the midst of their unworthiness, how gracious the LORD manifested himself towards them.

The book of the Judges comprises in point of time a period of about 300 years; commencing from about 1400 years before the coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST to about 1100 years; and recording the annals of 14 Judges, from *Othniel* to *Eli* included.

There is much of gospel shadows and types, both as to persons, and things, in the several parts of the Book of the Judges. The HOLY GHOST was graciously pleased to cause many striking allusions to the great events of salvation, to be represented during the period of the church, which this book refers to. And several of the persons, whose history forms a part in this scripture, were eminent types and servants of the LORD JESUS. The Apostle to the Hebrews makes special mention of several of them, and with the most honourable testimony, as very illustrious patterns of faith; such as *Gideon*, and *Barak*, and *Samson*, and *Jephthah*. Hebrews 11:32.

I shall not detain the Reader with any further preliminary observations on the Book of Judges. But I must request him before he enters upon the perusal of it, that he will bend the knee of prayer, and join my spirit in a fervent supplication to the mercy-seat of our GOD in CHRIST, that the minds of both Writer and Reader may be

under the teachings of GOD the HOLY GHOST, to behold in every period and age of the church, how the LORD hath been carrying on the great purposes and counsels of his own will, and gradually preparing the minds of the faithful for that glorious era, when his people should not be under the commonwealth of Judges, but *a King should reign in righteousness, and execute judgment, and justice in the earth: in whose days Judah should be saved, and Israel dwell safely. And this is the name whereby he should be called, the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

Reader! may our souls rejoice together, that our GOD in mercy hath caused us to see this day. We may truly take up the language of the Prophet, and make application of his sweet words to our own circumstances, and say, as he did, *The LORD is our Judge; the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our King.* Isaiah 33:22.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

The sacred historian prosecutes in this Chapter the subject of Israel's contest with the remaining Canaanites, after the death of Joshua. The chapter opens in the enquiry of Israel of the LORD, who should go before them to the subjugation and destruction of their enemies. The LORD's answer. The several tribes divide in their war; some are successful more than others. several of the tribes permit the Canaanites to remain with them, contrary to the command of the LORD.

REFLECTIONS

SEE, my soul, in the history of Israel, what conflicts await the believer after a work of grace is begun in the heart. *Let not him that putteth on the harness boast like him that putteth it off.* Never, until that we undress for the grave, can the soldiers in the holy army of JESUS be said to have done with battle. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.* But oh! what a sweet relief to the mind is it, in the consciousness that the issue is not doubtful. Though the

Canaanite be still in the land, the promise is, that he shall not always be. *There is a rest which remaineth for the people of GOD.* Blessed GOD! comfort the souls of thy people with this assurance. And, until the day of deliverance comes, may we fight under his banner, and in his strength, who is *the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

Dearest JESUS! at the very mention of thy name, methinks, new strength is imparted to my soul. How infinitely dost thou transcend thy type of Israel's Joshua, in all that is precious and endearing! He was not able to continue, by reason of death. But *thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.* Oh! how sweet, how very sweet is that assurance! *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.* Be thou ever with me in all my trials, difficulties, and temptations. Be thou with me in all my happier hours of seeming prosperity and quiet. Be thou ever with me, to soften every evil, and to heighten every joy. Upheld by thine arm, which bringeth salvation, I shall be more than conqueror. And surrounded with thy love, my cup will run over. Oh! for the lively actings of faith thus to be always in the spiritual company of JESUS, and to live *to him and with him,* to the FATHER'S praise, and the SPIRIT'S grace, which maketh his people *accepted in the beloved.*

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains an interesting account of the appearance of an angel, with a message from GOD to Israel. The sacred historian also takes a retrospective view of Israel's conduct under Joshua, by way of pointing out their sad departure after his death. The people's behavior on the subject of GOD's message.

REFLECTIONS

MYsoul! read again, and again, thine own history in this account of Israel's departure and backsliding. Can any portrait be more strikingly drawn! How hath the LORD overlooked and passed by thy disobedience! By how many messages of grace, like the angel from

Gilgal, hath the LORD sent to call thy ways to remembrance? Oh! for the gracious office of GOD the HOLY GHOST, to act as the Remembrancer in my forgetful heart, to make my soul like *Bochim* before GOD.

Dearest JESUS! how increasingly interesting, in every renewed view of my unworthiness, is thy lovely person, and thy complete righteousness. Oh! mayest thou be made to me *wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*. I see, I feel, and groan under the recollection, in how many things I offend and come short of thy glory. Though like Joshua to Israel, I hope and trust thou hast begun to magnify thy great name in bringing me into the privilege of thy people, yet too many of the Canaanites are in the land. I do not *see all things put under thy feet*: But I look forward with the hope, that in thy strength and *power*, I shall by and by, be enabled to put my feet upon the neck of these foes. LORD! in thy name let me rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness be exalted.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

The subject which opened in the preceding Chapter, of the backsliding of Israel; from the LORD, is prosecuted in this. Here are inserted the names of Israel's enemies, which acted as instruments in the divine hand, for Israel's correction. Some account of their punishment, and of their humiliation in consequence thereof, is also given in this Chapter. GOD's gracious interposition in the deliverance of Israel, by Othniel, from the oppression of their foes, and by Ehud, and Shamgar, three of the first judges, is also related.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! learn here again, in the history of Israel, how much in all ages the church of GOD is the same, and how uniformly the LORD is training his people for himself. GOD leaves his people in the midst of their enemies, to try them, and to prove them. As polished stones, for his temple, they are long preparing, and all the plan of his

proceedings towards them, is mercy and goodness. But oh! how very precious is it to see, in Israel's history, how everything pointed to the LORD JESUS. Brought, as the people were, by sin and rebellion, into a state of repeated slavery, GOD raised up the several judges as their deliverers. But what are *Othniel*, *Ehud*, and *Shamgar*; compared to him who delivereth his people from the wrath to come, and whose deliverance is everlasting! Look up, my soul, to JESUS, when the corruptions from within, or foes from without, would bring thee again into bondage; and in the cry of distress and sorrow to the LORD, oh for faith to behold JESUS the sent and sealed of the FATHER, to drive out thine enemies from before thee, and to make thee more than conqueror through him that loveth thee.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

Few events in the history of Israel, are more interesting than what this Chapter contains, of the defeat of Sisera's army by Barak, under the animated zeal of Deborah. Here are the several particulars related which gave birth to that war; with the event of it, in the conquest over the enemies of Israel, by a wonderful interposition of the LORD for his people.

REFLECTIONS

READER! I would call upon you while I desire grace to call up at the same time all the finer affections of my own heart, in the perusal of this chapter, to contemplate with fresh satisfaction, the renewed love and attention of the LORD to his people. *Again*, the HOLY GHOST records, Israel did evil. And *again*, the LORD visits *their offences with the rod, and their sins with a scourge*. But oh! my soul do not forget, though it be the *rod*, it is the *rod of the covenant*. It is the rod of chastisement, the correction of a father, not the scourge of an enemy. For though the LORD raiseth up enemies to correct his children, those enemies are but his instruments, and can act no further than he commissions them. Oh! for grace to remember

this, in all the gentle chastisements of his love. Dearest LORD! do thou, wherever needful, *hedge up my way with thorns, that I may not find my path*, when my way is perverse before thee. Bring me into the wilderness, and *plead with me face to face*, until that thou hast *purged out the rebels, and the lusts of transgression*; and until, by the sweet influences of thy Almighty grace, thou hast wrought a change in my soul, that I may say, *I will go, and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now*.

Blessed LORD! teach me, in the view of the humble instruments thou wert pleased to make use of for the deliverance of thy people, never *to despise the day of small things*, but to learn the full assurance of that precious doctrine, that *it is not by might, nor by power, but by the SPIRIT of the LORD*. Oh! for grace to be forever leaning upon thy strength, thou dear Redeemer, and to know, that thy strength is perfected in weakness. Ever, dearest LORD, be thou my strength, my hope, and song of rejoicing. I shall be more than conqueror through thine arm helping me.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the second triumphant song of the church over her enemies. That at the Red Sea by Moses, is the only one prior to this which the HOLY GHOST hath been pleased to have recorded on those memorable events. Probably with a view not only to show the suitableness of praise for signal mercies, upon all occasions, but as a pattern for the after ages. Here are blended both praise and prayer. It begins with praise and ends in prayer, and celebrates both the divine goodness, and the instrumentality of human endeavors, crowned with GOD's power.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD! My soul with holy joy, how infinite the resources are in the faithfulness of Israel's GOD! What hath he not wrought! What is he not able to accomplish! And although Israel merited it not, yet

nevertheless JEHOVAH wrought for his name's sake, and that he might make his power to be known.

And is there nothing in all this, to lead the heart both of the writer and the reader in the discovery of similar deliverances? If *Deborah* and *Barak* had their day of triumph in the LORD's manifestations for Israel, cannot you and I look back, my brother, and count the day when we had cause to praise the LORD for the avenging of Israel? Oh! yes, trust we may both well count the day when the LORD JESUS made bare his holy arm, and rescued our souls from the arrows of the enemy, in the place of drawing water from the wells of salvation. Long did our foes oppose our way, and the highways of ordinances were unoccupied by us, until that JESUS arose and led captivity captive. Then, dearest LORD, when thou wentest out of *Seir*; when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, then did the mountains of sin in our nature melt before the Sun of Righteousness at his rising, and Sinai with all its terrors gave way at the presence of JESUS. Oh! give us grace, dearest Redeemer, to awake and utter a song, even a song of salvation, to the LORD JEHOVAH. May this be the everlasting rejoicing of our hearts: *the LORD is our strength, and our song, and he is become our salvation.*

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

In the progress of the history of Israel, we are here presented in this Chapter, with an account of Israel's rebellion by sin against GOD, after the forty years rest which the LORD had given them, from all their enemies, from the victory of Deborah and Barak. We are here told of their ill treatment by Midian: GOD's message to Israel by a prophet: Gideon is raised up, for their deliverance: an angel appears to him to encourage him: the conduct of Gideon in consequence thereof.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let you and I pause over this chapter, and in the view of Israel's repeated departures from the LORD GOD of their mercies, behold the picture of our own hearts. How often, how very often, hath our adorable Redeemer saved us from our enemies, and yet how prone are we to forget the gracious hand that hath wrought our salvation? And while we view our unworthiness, let the reflection lead us to contemplate renewed mercies. Doth not GOD send his messengers, like the Prophet, to remonstrate with us? Are not his visitations, either in the common Providences of life, in sickness, trouble, persecution, and the like, voices like the Prophet's of solemn expostulation? And when, these messengers of correction and reproof are accompanied with his grace, and put a cry in our heart, under a sense of sin, and the prayer of earnestness for deliverance, doth not JESUS fly to our aid, and like his type, the Gideon here spoken of, come forth to our rescue? Oh! thou adored LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS! how precious is it to my soul, to see thy renewed goings forth for me in all the redemption of thy mercy! Dearest JESUS! grant me, from such repeated testimonies of thy love, such unalterable assurance of my interest in thee, that I may neither seek the moistened nor the dry fleece, to tell me that thou art a faithful GOD. Oh! for grace amidst all the departures and backslidings of my unworthy heart! Oh, for grace to believe stedfastly the record which GOD hath given of his dear SON.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

The former Chapter was introductory to what is contained in this. Gideon was called in that to the LORD'S service. And in this we find him entered upon it. We have here the LORD'S directions concerning who should accompany him to the field of battle against Midian; how he should be sure of victory; how the LORD leads him by stealth to the camp of Midan, by way of strengthening his faith:

and the event of the battle, in the LORD'S delivering Midian into his hand.

REFLECTIONS

IT is profitable to remark, how the LORD is graciously pleased to work by slender means for his people's deliverance. *Not by might, nor by power; but by the SPIRIT of the LORD.* In these precious memorandums of the church's history, may my soul learn how infinite the resources in the salvation of JESUS. Trumpets, and earthen pitchers, are effectual weapons when the LORD commissions them to conquest.

But oh! thou adored Redeemer! may I never lose sight of thy victory over death, hell, and the grave, when contemplating the gracious consequences of it in the triumphs of thy people. It is thine everlasting love, thy grace, thy righteousness, which hath laid the foundation of all thy people's deliverances, in every period of thy church. All the after-actings, in all the eventful circumstances which mark the church's history, are but the result of that love and mercy wherewith thou lovedest thy people before the earth was formed, and when thy delights were with the sons of men. Sweet and precious JESUS! how infinitely doth it enhance every blessing, and tend to endear every mercy, thus to trace it to its fountain head, in thee and in thy love to our nature! Oh! for grace in lively exercise, thus to live upon and walk with thee, my ever dear and beloved Saviour! May all my goings forth be in thee, and thy strength, the sword of JEHOVAH JESUS! And may all my victories be like those of the armies of heaven, through the blood of the LAMB. Even now, in the same faith as Gideon, in the assurance that the issue is not doubtful, may I send back all the strength which might appear ever so promising, and begin that song, as if the war was ended, which was heard in heaven, and which, ere long, I hope to sing in glory; *Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our GOD, and the power of his CHRIST; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our GOD day and night.*

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

This Chapter is but a continuation of the history of the battle, and success of Gideon, related in the former. It forms indeed the sequel of Gideon's life. The consequence of his victory excited the displeasure of the Ephramites, because he called them not to the battle. Gideon softens their displeasure by his mild answer. Some other events are related which took place after this victory. Gideon declined the government of Israel, but by his prudent conduct preserved, under the LORD, peace to Israel forty years, and died full of honor. These are the principal things recorded in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! pause over the review of this chapter. Call to mind the wonderful mercies shown to Israel, as related in the former chapter, and then behold the issue of divine deliverances, in the shameful departure of Israel to idolatry. My soul! art thou not astonished at the view of such perfidy? Couldst thou have believed, that there dwelt in the human heart, such vileness and corruption?

When, my soul, thou hast duly contemplated the church of GOD of old, look at the church of JESUS now. *What, (saith the apostle), are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.* Yes! my soul, thou art in the same condemnation by nature, and in heart and mind, prone to depart from GOD. Oh! precious JESUS! how dear and invaluable is thy salvation! how great that efficacy of thy blood and righteousness which pleads for the pardon of thy people. Oh, for grace to take shelter under both, from a conscious sense of my utterly ruined and undone state without it! Be thou my refuge all the day, and the justifying righteousness of my soul for evermore, for thou alone art *the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof.*

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter prosecutes the history of Israel, after the death of Gideon. Abimelech, the natural son of Gideon, usurps the government; slays all his brethren, except the youngest, who hid himself from him. His reign, did not, however, terminate according to his wishes, for his evil conduct produced at length his own ruin. These are the contents of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

WHILE I beg the Reader to reflect with me on the sad account of human sin and transgression which this chapter affords, I desire him no less to remark, how various the ways the LORD is pleased to adopt, to punish the sins of his people. Sometimes by the scourge of the enemy, and sometimes by the baseness of false friends. Oh! my GOD, give me to behold, and with humble thankfulness to contemplate, thy mercy in thus adopting any, and every means, thy grace and wisdom see most suited to the end, to call home our rebellious hearts, when at any time, from a fullness of blessings, we depart from thee. Yes, blessed GOD! do thou mercifully appoint chastisements, of whatever kind, or nature, or degree, the case requires, so that my wandering soul is again allured and brought back to thy fold; and JESUS becomes increasingly precious, from a stronger conviction in my past rebellion, of my need of him. Raise up, gracious LORD, an holy conflict, in the struggles of my poor fallen nature, until, like the men of *Shechem*, and *Abimelech*, they mutually destroy one another, so that every thought is brought into captivity to the obedience of CHRIST. Root out all the brambles and thorns which would propose shelter to my sins; and do thou, blessed JESUS, as the cedar of Lebanon, or the olive tree of *Engedi*, and the vine of Zion, cover me with thy rich branches, and give me to sit under *thy shadow with great delight, that thy fruit may be sweet to my taste.*

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

This chapter relates a pleasant, but short interval to the wars of Israel, under the peaceable government of two of its Judges; Tola, the son of Puah, and Jair a Gileadite. A renewal of Israel's transgression succeeds; and, in consequence, a renewal of troubles. GOD's anger and visitation: Israel's sorrow and humiliation; these are enumerated in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul! over the perusal of this chapter, and behold once more a renewed instance of human corruption, and divine grace triumphing over it, in the richest display of that glorious testimony; that where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

But chiefly my soul, remark in this chapter, what is said of his unequalled love, and tender sympathy with his people; whose soul was grieved for the misery of Israel. Yes! dearest JESUS, here I fully recognize thee! It is JESUS's soul that was grieved. It is the same, of whom it is said, that in all their affliction he was afflicted. In his love, and in his pity, he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled, and *vexed* his HOLY SPIRIT. Oh! sweet and precious view of the humanity of JESUS! Sweet and precious evidence, that he hath indeed taken our nature upon him! Sweet and precious assurance of his being the same JESUS, yesterday, and today, and forever: when, in an age so long before his incarnation, and the eternal purposes of salvation came to be fulfilled, JESUS' soul participated in the miseries of his people. And shall not my soul find a growing confidence in this unequalled view of his love? Shall I not rest assured, that if my adored Redeemer took a part, and so decided a part in the sorrows of his people, before redemption-work was finished; will he not now feel an interest, and concern in all that relates to them? Did the SON of GOD indeed come down from heaven; did he leave the bosom of the

FATHER, and tabernacle in substance of our flesh, on purpose to accomplish salvation; and was his soul grieved for those miseries he came to do away; and will he now relax in his regard, and overlook the miseries of his Israel, when he is exalted at the right hand of the FATHER, and all power is His in heaven and earth? Will not JESUS, of whom it is said, having loved his own which are in the world, he loveth them unto the end; will he not commiserate our distresses, soften their asperity, and overrule them to his own glory, and his people's welfare? Oh! thou dear Redeemer! convinced as my soul is, that amidst all the hallelujah's of the blessed, the care of thy church below, attracts thy unceasing concern; nor can all the joys of heaven cause thee to remit one moment thy participating in all the circumstances of the humblest and poorest of thy tried family: may my soul feel the SPIRIT'S constraining influence in drawing me nearer to the view, and to the enjoyment of thee my GOD and Saviour; till from conducting me through all troubles, and sympathizing with me in all needful afflictions, thou shalt bring me safe to that blessed place, where as the LAMB in the midst of the throne, thou feedest thy redeemed, leadest them to living fountains of waters, and GOD shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

The history of the Judges during the commonwealth of Israel, and their government is continued. In this chapter we have the relation of Jephthah's administration. His birth, valor, contest with Ammon in the deliverance of Israel, victory, and rash vow, and the event of it, on the person of his daughter: these form the contents of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! ponder over this chapter, and remark with me, how very striking the marks of distinguishing grace! While all the sons of Gilead, in hawkish descent, were passed by; Jephthah, the son of an

harlot, is chosen to be the servant of the LORD to his people! From hence let you and I learn never to overrate anything, from the mere outward and adventitious circumstances of birth, or human distinction. Not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But GOD hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath GOD chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. And oh! that the GOD of all grace, may give us both grace, that we may know by heartfelt experience, the sweetness and preciousness of being the distinguished object of so much mercy, which may be a never-failing source of comfort here, and of everlasting happiness hereafter.

But while we behold in Jephthah, this distinguishing mark of the divine favor, let the Reader learn in his instance, how to appreciate the grace of GOD, while beholding the little deserts of men. Reader! it is delightful, indeed it is, to observe in the history of all men, even the best of men (for this is the uniform character of the whole race) that GOD's mercies, (even the richest of mercies, JESUS himself) have never been bestowed because we have merited them. No, blessed GOD! all are founded in thine everlasting love; they originate in thine own free and sovereign mercy. Thou art the first cause; and thou art the final end. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen. Reader! let us pass over all other considerations, all other subjects, and in the view of JESUS, the first, best, and most comprehensive of all gifts, the mercy of all mercies, here rest our contemplation. And thus far imitate Jephthah's vow to say, if our GOD will indeed give JESUS into our arms, in our heart, and form him there by the sweet influences of his HOLY SPIRIT, the hope of glory; then will we give up for a burnt-offering, every other joy, and relinquish all that flesh and blood holds dear, so that JESUS be the strength of our heart, and our portion forever.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This chapter is connected with the former. It relates to us the displeasure of the men of Ephraim against Jephthah, because he called them not to the battle with Ammon; and the sad consequence of this jealousy: the death of Jephthah; the three successive judges to Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, including a period of 25 years.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! in all the contentions and animosities of life, and especially among brethren, never lose sight of Him, and his unequalled love, who passeth by the repeated provocations of thy sinful nature, and in return for thy manifold instances of ingratitude, pours himself, and his fullness of mercies into thy bosom. Precious JESUS! thou hast indeed endured the contradiction of sinners against thyself, and on the cross remembered our poor blind nature, when in that sweet prayer, thou didst call upon the FATHER to forgive the sins of ignorance, for they knew not what they did. Wilt thou be pleased, dearest LORD, to be to me all I need. Do thou fill up all relations: make up the want of every tie of natural affinities, and so influence my soul by the constraining graces of thine HOLY SPIRIT, that the language of my heart may be the true *Shibboleth* of thy gospel; so as never to betray thy interest, nor give the enemy cause to blaspheme; but that thy name, thy person, thy righteousness, thy salvation, may be as ointment poured forth, for the fragrancy of it, and my mouth may daily speak of it among the people, for I know no and thereof.

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

This chapter commenceth with another sad account of Israel's transgression, and the consequent punishment from the LORD. We

have in it also, the relation of the birth of Samson, and the message of an angel concerning him. The conference between the angel and the mother of Samson in the first interview, and the renewed conversation at a second, when her husband was present. Both are circumstantially related in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

CONTEMPLATE, my soul, the wonderful grace of GOD manifested to this humble family, amidst the general corruption of Israel; and remark from it, for thy comfort and encouragement in evil times, how the LORD watcheth over his people for good. Behold! how angels minister unto them that are the heirs of salvation. And may I not hope, may I not trust, that some celestial messenger will graciously be sent to my relief in any, and in every case, wherein my GOD and FATHER sees it needful.

But do I not see in this instance JESUS himself, the Almighty Angel, and Messenger of the FATHER'S covenant? Surely, dearest JESUS, as the great Mediator of it, and in this light thy FATHER'S servant, it is thou thyself which hast brought all the glorious revelations of heaven! It is thou which hast communicated all the important messages from JEHOVAH to men. Surely it was thou which didst converse with the Patriarchs, with thy church in the wilderness, and upon many occasions, like the present, to thy people, as if thou didst long for the period fixed on from all eternity to arrive, in which thou wouldest assume our flesh, and dwell among us. As if thy precious soul, in contemplating the glories of redemption, anticipated with joy and rapture the hour when by thy appearing in substance of our flesh, thou wouldest ransom the souls of thy people from everlasting destruction. Oh! thou Almighty Angel of the New Covenant, thou High Priest after the order of Melchisedec; thou Altar, thou Rock, and Sacrifice! do thou be all these, and infinitely more, if needful, in all my poor offerings; and do thou perform wondrously, and give me faith to look on, till my eyes see thee ascending in the flame of thine own complete and all-sufficient sacrifice, as an evidence that thou art all in all, and goest up with thy people'S intercession in thy dear name and righteousness; and then,

like Manoah and his wife, I would fall with reverence of soul and body at thy feet, as the LORD my righteousness.

But let me take one prospect more of the subject in this Chapter, and in the promised child of *Samson*, the Nazarite from the womb, behold him typified, who was not only separated from the very shadow of guilt, and before his incarnation devoted to his FATHER'S service, but was miraculously conceived by the overshadowing power of the HOLY GHOST. Samson, though set apart from his mother's womb, a Nazarite by birth, was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity. But the Almighty Samson of our salvation was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. The Samson of Manoah and his wife was indeed raised up of GOD to be the deliverer of his brethren from temporary affliction; and even this limited, as it necessarily was, to the boundaries of this life, by reason of death, could not be accomplished but in part. But the Almighty Samson of our heavenly FATHER, was raised up to be the Deliverer of his people from everlasting ruin, and to save them from the wrath to come. And in this glorious work, JESUS is not only the author, but the finisher of the work, and hath completed the eternal redemption of our souls. Hail! thou that art mighty to save! the LORD of Hosts is thy name. LORD! let thy grace be sufficient for me, and thy strength, of which Samson's was but the mere shadow in resemblance, be made perfect in my weakness. For of thee, and through thee, and to thee, are all things; to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

The history of Samson occupies the whole of this Chapter. His marriage with a daughter of the Philistines: his slaying a young lion: the story of the swarm of bees after this, in the carcase of the beast: his riddle: the stratagem of his wife to solve it: his anger upon the occasion: his destruction of thirty young men of Ashkelon: his wife given to another man. These are the several contents.

REFLECTIONS

I would pass over all other considerations in the perusal of this Chapter, to discover every feature which I can trace in this Nazarite, as pointing to the person and offices of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth. And though I am a poor blind creature in such a study; yet do thou, LORD, teach me the wonderous things of thy law; and then shall I discern somewhat to comfort my mind in every part of thine holy word; *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. Yes! blessed JESUS! I behold in the going down of thy servant to the Philistines, and tracing the wonderful events which followed, an emblem of thy gracious coming down for salvation-work to this lower world.

I view in the men of *Timnath* the baseness, treachery, and unprovoked anger of thine enemies! I behold nothing but perfidy and unfaithfulness in return for all thy favor, I see moreover, in this representation, not an unapt or distant allusion to the honey of thy gospel. How unexpected from such a quarter! How unsought for and overlooked! And what a riddle to the wisdom of this world, that GOD should have chosen weak things to confound the mighty. Oh! give me to eat of this honey, to be food to my soul, to recover from disease, to heal the wounds of sin. And however loathed by many, yet make me like the bee, earnest to gather it for my daily food. And be thou to me, dearest JESUS, in all thy person, relations, and offices, sweeter also than the honey, and the honeycomb.

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The history of Samson is continued through the whole of this Chapter. Several remarkable and surprising events are here recorded of his quarrels with the Philistines, his triumphs over them, the treachery of his enemies, his great thirst, and the LORD'S seasonable supply.

REFLECTIONS

DEAREST JESUS! may I, in these views of Samson, which represent him as delivered up by his countrymen into the hands of his enemies, have my soul instantly directed to the contemplation of thee, and of thy voluntary surrender; when, in the accomplishment of redemption, thou gavest thy back to the smiter, and thy cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. And may my soul so view thee, in this unequalled mark of grace and condescension, as to have my whole heart interested in all that concerns thee. But oh! precious JESUS, while I behold thy matchless power, displayed in bursting asunder the bands of death, do thou manifest the same omnipotency, in breaking the bands of sin and death in me. LORD! burst the bands of Satan, the strong man armed, in my heart; loosen his hold upon my poor fallen nature, and bring me out of the spiritual prison, where he hath long kept my soul captive. And at length, when thou shalt break through, and come in the clouds to judgment, oh! raise my body, loosened from the bands of corruption, to glorify the triumph of my GOD and Saviour; that having in this life known the power of his resurrection by grace, I may in that life be among the risen to glory, through the alone merits and salvation of JESUS.

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

The close of Samson's history forms the subject of this Chapter. We have in it a melancholy proof of our fallen nature, in the renewed breakings out of lustful passions in Samson, and the sad consequence of them, in the loss of his eyes, when, after repeated disappointments, the Philistines got him into their hands. His recovery by grace, and the LORD'S merciful answer to his prayer, with his death: these are among the relations in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

I CANNOT dismiss the review of this very remarkable character, Samson, without once again, and before I take a farewell leave of him, desiring grace and the divine teachings of the HOLY SPIRIT, that I may look at him so as to profit. I would pause and consider, with what an air of importance his birth was introduced: how singularly the pretence of the LORD led him on through all the remarkable periods of his life: and what decisive tokens of the same Almighty presence and favor distinguished his death. Thus brought into the world, so solemnly set apart as a Nazarite to GOD: and so peculiarly distinguished from every other in all the events which befel him: it is impossible but to suppose that the divine intention concerning him, was to prefigure another. And to whom shall I direct my eyes, in order to behold the person represented, but to thee, thou holy blessed glorious Nazarite, whose whole nature was *purer than snow, whiter than milk, more ruddy than rubies, and brighter than polishing sapphire*. Thy birth indeed, blessed JESUS, was miraculous; and great were the predictions and preparations, made in the sacred word for thy coming. Anointed with the HOLY GHOST without measure, and solemnly set apart for thy FATHER'S service, when thou didst come thou wast at once brought into a display of the most triumphant exploits; not indeed of the destruction of the Philistines, but in thy victory over the enemy; when from thy baptism thou wast led up of the SPIRIT into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. Basely wast thou betrayed as Samson, by false friends, and like him delivered up into the hands of thine enemies. But infinitely surpassing him, though thine enemies nailed thee to the cross, and then insulted thy sufferings, thou hast, by that very death, fulfilled the whole council of JEHOVAH, put an everlasting end to sin, with all its dreadful consequences, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is to all, and upon all that believe. Here then, LORD, let me behold thee in thy death, and in the triumph of it. And beseech thee, thou gracious GOD of my salvation, that now thou hast by thy death spoiled principalities and powers, and made ashew of them openly, triumphing over them in it, that thou wilt mercifully go on by the preaching of thy gospel, under

thy blessed SPIRIT'S influence, conquering and to conquer. Oh! may thy sovereign word be as the arms of Samson, to pull down all the strong holds of sin and Satan. Let that cursed foe be beheld by thy people, to fall as lightning from heaven. Let the foundation of every false god be thrown down, and the ruin of antichrist be brought to pass. Oh! let thy Kingdom come, thou dear Redeemer, and hasten the latter day glory. May that period soon arrive, when the nations of the earth shall own thy power, when every knee shall bow before thee, and every tongue confess, that thou art CHRIST, to the glory of GOD the FATHER.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

The subject of this, and all that remains in the book of the Judges, puts on a different complexion from what went before. The Reader will recollect the title it bears: the transactions here recorded; where in those days when there was no king in Israel; when every man did that which was right, or pleasing, in his own eyes. And how right that was, the sad account here given doth but too plainly show. In this chapter we have, in the example of one house and family, a lively Feature of the Idolatry of the land. Micah sets up an image for his god, of silver stolen from his mother: and takes a vagabond Levite for his priest.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! pass over all lesser considerations in the perusal of this Chapter, to drop a tear over Israel's degeneracy, in setting up idols in their houses; and the corruption of the sacred order of the Levites, in acting as priests of the same. Is this Israel before whom the LORD GOD manifested such wonders, and to whom the LORD showed such distinguishing grace? *Tell it not in Oath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice: lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.*

Blessed be GOD! the day is come, the fountain is opened to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness, when the LORD hath cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and in which the LORD hath promised, that the prophets and the unclean spirit shall pass out of the land. Oh precious JESUS! thou prince of the tribe of Levi, give us pastors after thine own heart, and let not thy faithful servants be obliged to wander to seek places; much less be content to prostitute their sacred order for a piece of silver, and for a morsel of bread. Oh! make them more anxious to win souls than to gain kingdoms. Let the salvation of sinners in thy blood and righteousness be the sole object of their work, and here may they labor night and day in thy word and doctrine. And do thou bless them, gracious LORD, in their ministry; and when thou the Chief Shepherd shall appear, may they obtain that crown of glory which fadeth not away.

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

The same melancholy subject of idolatry is the burden of this chapter. Certain Danites having called at the house of Micah, impiously consult the priest of Micah concerning their journey: being joined by others, they rob the house of Micah of his gods: and his priest, as might reasonably be expected, leaves the service of Micah to be priest to the robbers. Idolatry is long established among the children of Dan.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD my soul! what dreadful effects the fall of man *and* his apostasy from GOD, hath wrought in the human heart. Behold! how general and even universal that apostasy is by nature. Well might the prophet, contemplating the horrid picture, confess; *all we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way.* For though the different tracks, the different characters of men take lead into various bye paths; yet the bias and direction of every man's

mind, in a state of nature, is all turning from GOD. And how very dear ought that rich dispensation of mercy which sought us in our lost estate to be, which brings back sinners from the error of their way, and turns them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the living GOD.

Precious JESUS! may it my portion to learn from hence, how much I owe to thee and to thy rich mercy, who, when running after the idols of any sinful heart, came and delivered me from this dreadful captivity. And no less to thy mercy, heavenly FATHER, do I desire to ascribe the great salvation, whose everlasting love made such ample provision for my recovery, in the complete redemption of thy dear SON! And thou Almighty SPIRIT, from whose effectual teaching, and in thy glorifying both the FATHER'S love and JESUS'S grace to my view, I am brought over from the dominion of Satan, and made willing to be saved in JESUS, in the day of thy power! LORD, let the cry of my heart evermore be like that of Ephraim, *What have I to do any more with idols!* In the LORD JESUS do I desire to rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness to make my boast. Thou art my GOD, and I will prepare thee an habitation; my father's GOD, and I will exalt thee.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

Melancholy views of Israel's transgression still appear, and are prosecuted in their contents through this Chapter. In the former we have beheld the daring sin of idolatry; here we are presented with the horrid representation of the sin of murder. The concubine of a Levite forms the chief subject of the story: her abuse: her being murdered: and the Levites conduct upon it: these form the principle events here recorded.

REFLECTIONS

THOUGH the several contents in this chapter lead to the review only of the sin, and consequently the sorrow of our nature, yet my

soul, if the contemplation of man's ruin by sin, prompts thy heart to admire and embrace yet more affectionately the glorious recovery by grace, and brings thee home to Him, who hath done away sin and all its real consequences by the sacrifice of himself, even this humiliating subject will form the foundation for greater praise. Yes! thou blessed JESUS, I see in thee, and thy great redemption-work, the glorious scheme of salvation, prepared long before the fall, and in the fullness of time completed, for to repair the desolations of many generations, and to restore perfect order among all the works of GOD. I behold the Almighty GOD and FATHER founding this plan of unequalled mercy, in the ancient settlement of eternity, and thou generously undertaking it when neither Levite nor Priest, nor righteousness, nor offering, could stand in the least stead to bring sinners to GOD. And what is it now in time, but the same everlasting righteousness arising out of JEHOVAH's everlasting love, by which the salvation of thy church and people is secured forever. Hail! thou holy, precious, pure, and spotless LAMB of GOD! Oh may my soul find constant relief, and every suited encouragement, in reposing on thy righteousness, when at any time, in myself or others around me, I feel or see the sad consequences of a sinful state. LORD! I would lay low before thee, under a deep sense of sin, and this body of death I carry about with me, while taking refuge under the incense of thy merits, and seeking redemption in thy blood. Be thou to me, O LORD, all I need; *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: and may all my glorying be in thee, O LORD.*

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

The history in this chapter, like the two or three preceding, is full of distress, though the subject varies. From private calamities we are now introduced to the relation of public: and from an house, or family, the evil is extended to the Nation. Now we hear of the wars on account of sin. The story of the Levites' wrongs is heard in the several tribes of Israel; they form a resolution to avenge them on the

Benjamites: matters soon come to an issue: and a dreadful slaughter in consequence thereof is related in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

HERE let me learn, from the unanimity of Israel in a just cause, and the blessing of the LORD GOD upon them, how much it becomes the Israel of GOD, to unite in the suppression of sin, and in supporting the interest of JESUS in the world. Oh! for zeal for him, and his blessed cause, who hath so loved me, as to give himself for me! Here, blessed JESUS, give me grace to unite in heart and soul with all thy holy army, and to be valiant in thy cause. And, ye soldiers of the LAMB! ye who wear the regimentals of JESUS, and profess to have put on his whole armour; let me speak to you, as the Levite did at *Mizpeh*; behold! ye are children of Israel! be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. Never give quarter to Satan; but resist stedfast unto death, striving against sin; and count not your life dear unto yourselves. So that you may finish your course with joy, and having fought the good fight of faith may lay hold of eternal life.

And ye men of Benjamin, shall I call you? my poor brethren in sin and transgression, oh! cast down your rebellious arms at the foot of the cross; or flee, like the men at *Rimmon*, flee to CHRIST JESUS for shelter, while the opportunity of escape remains, and while the door of salvation is open. Sweet is the voice, and most precious the promise: *All that the FATHER giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out.*

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

This Chapter, which concludes the book of the Judges, gives the general conclusion also, of sin and its punishment in the sorrow and anguish of spirit it induceth. We have in it, the account of all GOD'S people mourning, concerning the ruin of Benjamin. They take counsel, how to repair the breach, made by it, in one of the tribes:

and from the daughters of Jabesh-gilead, and Shiloh, give them wives, to build up their inheritance.

REFLECTIONS

May a gracious GOD, be pleased to follow up his own blessed designs, in recording the sad relations of Israel in this book, to, make both the Writer, and Reader of this Commentary upon it, wise, under his divine teaching, from what is written. If, Reader, the page of Israel's transgressions, in this book of the Judges, be so blessed of GOD the HOLY GHOST, as to prompt both your heart, and mine, to behold in it, what it really is, the history of all men according to nature, and unrestrained by grace: and, if the consciousness of the whole, tends to endear JESUS, in all his Person, Offices, Relations, and Characters, as the only remedy for sin; and, if our hearts are led to him for salvation; then let us both bless the Great Author of our mercies, who hath given this, as well as *all scripture, by inspiration of GOD; and made it profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of GOD may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Amen.*

Ruth

General Observations

THE Holy Ghost hath not thought proper to gratify our curiosity, in giving information from whose pen the book of *Ruth* hath issued. Had it been at all needful, no doubt the Church would have been made acquainted with it. But, that it carries with it marks of being written under his own blessed inspiration, and that he intended it for the perpetual instruction and comfort of the Church in all ages, there can be no question. Indeed, according to my view of things, the truest evidence that any Book bears his signature is, when his people are enabled, from his own precious teachings therein, to set to their seal *that God is true*. For, when at any time the Holy Ghost refreshes their minds with his word; when those sweet truths they read, in any part of the divine oracles, are made life and spirit to their hearts; this is what the Apostle says, *in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established*. And in the instance of this book of God when those blessed effects accompany the perusal, here are the *three* all agreeing together. The sacred word itself is *one*. The Almighty Author of it is *another*. And the heart of the believer, in whom the word seals its authenticity, is a *third*.

The design the blessed Author of the book of *Ruth* had in giving it to the church, seems to have been directed for the display of the divine mercy, both in the world of Providence and of grace. And perhaps yet more pointedly, to lead unto Jesus.

The gracious superintending mercy of God over his people, in a way of Providence, is beautifully illustrated in *Ruth's* history. In her life, simply considered, as relating to the things of time and sense, connected with this world only, we behold the fullest proof of our dear Lord's promise displayed, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all things needful shall be added unto*

you. Ruth, in leaving all that was near and dear to nature, to seek the God of Israel, and finding him, and all things *with* him, and *in* him, became a living testimony of this precious doctrine. But though I very readily and cheerfully allow that this, in a subordinate sense, might be among the gracious designs of the Holy Ghost, in causing the Book of *Ruth* to be written, and her history recorded; yet I cannot but believe that a greater and more important design was intended in giving this sweet morsel of sacred truth to the Church. Was it not to display yet more illustriously the wonders of his grace? And what can more illustriously display the riches of his grace, than the call of this poor *Moabitish* daughter to be among the fellow-heirs of the same covenant promises with Israel?

Independent of all other considerations, the Book of *Ruth* claims peculiar regard from the followers of the blessed Jesus, in that Christ, after the flesh, sprung from *Ruth*; and thereby manifested his alliance to the Genthe as well as to the Jewish church, So that we may upon this occasion, as well as many oilier grand considerations connected with it, say with Paul, *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not a/so of the Gentiles? Yes! of the Gentiles also.* And it is, I conceive, a very delightful consideration to the believer, to trace this connection even in the minutest point. For it is not the question, or enquiry, after *endless genealogies* (as an apostle terms it) but it is concerning him, who is in all characters and offices, dear to his people, *not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless file.*

I shall not presume, in this humble Commentary on the book of *Ruth*, which I here offer, under divine teachings, in aid to the Believer to be wise above what is written; and therefore will not venture to allegorize the several very interesting things contained in it, which certainly seem to lean that way. That there are very many beauties in scripture of this kind, no one, who is conversant in the word of God, will question, It corresponds so munch to the ancient method of instruction in the eastern world, that we might reasonably expect, in a gracious revelation from heaven, the great truths contained in it might, in accommodation to the capacities of men, be conveyed that way. And hence we find, not only the servants of the Lord Jesus, but the Master himself, adopted similitude and parable

in their teaching. Whether *some* of the most interesting outlines in the book of *Ruth* be of this kind or not, I leave undetermined. But the Reader will perhaps be led to think, (and I wish him not to think otherwise), that I am strongly inclined to this belief, when I add, who among the fallen race of Adam would ever have understood, unless the Holy Ghost had commissioned his servant Paul the Apostle to inform the Church of it, that the things concerning the history of Sarah's Isaac, And Hagar's Ishmael, *were an allegory*.

Reader! may the blessed Spirit of all truth guide me into all truth, while writing, and *you* while reading, this Precious book of God! May our hearts be mutually refreshed and comforted in all our researches, in the faith *which maketh wise unto salvation*. And may we be led into a saving acquaintance, and full assurance of understanding, to *the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. Amen.

Chapter 1

SUMMARY

The book of Ruth opens in this Chapter with the relation of a certain family leaving Bethlehem in consequence of a famine, and sojourning in the country of Moab. The distressing events which followed: the death of the husband and his two sons; and the return of the widow, with one of her daughters in law, from Moab to Bethlehem. These are the principal things related in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, in the review of what is written in this Chapter, and see what reference it bears to thy spiritual state And circumstances. Is there not, by nature, a famine induced in the hand to all the fathers race of Adam, when, before the soul is quickened to the use of any of its spiritual faculties, it neither feels the sense of its lost and famished state, nor hath any spiritual appetite to the bread of life, which came down from heaven? And hast not thou, my soul,

hike Elimelech and all his household, left the land of bread ‘to seek among the husks of the world the gratification of thy sensual appetite?

Oh! thou merciful Lord God, how gracious hast thou been to my soul, when hedging up my way, and inducing disappointment and afflictions in the creature, thou hast again inclined my heart to return to the Lord God of my salvation! Oh! how gracious hath it been in thee, Lord, to visit *thy* people again with spiritual sustenance, when by sin and disobedience we had called forth a dearth of such rich provisions! Shall I not hasten back to my Father’s house, convinced, as I am, that the world, like Moab, affords no resting place to dwell in. Shall any persuasions of others, or fears of my own, keep me from this purpose? Dearest Jesus! to whom shall I go but to thee, thou art both the bread of life, and thou only hast the words of eternal life; thou art the very Bethlehem of thy people, and in thee I shall find enough to live upon forever! Like Ruth, may it be my most determined resolution, to go where thou goest, and to know nothing among men but thee. I would forget my own people, and my father’s house, and both in life and in death, desire none in comparison of thee. And though my flesh and my heart faileth, yet thou art and wilt be the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.

Chapter 2

SUMMARY

As the history advanceth in its progress, the several particulars of it become more interesting. In this chapter we are introduced into the acquaintance of the hero of the subject, Boaz: and informed how Ruth became first brought acquainted with him. The events of a day are circumstantially related, and the consequences of it, in Ruth's conduct during the season of the harvest follow.

REFLECTIONS

READER! pause over this chapter. Are we not, hike Naomi and Ruth, returned out of the country of Moab, brought by divine' grace to seek sustenance in the land of Bethlehem? And have we not, hike them, a kinsman of our first parent, a mighty man of wealth indeed, whose name is Jesus? Yes, dearest Lord! let it be our hap to glean in thy fields, for all the world beside thee is but us a wilderness. All other sustenance is but as the husks which the swine do eat. And wilt thou not, dear Lord, though we are strangers, eye us when we seek to glean in thy pastures, and bid thy servants, the ministers of thy word, to drop suitable supply to our need? Conscious of our nothingness and poverty, we have reason indeed, like Ruth, to come with trembling and with apprehension. And should our Lord but graciously condescend to speak to his servants, Oh! what holy joy with it afford, that One so great, so glorious, should regard creatures such as we are. Surely the most becoming language of our hearts must be, like Ruth: *Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger.* Oh, Lord! let a poor Gentile, whom thou hast taken into thy church and family, find grace in thy sight: and let thine Holy Spirit give to me such strength, that I may never glean in other ground, nor seek comfort from other resources. No! blessed Jesus! there is enough in thee to live upon forever. Oh! may I abide in thee, and keep fast by the companions of my Lord's service. And let thine eyes be upon me

from harvest to harvest, and from one end of the year even to the other end of the year, until the whole of thy dispensations concerning thy church on earth are ended: and then may it be my lot, with *all, the ransomed of Zion, to return with songs and everlasting joy upon our heads; then shall we obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

Chapter 3

SUMMARY

The history is prosecuted through this chapter, and of consequence in its progress and drawing nearer to a close, becomes more and more interesting. Naomi gives instructions to Ruth how to conduct herself in her deportment towards Boaz. According to the laws of Israel, Ruth had a claim upon Boaz to do the kinsman's part and marry her. Naomi directs her towards the attainment of this great end. This chapter relates also Ruth's obedience to Naomi's direction, and the noble behaviour of Boaz towards her.

Reflections

My soul! In the perusal of this chapter, I would say to thee, as Naomi did to Ruth, Shall I not seek rest for thee? And can there be any rest on this side the grave, but in Jesus? is he not the *rest wherewith the Lord will cause the weary to rest, and is he not the refreshing!* And as an encouragement to go to him, may I not say as sine did: *Is he not of my kindred?* Hath he not married our nature: united it to himself, and become *bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh?* And can I go to one nearer and dearer than he? And doth he not hold a constant feast in his harvest seasons? And are they not in his church perpetual? Oh! for grace to anoint myself, and the sweet washings of the Holy Spirit, that I may go forth and lie low at his feet, and seek from the blessed condescensions of his love, that he may spread his skirt of righteousness, and his garment of salvation, over me, and betroth me to himself for ever, *in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies: yea betroth me unto himself in faithfulness and that I may know the Lord*

And, dearest Jesus! give me grace while I wait at thy feet, that I may lie passive until the morning. Oh! for the lively actings of faith to believe what my God hath promised, and that he will do the kinsman's part, for he hath said it. He is the Holy One of Israel, and all the saints of God have borne testimony to his faithfulness. Help

me, Lord, to believe under every event: to trust and depend upon thee, how discouraging soever circumstances may seem. And do thou, blessed God, grant me such a degree of faith, that I may be enabled to make an application of thy general promises to my own particular circumstances: and if needful, hike the patriarch, *against hope to believe in hope:* and like him, to *be strong in faith, giving glory to my faithful God.*

And Holy Spirit, of all truth! as thou art the glorifier of Jesus, do thou by thy blessed influences, SO glorify the Lord Christ to my view, that I may behold in him the very Saviour my soul stands in need of, And in myself may I behold the very circumstances which renders Jesus so suitable a Saviour for me. Oh! for thy constraining grace, to fix my soul firm in this most unquestionable truth, that my desires for Jesus are not more earnest, when those longings are at the highest, than the desires of Jesus are for me. The God-man, my husband, brother, friend, will not rest, until he hath finished the thing he hath begun in righteousness. *He will save; he will rejoice over me with joy. He will rest in his love: he will rejoice over me with singing.* His name is Jesus: he is, he will be Jesus. *he will save his people from their sins.*

Chapter 4

SUMMARY

This Chapter concludes this eventful History of Boaz and Ruth: and a most interesting conclusion, even in this point of view only, it forms. But in the higher relation of a spiritual tendency, it comes home infinitely more strongly recommended and endeared. The relationship of Boaz, and his claims to Ruth in consequence thereof, the chapter opens with, and the marriage which follows, under the auspicious blessings of the people of Israel, are recorded. And, as if to direct the Reader to the consideration of a much more important subject veiled under the history, the sacred historian closes the book with the genealogy of Boaz, leading from Pharez (the son of Judah, Jacob's son) unto David, and consequently from David to Christ.

Reflections

AND now, my soul, before thou takest thy leave of this sweet book of God, pause over it, And review again, and again, the many, very precious things, contained in it, for thy edification, comfort, and delight.

I behold, O Lord, thy gracious providences strikingly exemplified, in this history. In a land of *Bethlehem* itself, the house of bread, thou turnest it into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. And when our poor fallen nature, as in the case of this certain man Elimelech, had heft thee, and wandered into the world of sin And transgression, by which death entered into the world, and ruin followed: it was thou, by thy preventing mercy going before, didst again visit the land in favor, and incline the hearts of the people, by thy grace, to return to the Lord, that he might have mercy upon them, and to our God, that he might abundantly pardon.

And do I not behold in the history of this poor Moabitish damsel, the astonishing proofs of thy grace? What but almighty, sovereign, free, And unmerited grace, could incline the heart of thy poor sinner,

to leave her country, and the gods of Moab, to join herself unto the people of God in Israel? What but the sweet drawings of the Lord Jehovah could prompt her to leave her father, and all that sine had, to go forth like Abraham, into a land that she knew not. Holy Father! was not all this the effect of thine everlasting love wherewith thou lovest the objects of thy grace, as thou didst behold them, in thy dear. Son, before the foundation of the world! Blessed Jesus! was it not, because thou didst set thy love upon Ruth before all worlds, and sine was the purchase of thy blood and righteousness, in the counsel of peace, from all eternity! Holy Spirit! didst thou not know her person, and was not thy gracious influences pledged to call her to thyself, and to reveal the Father's love, and the Redeemer's grace, to her heart, when in the economy of redemption, thou didst undertake to make sinners willing in the day of thy power. Oh! may my soul feel interested in the same precious discoveries of grace! And since I see in so striking. an instance, that the Father hath given the heathen to his blessed Son for an inheritance, and that he might be the Father's salvation unto the ends of the earth; may this view of the call and conversion of Ruth, so often as I shall peruse this sacred history, comfort my soul, under the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, with the assurance, that God also *to the Gentiles hath granted repentance unto life*. And O Lord! grant that I may be the happy partaker of it.

But principally, and above all (if any thing upon earth can be more interesting) Lord, head us to see in Boaz, the man of Bethlehem, the God-man, Christ Jesus, pointed out, my Goel, my Kinsman-Redeemer, my husband, friend: performing the kinsman's part, redeeming our mortgaged inheritance, marrying our' nature, uniting believers to himself, rescuing our souls from everlasting bondage, and avenging the blood of our souls on the cursed enemy, who by his snares ruined us; Yes! dearest Jesus! thou art all this, and infinitely more. Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood. Thou givest us grace by thy Holy Spirit, to seek thy fields and ordinances, and enablest us when there to glean among the sheaves. Thou commandest thy servants, the ministers of the bread of life, to let fall handfuls for our souls to gather. Thou spreadest thy skirt over us, and marriest us to thyself, and we become thine. Oh! for grace to

abide by thee, and never, never to seek another field to glean in, nor by creature confidences to forget our entire dependence upon thee. Be thou all in all to our souls: for in thee all fulness dwells, and all the Father's love and Spirit's grace come to our souls in and through thee. Thou art such a Saviour and Goel-Redeemer as our souls need; and are we not, blessed Jesus, sinners suited for the display of the riches of thy grace to be manifested upon? Here, therefore, may our souls fix, cleave unto thee, and abide in thee, for thou hast betrothed us to thyself, until, at the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven, we are brought home to dwell with thee for ever, Amen.

1st SAMUEL

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

IT is not certain, that Samuel was the author of this book, which bears his name, though, probably, he might be the writer of that part of it which contains so much of his own life and ministry, which is prosecuted to the end of the twenty-fourth Chapter. But it is certain from this very cause, that neither the close of this first book of Samuel, nor the whole of the second book could be his. The general title therefore given to it in our Bibles, should seem to be the more proper: otherwise called *the first book of the Kings*. But, (as I have before remarked in the general observations, introductory to the perusal of either of the books of the sacred volume), it is not so material to us in the present hour, to be informed *who* the person was, the HOLY GHOST hath been pleased to appoint as a scribe, for committing his truths to record; as to discover in the book itself, the blessed marks and well known characters, that it was written under his immediate inspiration. When the Reader is himself illuminated to know the SPIRIT'S testimony, and can plainly read that testimony in the sacred writings; these are the grand things to be attended to, and the *imprimatur* of the HOLY GHOST, which is to be looked for. And in these points, both the first and second books of Samuel, carry with them the fullest assurance.

In point of time, the history contained in the first book of Samuel, relates to the annals of the world about eleven hundred and fifty years before the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. And the history itself comprizeth a period of about fourscore years.

I would earnestly beg the Reader to look diligently, as he passeth *through the perusal of this book of GOD, for sketches and outlines of the blessed Jesus. And yet more earnestly, rather than lean to his own understanding, beg the enlightening*

grace of the HOLY GHOST to open to his view the several sweet tokens here given of the Redeemer. Depend upon it, here is a great deal contained in it, that hath peculiar reference to the LORD JESUS. GOD never left himself without witness, concerning the promised seed, in any one age or period of his Church. The apostle Peter in his sermon to the Jews, expressly assures us of Samuel's ministry concerning JESUS: All the prophets (saith he) from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Acts 3:24. And when we find that memorable promise of JEHOVAH, delivered to Eli, and which is recorded in this book of Samuel, in which GOD pledged himself to raise up a faithful Priest that should build him a sure house, and walk before his Anointed for ever: (Chap. 2:35.) Surely there is enough in this blessed book of GOD, to convince us of the grand, and important things contained in it, to call up our most earnest attention, and to prompt the mind to be looking out for New Testament mercies, covered under an Old Testament dress.

Oh! thou, who hast given all scripture by inspiration, and hast directed it, and made it profitable, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness; do thou blessed SPIRIT of all truth, direct both the Writer's and the Reader's mind into the truth, as it is in Jesus; that we may know the things which are freely given unto us of God; that what is written, whether in the law of Moses, or in the Prophets, or in the Psalms, concerning JESUS, may be opened to our understandings, that we may understand the scriptures, which will make us wise unto salvation, through faith which is in CHRIST JESUS. Amen.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with an account of Samuel's family; of his father Elkanah, and his mother Hannah, particularly. The distress of his mother, by reason of her being childless; the temptation of her adversary on this score: her earnest prayer to GOD; Eli the Priest taking notice of her fervor in prayers and mistaking for drunkenness, what he saw of her wrestling in prayer with God, reproves her; Hannah satisfies Eli, and obtains his good wishes, that the LORD might hear and answer her petition: Hannah is blessed of GOD, with a son, and Samuel is born; offerings are made in consequence thereof, to the LORD, in Shiloh. These are the principal things contained in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

How sweetly the HOLY GHOST teacheth the Church in the history of all characters, the universal taint which marks our poor fallen nature! Elkanah, though a pious man, cannot be content without breaking the order of GOD, in a double marriage. And Hannah, though a partaker of grace, must have a child, or she is a woman of a sorrowful spirit. Oh! how fully doth GOD the SPIRIT teach us, by such views, the necessity of redemption by JESUS. Dearest Redeemer! we humbly feel our need of thee, and earnestly pray to be interested in thee. LORD! without thee, and thy righteousness, what are the best of men, but sin and corruption!

See Reader in this verse of Hannah's petition, the blessed effects of prayer! What cannot prayer accomplish! Prayer can shut up, and open again the windows of heaven. For *Elias* we are told, was a man of like passions with ourselves; and yet at his cry, so the LORD answered. *Hannah* was one also partaking of human infirmity. And yet the LORD proved himself a prayer-hearing, and a prayer-answering GOD. Oh! for faith, to plead with GOD in JESUS's name,

nothing doubting, and our LORD JESUS hath said, that *all things we ask believing we shall receive.*

I detain the Reader with one observation more, in the dedication of Samuel to the LORD, to remark the sweetness, and graciousness of pious parents making a solemn surrender of their little ones to the LORD. To whom shall we commit them, but to Him from whom we have received them? May not every pious parent say; ‘All cometh, LORD, from thine hand, all is thine own, and of thine own do I give thee’. But how is this subject heightened to the soul of the believer, in the recollection that such was the unequalled love of the FATHER to a lost world, that he gave his only begotten SON, to the end, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: Oh! for ever blessed be GOD for JESUS CHRIST!

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

We have in this Chapter, the song of Hannah in her devout thanksgivings to the LORD, for her Samuel. She had dedicated the child to the LORD’s service, and then closes the subject with praise. Besides this, the Chapter contains an account of the increase of Elkanah’s family: of the sin of Eli’s family; a man of GOD sent to reprove Eli: the threatened death of Eli’s two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, in one day: the gracious promise of GOD’s raising up to himself, a faithful Priest, and the degraded state of the house of Eli.

REFLECTIONS

READER! Stand still, and fully contemplate the character of Hannah, and observe, how the harp which was before hung on the willow, is now strung and sounded to the praise of JEHOVAH. See, how her note is changed. And the countenance which was before sad, is now lighted up in praise, and thanksgiving. And in remarking the blessed effects of grace, in this woman’s experience; do not overlook the

principal feature of it, in that her song of joy is not merely directed to praise GOD for his gift, but to praise the great Giver. She doth not dwell upon the loveliness of her Samuel, and celebrate, as a fond parent might be supposed to do, the features of his body, or the promising features of his mind. But her whole soul seems to be swallowed up in adoring the GOD and giver of her Samuel. Oh! how delightfully doth she hold forth the holiness, the faithfulness, the goodness and wisdom of a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering GOD: and how sweetly she triumphs in the assurance of having this GOD for her Rock, and as the horn of her salvation. Reader! do not overlook that this precious covenant GOD is the believer's GOD in JESUS, in all generations. He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. And why should not you and I find the same confidence? Oh! for grace to adopt the same assurance of faith, and in the contemplation of all his rich mercies in JESUS, to cry out, with one of old, For this GOD is our GOD, forever, and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.

While the sad contrast to Hannah's song, in the awful example of Eli's family, should fill our minds with suitable reflections, and call forth prayer to be kept from all presumptuous transgressions; let us, from lamenting the wretched and corrupt state of all Levitical and Priestly ministrations, direct our thoughts, and call forth our warmest affections to JESUS, that faithful priest of GOD our FATHER, the Mediator of a better covenant, founded upon better promises. Yes! thou clear Redeemer, thou art indeed the faithful priest our GOD promised to raise up. Thou hast done all, according to what was in thine and our FATHER'S heart, and in his mind. And GOD our FATHER hath built thee a sure house forever. Oh! grant, thou great Melchisedeck, that we, whom thou past made kings and priests to GOD and thy FATHER, may walk before thee, the LORD'S anointed, forever. And give us to rejoice that we have such an High Priest, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. And while, as in the

instance of *Eli*, we perceive that none among the sons of Aaron, whose race is mortal, and whose stock corrupt, can be exempt from sin: though the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

In this Chapter we have related to us the call of Samuel, in an extraordinary manifestation of the LORD to him by night in the temple. What the LORD said to him; his fear of communicating it to Eli: Eli's demand of Samuel to be informed of it: Samuel's faithful relation of it: Eli's solemn resignation in consequence thereof to GOD's will. Samuel in the close of the Chapter is said to be established in the Prophetical office.

REFLECTIONS

I WOULD pause over this delightful Chapter, which the HOLY GHOST hath graciously caused to be written for the edification of the Church; and in the call of Samuel desire to bless GOD for all the early manifestations, which the LORD hath been pleased to make to his people.

Who can venture to call in question the work of GOD, upon the heart of his people, when in the instance of a child like Samuel, we see that works so strikingly manifested, and at a time, when the rich partaker of this unspeakable grace, knew not the LORD, and was unconscious what grace meant. Let any Reader compare the striking dissimilarity, between the hoary Eli, and the young child Samuel: And then let him determine, (for to his own decision I leave it) what grace, could have made all this difference.

If the Reader be among the youthful part of mankind, let him reflect upon the blessed manifestations here recorded, to have been made to Samuel. And are you not anxious, I would say, my youthful friend, to enjoy the same? Do you not feel the rising prayer, in the

soul; LORD, *manifest thyself to me!* if not in a way so splendid, yet at least in a way so gracious, as to Samuel, that I may be a partaker also, of the grace which is in CHRIST JESUS!

And let not the most aged of my Readers close the book, and take leave of this Chapter, without first having dropped the knee in *prayer*; or *praise*. In *prayer*; if so be, that no evidences of the renewed life be found in his own experience; that the same GOD, who called Samuel, would, though at the eleventh hour, call him; and in *praise*; if the LORD hath manifested himself, as in the case of Samuel, to his soul, otherwise than he doth to the word.

Blessed LORD! help my soul to praise thee, under the humble hope and assurance, that thou hast called me out of darkness into this marvellous light, and translated me from the power of Satan, into the kingdom of thy dear SON; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

This Chapter folds within its bosom heavy tidings for Israel in general, and Eli's house in particular. In a battle between the Philistines and Israel, the Israelites presumptuously, and without taking counsel of the LORD, bring the ark of GOD into the camp. The Philistines are again conquerors; they take the ark of GOD: the two sons of Eli, according to the LORD'S declaration, are both slain. Tidings coming to Eli of those events, the old man falls from his seat, and dies; and his daughter-in-law, Phinehas's wife, in the premature labor of child-bed, dies also. Such are the woeful contents of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

THOUGH I have incorporated several suitable thoughts as they seemed to arise from the several verses in the Chapter opening

before me; yet I have not said all that might be said by way of devout reflections in the perusal of it, nor superseded the necessity of adding more. Various are the improvements this chapter affords, and under the blessed SPIRIT'S teaching, many are the precious practical observations which ought to result from it.

Who is there that beholds the ark of GOD as the symbol and token of the divine presence, and of the covenant engagements of our GOD in the person of his dear Son, but while reading in this chapter the just judgments of GOD upon his people in the loss of the ark, must feel deep concern for the transgressions of the people in all ages, and especially in the present day of infidelity, and the many crying abominations of the land. Did the LORD give up Israel of old for their sins into the hands of their enemies; and are his people Israel now more secure from his judgments? Was there just cause for this awful dispensation then, and is there no cause for a similar visitation now?

You that are the people of GOD! do you not feel yourselves deeply affected in the contemplation of the spiritual miseries that seem to be hanging over his church? Doth not our JESUS speak, as he did once to the church of *Ephesus*; *Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place.* Oh! should our eyes be brought to see the gospel taken from us: the sun going down upon our ordinances, and all our precious sabbaths and gospel feasts cut short: might we not, like the daughter-in-law of Eli, write, *I-chabod* upon all that would then remain, when the glory was departed.

Ye parents of tenderness, and masters of houses and families, mark in Eli's mistaken indulgence the dreadful consequence of honouring our sons or our households before GOD, and by a sinful compliance with the corrupt desires and irreligious dispositions of those about us, make shipwreck of the faith and of a good conscience. If we set not up religion in our houses; if we neglect both by precept and example to lead our little ones to the ark of GOD'S presence in his house of prayer; if our servants or our children make themselves vile and we restrain them not? Oh! think of Eli, behold the melancholy close of his life, and be assured that GOD will not pass over the iniquities even of his people.

But chiefly, ye ministers of my GOD, be very jealous for his honour who hath so honoured you, as to appoint you for watchmen on the walls of Zion. *Cry aloud! spare not! lift up your voices like trumpets, and show the people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins.* Be very jealous for the ark of GOD's sake. And oh, thou dear Redeemer! do thou, for to thou alone the glorious work belongs, do thou ever dear, ever precious JESUS, continue to us thy presence, thy love, thy pardoning, renewing, reviving, quickening, strengthening, and confirming grace. We would say in the language of thine own most holy word, to the holy undivided Three which bear record in Heaven, *Arise, O LORD, into thy rest: thou and the ark of thy strength. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy.*

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us the history of the ark of GOD while in captivity. The Philistines for a short space rejoice over their spoil. But this joy is turned into sorrow. GOD visits the Philistines with plagues, till at length they are constrained to call a council in order to deliver them from what at the first they considered a great triumph.

REFLECTIONS

How very precious it is to observe, the attention which GOD hath over his own cause. Though Israel is sunk so low as to be supine and inattentive to the attempt of recovering the ark, yet GOD will be jealous of his own honor. Reader! do you not see a sweet instruction veiled under this? When the poor sinner bound in Satan's chain is fallen asleep, and is unconscious of his impending ruin; neither sends forth a cry for help; nor is aware that he needeth that help; then it is that the eye of JESUS is upon him, undertakes himself his cause, and goeth forth to his deliverance. Oh! blessed JESUS, how

very precious is it to my soul to observe that thy grace, like the dew of Heaven, *waiteth not for men, neither tarrieth for the sons of men.*

And here also while poor dispirited sinners are thus taught that our GOD will maintain his own cause and deliver his people out of captivity; woe unto the oppressor, when our GOD ariseth to judgment! Secret punishments will be their lot in this life, and an open display of his anger in that which is to come. *The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of wrath will he restrain.*

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

As it was impossible not to take interest in whatever concerned the ark of GOD, the contents of this Chapter becomes very pleasing, in that it relates to us the conduct of the Philistines in sending away the ark of GOD. The great joy of the men of Bethshemesh in beholding the return of the ark. The presumption of the Bethshemites in looking into the ark, is punished by the LORD: they send to the men of Kirjath-jearim to fetch the Ark. These are the contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

THINK my soul, how awful the state of Israel was during the seven months GOD was pleased to punish them for their transgressions, in depriving them of the ark. Truly awful indeed, is the condition of all men who live without GOD, and without CHRIST in the world. But chiefly ye people of GOD, whose backslidings make barren your ordinances and leave them but as the mere shell and carcase of religion. Let such determine what it is to visit ordinances, and find not the GOD of ordinances. To have the *form*, but not the power of godliness. Oh! for the unceasing presence of GOD in CHRIST, in the assemblies of his people.

But behold my soul in what is here represented of the bringing back the ark, how the LORD works when as he saith himself, *I am*

returned to Jerusalem with mercies. It is all of divine grace. Not our merit, not our exertions, not our prayers, not our labours; but thy right hand and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, O LORD, are the sole cause for which thou savest and redeemest thy people, for thy name's sake.

Precious JESUS! thou everlasting ark of thy church and people, thou art eternally fixed in Zion. And oh! how divinely reared for the security of my soul. Never, like the men of *Beth-shemesh*, would I presumptuously look into the secret things which belong unto the LORD our GOD. But with an eye unto thee and all thy suitableness, and all-sufficiency for the sinner's security, would I come unto thee in the way appointed. Surely, blessed JESUS, thou art thyself the very throne of grace, the very ark and mercy-seat, from whence all tokens of salvation come, and in whom JEHOVAH is accessible to all the humble requests of my soul. In thy blood and righteousness I find the removal of guilt, and the confidence of justification. In thy dear person I have all I need, both for security and comfort. Thou art my dwelling place whereunto I may always resort. LORD JESUS! cause me never to lose sight of thee in all my approaches. *In thy name would I rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness make my boast; for thou art both the ark and the glory of our strength, and in thy favor our horn shall be exalted.*

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

The events recorded in this Chapter are much more pleasing than what hath been said of Israel a long time before. Here is an account of the men of Kirjath-jearim fetching the ark and placing it in an house. The Israelites are represented as mourning after the LORD. The history of Samuel is renewed, his government, and victory over the Philistines. He set up the stone of help between Mizpeh and Shen, and called it Ebenezer in token of GOD's help and his blessing again of Israel.

REFLECTIONS

REMARK, my soul, in the perusal of this Chapter, the first renewings of grace in the blessed fruits and effects of it; all hearts, like those of Israel, then will go forth in lamentations after the LORD. There will be no real enquiries, no heart-searching sorrow, though ordinances may be restrained, and even the ark of the divine presence be away, even to twenty years continuance, as in Israel, until the LORD pours out the renewings of his SPIRIT. But when this precious gift is dispensed, then the soul looks unto him whom it hath pierced, and will mourn. Oh! most holy FATHER! of thine infinite mercy bestow this blessing, this covenant promise on my soul: lead me by thy gracious influence unto the precious JESUS, that the goings forth of my desires may be unceasingly after him and to him, who is indeed the ark and the mercy-seat, the offering and propitiation for sin.

In beholding Samuel as praying for the people, offering the stucking-Lamb, and crying for Israel, unto the LORD, I would pass over the servant, to view in him the shadow of his master; and would behold in him the typical representation of thee, thou blessed JESUS, for thou art the sum and substance of all the shadows of thy ministering servants. They offered all by faith, and had an eye in all their offerings to thee, who art, in all the ages of thy church, both the sacrifice and High Priest, the golden altar and the ark, on which all offerings are made. However veiled in covering under the darker dispensation of those ages before thy coming, yet so much of gospel every rite contained, that the holy men of old could, and did, see enough in those sacrifices made under the law, to behold by faith thy person and righteousness, with all the glorious circumstances of redemption secretly and mysteriously included. Yes! dearest JESUS! in all ages thy faithful ones knew thee, loved thee, lived to thee, were strong in thee, and in the power of thy might! Be thou to me, therefore, holy Saviour, all and in all, in every word of thy sacred scripture. Oh! give me to see and unceasingly to live in the same blessed privileges. In thy dear person, righteousness, love, grace, and power, may I know myself to be eternally secure: so that no Philistines may any more come into the coasts of thine Israel. Like

Samuel, on JESUS the rock of ages, would I build an altar of earth to JEHOVAH, *In* him would I offer all my offerings. *Through* him would I make all my poor presentations. *From* him and his all-perfect sacrifice would I seek acceptance; and *to* him, with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, would I ascribe all the praise.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains rather the dark side of Israel from the former. Samuel growing old, and his sons not closely copying after the example of their father, discontent broke out among the people. They ask for a king in imitation of the nations around them. The thing displeaseth the LORD. Samuel remonstrates with the people. They are obstinate. Samuel promiseth their request shall be complied with. These are the principal things contained in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

AMIDST the growing age and infirmities of all GOD's faithful servants, though we see Samuel and all the holy men and prophets going the way of all flesh, what a sweet and soul-reviving thought is it, that our JESUS liveth for ever! Yes! thou precious Holy One of Israel, thou ever livest; and because thou livest, we shall live also. Triumph my soul in this well-founded confidence!

And here, LORD, let me learn, from the rebellion of Israel in desiring a king, when thou thyself wast the gracious king of thy people, let me learn how prone the heart, even of thy people, is to rebel against thee. Oh! ye wretched, misguided, unhappy sons of men, who by deeds, if not by words, are continually saying: *We will not have this man to reign over us.* Think, I charge you, ere it be too late, whether he hath not a right to govern, who, as one with the FATHER is GOD; and as Mediator, hath all power in heaven and in earth. Is not every creature his, both by creation and redemption? And shall not every knee *bend before him, and every tongue confess*

that JESUS CHRIST is LORD to the glory of GOD the FATHER! Oh! kiss the Son lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the right way. Acknowledge him now for your lawful king and sovereign, before he comes in the clouds as your just Judge. If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

As for my soul, let angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, let all heaven and earth bear witness for me, that I desire no other king, neither will I know any other but he that is *a Priest upon his throne*. Do thou holy, blessed, royal LORD JESUS, reign in me, and over me, and establish, and preserve, and maintain thy rightful kingdom in my soul, against all there enemies, my lusts and corruptions, as well as the world, and the powers of darkness. Oh! do thou bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of our Christ! Do thou manifest thyself to my soul, in all thy sovereignty, grace, and goodness, in thy kingdom, both temporal and spiritual. Do thou pardon my sins as a king; do thou rule over my affections as a king; do thou bestow all needed grace as a king; do thou bless, protect, restrain; subdue, regulate and dispose of all things concerning me as a king, the glorious, gracious king which our GOD hath set in Zion. And by thus living under thine own kingly influences here below, mine eyes continually beholding the king in his beauty; in that tremendous day, when thou shalt come to take away all things that offend out of thy kingdom, my soul will find a growing confidence in thy salvation. For sure I am, since none but JESUS is king, he who hath borne my sins will not plead against me in judgment. The language of my heart, will be like the church of old; *the LORD is our judge: the LORD is our Lawgiver: the LORD is our King; he will save us.*

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

In this Chapter the sacred historian first brings us acquainted with Saul, whom GOD had previously determined to appoint king of Israel. By an overruling providence, Saul, who was in pursuit of his

father's asses which were lost, is led to Samuel. And Samuel, privately admonished of GOD, gives Saul the first intimation of the LORD's design concerning him.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! I charge it upon thee while reading this chapter of the LORD's providence concerning Saul, that thou search diligently into the records of thine own life, for the testimonies of the LORD's dealings with thee, both in his world of providence and grace.

Pause and see whether the same gracious GOD, while thou hast been searching out the things of time and sense, hath not been going before thee, anticipating thy requests, blessing thee with things unasked, and infinitely exceeding all thy thoughts and expectations, with preventing and restraining mercy and grace? In things *temporal*, how hath he supplied all thy wants, *thy bread hath been given, and thy water hath been sure*, and GOD himself hath been thy defence as *the munition of rocks*. And in things *spiritual* how hath he outrun all thy desires! Nay, while thou wast standing out against him, and causing him to serve with thy sins, and wearying his patience with thine iniquities, then it was the LORD had mercy upon thee, even before thou wert conscious of the want of mercy; and saved thee though he *knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast a transgressor from the womb*. My soul! keep this ever in view, to make thee humble, to endear JESUS, to hide pride from thine eyes, and to make the redemption work of thy GOD more and more sweet and important. And oh! for grace, continual grace, to make suitable returns of love and praise and obedience, where mercy and favor are so freely given. Thou art called to a kingdom that cannot be moved. JESUS hath made all his children kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER. Whatever trials beset us in the way to the possession of future glory, there is no state can be truly called comfortless while JESUS is our portion. Neither can one of his children esteem his mercies small who is saved from hell, and brought into the sure path of Heaven.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with presenting us by a view of the prophet's anointing Saul king. This is followed with tokens Samuel told Saul, should immediately take place, on his departure from him to return home to his father's house, and which accordingly came to pass. After this Samuel convenes Israel at Mizpeh; at which convocation, he proceeds to the election of a king. Saul is elected. With which event some are displeased, but Saul holds his peace. These are the principal things contained in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! while you and I behold the aged prophet pouring the vial of oil over Saul's head, let our meditation take flight, and by faith behold the HOLY GHOST anointing JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth, and installing him into all these offices by which our souls live under his precious exercise of them through all the departments of grace. Yes, blessed JESUS! we would hail thee king of Zion! We behold thee consecrated our great high priest for evermore. And we accept thee as the anointed prophet of our GOD, to preach good tidings to the meek, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD. We view thee as the Christ of GOD, the glorious GOD-man set up and anointed as the Mediator before all worlds. And oh! that thy *name*, in the sweet savor of it, may be as the fragrancy of *the holy ointment poured forth! therefore do the virgins love thee.*

And dearest JESUS! as it hath pleased GOD, even thy GOD, to anoint thee, as Mediator, with the oil of gladness for, and above thy fellows; oh for a portion of that sacred anointing of the HOLY SPIRIT, which was poured out upon thee without measure, to descend upon us like the precious ointment upon Aaron's head, which ran down to the skirts of his garments! Yes! we would pray for the largest, fullest portion of that rich anointing, which teacheth all things. We would covet the same holy unction, which, flowing from thee, makes all thy people priests, and kings to GOD, and the FATHER. And we would

desire, to be made such partakers of thy grace, that by the exercises of it, our souls might be enabled to lay hold of thee, by lively faith, so as to live upon thy Person, to hang upon thy righteousness, and to walk evermore with thee, in all the departments of our pilgrimage here, till we come to dwell with thee for ever, as men whose hearts thou hast indeed touched, and who cannot cease from following thee. And grant, blessed, dearest JESUS, that in the gifts of thy HOLY SPIRIT, thou wilt not merely give us *another* heart, but a *new* heart, even the *renewing of the* HOLY GHOST, *shed upon us abundantly, through* JESUS CHRIST *our* LORD: so shall we be, indeed, kings, and priests to the FATHER, and fellow-heirs of that *kingdom, which cannot be moved.*

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with an account of Israel's distress, by reason Of the Ammonites' daring encampment against Jabesh-Gilead. The Gileadites are disposed to submit to the Ammonites, but their terms are both insolent and cruel. Saul being made acquainted with the circumstances of the case, commands all Israel to assemble for the relief of the Gileadites. He routs the Ammonites in battle, and makes a very great slaughter of them. All Israel rejoice, in consequence thereof, and are full of praises of their new king.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! in those *Ammorites* behold the sworn foes, not of Israel of old only, but of the Israel of GOD, in all ages. How alive are they to harrass, and afflict believers. The reproach of Israel is their delight. To put out their right eyes would be their highest joy. And how hast thou, my soul, been ready to serve them, like the men of, *Jabesh-Gilead, and* to make any covenant with them, if they would but be easy in their government. Dearest JESUS! be thou everlastingly praised, that thou wouldst not let me rest in this yoke of sin, but didst come to my rescue, and hast gotten thyself the victory, and

brought down thine, and my enemies under thy feet. Oh! grant, heavenly LORD, that I may never more, after so complete a deliverance, be brought under the dominion of the enemy, nor meanly seek peace with thine, and my sworn foes. Give me grace and strength, openly, and boldly in thy great name, to wage war with sin, Satan, and the world. And in all my spiritual warfare, do thou as the great Captain of thy little army, go on before me, and make me more than conqueror, through thee, who hast loved me! Let this be my every day song; *the LORD is my light, and my salvation, whom then shall I fear; the LORD is my strength, and my song, and he is become my salvation.*

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains the address to Samuel, on the resignation of his government, now Saul is king. He appeals to him concerning his own integrity, in the administration of justice; brings the people to the acknowledgment of it: points out, yet once again, their sin and folly in the insisting upon a king: at the call of Samuel the LORD answers, in confirmation of what he had said of their sin and his rectitude, in sending thunder; and the chapter concludes with Samuel's assurances, that if the people obeyed the LORD, both they and their king should be preserved.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us not too hastily pass over this chapter, without taking with us the several very interesting instructions it affords.

In this address of the prophet, dismissed, as he evidently was, by the people, we behold how pleasant a thing it is, in the close of any labours, to be able to make an appeal to GOD, for the rectitude of our proceedings. And while we are enabled to challenge the tongue of calumny, to be yet more refreshed, in the consciousness, that *our record is on high.*

In the beautiful recapitulation, which the man of GOD makes in his sermon of Israel's history, by way of calling up the remembrance of the people, both to divine mercies, and their unworthiness, we ought to learn the preciousness of faith, in referring all our blessings, while we review them, into the grace, and mercy, and loving kindness of our GOD. Faith finds great strength in such reviews, for future occasions. And I would desire the reader, not to overlook this instruction from it, while I pray, that my own mind may be refreshed in the thought; that the best method to seek strength for confidence in JESUS, for future blessings, is to make remembrance at the throne of what are past. Looking up to the great Author, and Finisher of faith, for suited strength for our day, we certainly take the most effectual means to trust him for what is to come, when we tell him of what he hath done before. And by giving him the glory of what we have received, to rely upon him for what we need.

But principally, as an improvement from the perusal of this chapter, in the call of Samuel to the LORD, and the LORD's answer, in a way contrary to the usual manner of things; let the Reader behold in the Prophet the type of his Master. Yes! blessed JESUS! I would desire grace, upon the humblest and slightest occasions, as well as the highest and the greatest, to discover somewhat of These. Do I not know, dearest LORD, that all intercourse with heaven can only be opened by Thee? No prophet, no patriarch, no apostle, no angel of light, could have procured for our fallen nature, this blessing. Heaven must have been for ever inaccessible, hadst thou not opened that new, and that living way, by thy blood! Convinced therefore, of this most precious, and soul-reviving truth, oh! let me learn to prize the unspeakable mercy; delight myself in seeking constant communion, and intercourse with my GOD and FATHER, in CHRIST JESUS; and like Samuel, learn to be looking out for such manifestations of thy grace, and glory, as may be contrary to the usual plan of ordinary events; that at an *evening time*, if needful, *it may be light*.

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

In this Chapter the history of Saul's reign opens, and a sad opening of it is recorded. He is invaded by foes from abroad, and disorders at home, His subjects desert him, and the enemy advances upon him. In this distress he offers sacrifice, and thereby breaks the divine commands. The LORD rejects him from being king; and though the sentence is not immediately executed, yet he is told of the event, and consequently waits its execution. Such is the state of things as recorded in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! mark with me, the very awful state of an unrenewed mind, in the conduct of Saul. No situation, no providences, however prosperous, in themselves; no elevation in rank, or power, can produce real comfort, or happiness, while the heart remains carnal, and unregenerated by grace. The LORD had given Saul a kingdom: and the LORD had turned him from the pursuit of his father's asses, to the pursuit of government; but Saul, though *another* man, as the scripture terms it, in outward things, remained the *same* man, as to vital godliness. Learn Reader herefrom, that it is not a change of place, or rank, or circumstances, that availeth anything; but *the putting of the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and the being renewed in the spirit of the mind: and the putting on the new man, which after GOD, is created in righteousness, and true holiness.*

Precious JESUS! grant me grace to learn once more from hence, in the view of Saul's profanation of thy Priestly office, how infinitely important must be the view of thy alone offering, and priesthood, in the sight of JEHOVAH; and how rejoiced my soul ought to be, in taking shelter under thy holy censer! Yes! dearest LORD! thou, and thou alone, art a Priest for ever, by oath, and the solemn inauguration of thy GOD and FATHER. Taken from among men, as it concerned thy manhood, thou wast called to this office from all

eternity. And as it relates to thine eternal power and GODHEAD, thine own glorious perfections, and attributes, become the golden altar, on which, and from whence, the saving efficacy of the whole priesthood, derive their importance. From both, may my soul find continual comfort, and confidence. Never, like Saul, may I bring my poor offerings, or fancied peace offerings, without an eye to thy precious, and all-sufficient sacrifice: for it is thou only, dearest LORD, that canst make, or hath made, *our peace in the blood of the cross*. To seek acceptance another way, though with the most costly rites, as Saul did, is to show contempt to thy person, thy blood, and thy finished righteousness; and to call down the vengeance of heaven. But while, through the influence of the HOLY GHOST, my soul is enabled to look stedfastly to thee, and to rely on thy precious, all atoning blood, and sacrifice, for acceptance with GOD, and the FATHER; let me, blessed JESUS, every day, and all the day, be continually coming in thy name, and righteousness, *boldly to the throne of grace, that I may find mercy, and grace to help, in all times of need*.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

The history of Israel under the reign of Saul, brightens up a little in this Chapter. Jonathan, the son of Saul, prompted, it should seem, by a Divine impulse, goes forth with his armour-bearer only, to a garrison of the Philistines. He is made successful:—the host of Israel, when informed of it, follows after; and a great slaughter is obtained over the Philistines. In the close of this Chapter, we have a short relation of Saul's family.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE over this chapter, my soul, and mark, in the history of Saul, the sure consequences of rebellion against GOD. The word of the LORD assures us, that, *when a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh, even his enemies to be at peace with him*. But, when sinners

neglect and despise the LORD, he can convert their very comforts into crosses. And Saul, though at the head of a kingdom, shall be afflicted, and his crown be filled with thorns.

But, my soul, while remarking, as in this man's history, the sure consequences of sin, remark no less in his history, and in thine own, how gracious the LORD is, notwithstanding all our multiplied transgressions. *The LORD will not retain his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.* By some slender instrument, like that of Jonathan, he will work out deliverance for his people. Oh! my soul, learn to impress upon thy mind those precious things of GOD's grace. And in all thy manifold undeservings, never lose sight of divine love. And when at any time trials and difficulties occur for the exercise of faith, keep a steady eye unto JESUS, that it may be enlightened with the droppings of his grace, as the honey did unto him. And depend upon it, in the strength of the LORD JESUS, it will be found that all difficulties are as nothing. He can, and will make thee more than conqueror, through the sovereignty of his power. All obstacles, in the way to the accomplishment of his holy purpose, will be as nothing, for *there is no restraint to the LORD, he saveth, by many or by few.*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The sacred historian is prosecuting the account of Saul's reign, in this chapter. Every part of his government seems to be with a view to aggrandize himself, and to show his disregard to the LORD. We have here, the relation of a commission the LORD sent him upon, to destroy the Amalekites: his partial obedience to that commission: the LORD's displeasure upon the occasion, and his rejection of Saul from being king, communicated to him by Samuel. The zealous prophet, in his warmth for GOD's glory, doth that which Saul had neglected, and heweth Agag, the king of the Amalekites, in pieces before the LORD, in Gilgal. The chapter closeth with an account of

Samuel's final departure from Saul, and visiting him no more until his death.

REFLECTIONS

READER! pause with me over the perusal of this chapter, and mark, in the progress of Saul's history, the certain truth of that awful sentence of the apostle, *that evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*. And while we look at the king of Israel under this melancholy character, let us not forget, to gather from the history of the LORD's everlasting war with the *Amalekites*, that there can be no truce in this battle. Grace and corruption can no more join issue, than the iron and the clay in the image which the prophet saw. Put it down, Reader, in the maxims of your life, and see to it that your own experience corresponds to this most certain and unquestionable truth: *the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the Spirit*. LORD, grant that neither the writer of this Commentary, nor the Reader of it, may be *debtor to the flesh to live after the flesh: for if we live after the flesh we shall die: but, if we through the SPIRIT, do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live*.

Oh! most gracious GOD! give me to see, and awfully to feel the impression of it on my heart, in the history of the utter destruction of the *Amalekites*: that though the LORD long bears with the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; yet the day, the dreadful day, the tremendous day of judgment, surely cometh as a thief in the night, Oh! precious JESUS, be thou my refuge, my covert, my strong hold, in that day of wrath!

One sweet improvement more would I gather from the perusal of this chapter, before I take my leave of it, and in the sorrow the man of GOD felt for the LORD's rejection of Saul, I would see how suited it is for the ministers of JESUS, *to weep between the porch and the Altar*, and lift up their cries and prayers over the sad ruin of our fallen nature? Did Samuel weep for Saul because the LORD had determined to take from him his earthly kingdom: and shall not my soul weep over the thousands of ungodly sinners, against whom the LORD hath sworn they shall not enter into his heavenly kingdom? Did the events of this short life, as they related to Saul, call forth the affection of the prophet: and shall not the grand concerns of eternity,

as they attach themselves to sinners in the present hour, call forth my sympathy and prayer, that the LORD in the midst of judgment may remember mercy? Oh! most gracious Saviour! from whose distinguishing favor it is, that *by the grace of GOD, I am what I am*: teach me, LORD, *to rejoice with trembling*; and in the deepest sense of those awful judgments which I most righteously have deserved, but which thy mercy hath saved me from; give me a suitable frame of mind to come before thee. Like the prophet *Ezekiel*, I would fall to the dust, crying out; *Ah! LORD GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in this pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem!*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This chapter is the first in the history of David. And as this man forms so distinguishing a character in the word of GOD, in every point of view, as a patriarch, prophet, writer, warrior, king, and above all, as a type of the LORD JESUS, everything respecting him becomes interesting and important. The history doth not open with the birth of David, but takes up the relation with his anointing by Samuel, as king of Israel, and the successor to Saul. Here is related in this chapter, the LORD's sending Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint one of the sons of Jesse. All the sons of Jesse are made to pass before Samuel. David is chosen. Samuel pours the horn of oil upon him: Samuel returns to Ramah. An evil spirit from the LORD troubles Saul. David is sent for, as one that played well upon an instrument, to divert him.

REFLECTIONS

HERE my soul, in the view of Samuel's commission to anoint David king of Israel, do thou learn the infinite importance of singling out thy Almighty David, as thy king and chosen from among his brethren. Fear not all the Sauls which would oppose thee, but boldly put the sacred crown of

thy redemption upon his holy Head; and let the world know that him, whom thy GOD and FATHER hath chosen as thy Sovereign, is thy chosen also. The LORD'S CHRIST, is thy CHRIST; and his anointed, thine anointed from among ten thousand.

And as for thee, thou blessed, holy, Anointed One; to thee it belongs, both by thy natural right, as one with the FATHER, over all GOD blessed for ever, and by thy appointed and acquired right, as Mediator, to reign over thy church and people. Do thou take to thee thy great power, and rule in my heart, and over my whole soul and body forever. Though like David, thou art taken from the lowest state of poverty, so that when on earth thou hadst not where to lay thine head; yet art thou placed above all thy brethren. Thou art he, whom all shall praise: and all thy Father's children shall bend before thee. The FATHER hath solemnly put all things into thine hand, and declared that men shall be blessed in thee, and all nations shall call thee blessed. Before thee, therefore, would I bow the knee and join with every creature to confess, that JESUS CHRIST is LORD of all, to the glory of GOD the FATHER.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

The Chapter we are now about entering upon, relates to us the insolence of the Philistines towards Israel, and the challenge made by their champion Goliath of Gath, daring any man in Israel's army to single combat. The consequence of which, we are told, was, that Saul and all his army were dismayed. David coming from his father, on a message to his brethren into the camp of Israel, hears the challenge of Goliath, and accepts it. Going forth, not armed with the common weapons of slaughter, but in the confidence of GOD, he prevails over the Philistine, and kills him. In consequence

thereof the Philistines are put to the rout, and Israel pursues them with a great slaughter. These are the principal matters contained in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over the perusal of this chapter, and behold in the character of Goliath of Gath, and his bold and open defiance of Israel, a lively resemblance of that implacable, proud, and haughty foe, the accursed enemy of GOD and man, the Devil, who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. How often hath he stood tremendous to thy view, defying GOD and his Redeemer, to save thee! How fierce and blasphemous have been his insinuations, in tempting thee to fear that his threatenings were but too well founded. And how often, like the whole army of Saul at his approach, again and again, not only for forty days together, but for years, in apprehension, hast thou fled from him, and been sore afraid! And indeed, had a deliverance from his power been left to the accomplishment of an arm of flesh, how sure would have been thy everlasting ruin!

Oh, precious JESUS! thou Almighty David of thy people! Blessed be our FATHER'S mercy, that sent thee to see how thy brethren fared, and to take their pledge! And blessed be thy love, which prompted thy divine mind to come to our rescue, from all the powers of sin and hell! And thrice blessed be the hour when in thine own blood and righteousness thou didst conquer for us all the enemies of our salvation! And now, Almighty LORD, we behold thee as returning from the slaughter of the Philistines, having spoiled principalities, and powers, making a show of them openly, and triumphing over them in it. Now, LORD, we behold thee seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and all power thine in heaven and in earth. Go on, Almighty Conqueror, in thine holy war, until all hearts are subdued to the sovereignty of thy grace.

And having wrought out such a glorions deliverance for us, work a still more powerful victory in us. And O lead us on, as the Israelites pursued the Philistines, to all the conquests which thy redemption hath procured, until at length, having under thy banners manfully opposed and subdued all the enemies of our salvation, we follow thee to the seat of the conqueror, where, in an unceasing security which thy complete victory hath purchased, of everlasting joy, we obtain that kingdom which cannot be moved, and where thou last made us kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER.

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This forms an interesting Chapter, because it opens that account of the loves of David and Jonathan, which in the after history of David forms so very interesting a subject. Jonathan's heart is won by David. Saul at first seemed to be much pleased with David, but because the women in their songs and dances praised David's victories more than Saul's, from that day forth Saul envied David. This Chapter relates some of the evidences by which Saul manifested this malice towards him, in casting his javelin at him twice to slay him; then proposing to give him his eldest daughter to wife, but afterwards giving her to another; then offering his younger daughter, but with the hope of proving his ruin. Notwithstanding these things David prospers.

REFLECTIONS

I would call upon the Reader, while calling upon my own soul, in the contemplation of this chapter, to pass by all other considerations, to pause over the view of the love of Jonathan to David; to remark its wonderful properties, to stand amazed at the extensiveness of creature love in this man; and then to ask my heart, whether there is not cause to blush in the view of it, when I compare

his love to David to my love to Him, who is David's LORD? Was Jonathan's soul so instantly captivated, so strongly rivetted, and so engaged by covenant to David, as to love him as his own soul; to strip himself of his garments and of his princely robe, in order to cloath David; while I who have so long known the LORD JESUS; have been so often fed, so constantly cloathed, so everlastingly protected, so graciously loved by him, feel such coldness, such deadness, and such little drawings of my heart towards him!

Oh! precious JESUS! *thy love indeed is better than wine, thy favour than life itself.* Thou hast shown it by ways infinitely surpassing the love of Jonathan to David. Thou hast not only cloathed the souls of thy people, with thy robe and garment of salvation, but thou hast made over thine whole soul to their welfare. All the blessings of grace flow from thy boundless, matchless love. And the various ways by which thou hast made the rich discoveries of thy love, all show its wonderful properties. The covenant thou didst make for them in the everlasting counsel of peace, makes known thy love, for thou art thyself the whole of the Covenant. Yes! clearest LORD! thou hast proved it by all thy suretyship engagements; by all thy gracious undertakings; by all thy great accomplishments; by all thou hast done, and art doing, and wilt do for thy people. Oh! dearest, blessed JESUS! add this one mercy to all thou hast wrought, as great a miracle as any; melt my cold icy heart into a love for thee, who hast so loved me, and knit my whole soul unto thee, that I may fear and love thy name. Then will my song correspond with that of David, and I shall say as he did; *I will love thee, O LORD my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my Deliverer; my GOD, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, the horn also of my salvation, and my high tower.*

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

The history of David, and Saul's enmity against him, is prosecuted in this chapter. Saul throws off the mask, and openly

commands his son and servants to kill David. Jonathan expostulates with his father on the subject, and for a time obtains a promise, that David shall not be hurt. But his malice breaks out afresh, and he is obliged to flee for his life. Saul pursues him; but his design is overruled, and David again escapes. These are the principal things contained in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT an awful contrast marks the characters of Saul and Jonathan this son! While the Father manifests the malignity of an evil spirit, breathing out nothing but hatred, malice, and death, against a faithful servant, who had gone with his life in his hand, to deliver him and his kingdom from ruin; see how the son's heart is influenced with all the kinder feelings of love, and brotherly affection towards him, so as to love him as his own soul! Reader! remark with me, the precious, blessed properties of distinguishing grace.

But while we admire and praise the friendship of Jonathan towards David, let my soul take wing, and fly to the contemplation of the unequalled friendship of Him, whose love as far exceeds the love of Jonathan, as the light transcends the darkness. In the loves of Jonathan and David there was a congeniality of soul, of manners, of age, and of mind. But in thy love and friendship towards our fallen nature, O blessed JESUS, thou wast *a Brother born for adversity*. Thy love, to us was when our persons were not only totally opposite to thy pure nature, but loathsome; and no congeniality, no one thing to form a likeness, prompted thine infinite mind to such stupendous acts of mercy. Never forget, my soul, that it was while we were enemies, CHRIST *died for us*. And when we come to estimate the acts of JESUS' friendship, how doth all human friendship fall to the ground before it. Thy friendship not only led thee to engage as our surety, to pay all our debts, to supply all our wants, to answer all our demands, to purchase by thy blood and righteousness an inheritance for us; but thou didst give thyself a ransom to deliver us from captivity: didst place thyself in the very state of vassalage in which thou didst find us, and though unconscious of sin in thyself, didst become *sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD*

in thee. Oh! matchless love, unparalleled friendship! Oh! be thou, blessed JESUS, to me ever dear, ever precious; and cause my soul to love thee, who hast so loved me, that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, may be able to separate my soul from the love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS the LORD.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

The subject of David's distresses, on account of Saul's seeking his life, is continued through this Chapter. David leaveth Naioth, and flees to Jonathan for counsel. They confer on the best means for David to adopt. A plan is suggested for this purpose, but it fails. They meet by appointment, and it becoming necessary for David to escape for his life, Jonathan and David part with tears.

REFLECTIONS

READER! there is so much loveliness in the character of Jonathan, according as the HOLY GHOST hath been pleased to present him before the church, in his conduct towards David, that I think it is our duty, as well as our privilege, to look at him with proper attention: and while we adore the gracious GOD that made him so lovely, we should implore grace to imitate his bright example. How beautiful he appears in this chapter, in his wisdom of discovering the real state of his father's mind towards David, and in his contrivance of communicating the same, unobserved, to the mind of David! How very engaging he appears also, in his sympathizing with David on the occasion, and mingling his tears with his, in the prospect of separation! How lovely in his piety towards the LORD, in so cheerfully looking forward to the sure succession of David to the kingdom, though to the exclusion of himself and his own family, because the thing was of the LORD!

But, my soul, when thou hast taken the fullest, and most leisurely survey of the loveliness, and wisdom, and generosity of Jonathan, turn thy thoughts to the contemplation of thy JESUS, in

whom are hid all the treasures of loveliness, wisdom, and knowledge; and behold that matchless superiority in him to every thing excellent. JESUS is, indeed, *the altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand*. He is the wonderful Counsellor, for guiding and instructing his people in wisdom and knowledge. And he is not only the noblest of all possible examples of mercy, but mercy itself; even *the mercy promised*. Yes! blessed JESUS, it is thy sweet and friendly office to give us counsel in all seasons of perplexity; to impart to us the secrets of thy FATHER'S will, both in a way of providence and of grace: and thou dost indeed sooth us in all our troubles. When on earth thou didst mingle thy tears with the sorrows of thy distressed family. And now in glory, thou still retainest the feelings of our human nature: and when we are driven out and forsaken of all men, thou dost never leave us, nor forsake us. Oh! Precious LORD GOD! when I think of thy matchless love, how infinite, how inexhaustible; that even my ingratitude and forgetfulness of thee cannot wear out. Shall I not in all seasons when viewing anything lovely in the creature, like this of Jonathan, shall I not call to mind thy surpassing loveliness, in mercy, grace, and favour to me, and to thy people? And shall I not, under the impression of the vast superiority, point to JESUS, as the church of old, and say, *this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem*.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

The troubles of David are prosecuted in history through this chapter. Being driven from home, and like one banished the land, he visits Nob; receives from Ahimelech, the priest, hallowed bread: and the sword of Goliath, which was there. David hastens to Achish, at Gath; is but poorly received, and full of fears lest the men of Gath should betray him, he feigns himself mad. These are the principal points in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

BLESSED Redeemer! I cannot behold the show-bread which David craved for himself and followers, from the hand of the Priest, without having my soul led to contemplate thee, thou bread of life, thou show-bread on the Golden Altar, before thy FATHER, as the everlasting food of all thy people. Thy flesh is meat indeed, and thy blood is drink indeed. Thou hast been the show-bread of thy FATHER before all worlds. As the corn is bruised, and broken, and prepared for nourishment to the body, so, precious JESUS! hast thou been bruised and broken for our sins, and prepared for the durable substance of thy people, from and to everlasting. And oh! the heavenly, the divinely prepared sustenance in thee! Thou art shown forth by our GOD and FATHER as the infinitely satisfying fulness on which thy people may live for ever. Without thee all is empty and unsatisfying. in thee every want is answered. Thy Priests (for all thy people are a nation of kings and priests) enjoy thy fulness. The carnal world neither know thee nor enjoy thee. Oh! precious LORD GOD, enable me by true faith, with all the royal priesthood, to make a special appropriation of thy person and righteousness, with all thy saving benefits, to my soul. I would live upon thee, rejoice in thee, walk with thee, and make use of thee, as David did the show-bread of the sanctuary, upon every occasion. Be, thou my GOD, and acknowledge me for one of thy people. Never like Doeg, to be detained before thee; but, as a free-will offering, may I present myself by the mercies of my GOD a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to GOD, which is my reasonable service. And do thou, dearest JESUS, give me of the bread which is in secret, which the world knoweth not, because it knew thee not, that I may eat and live for ever.

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

David's distresses are still continued, and form the subject of this Chapter. He is constrained to leave Achish, and gets to the cave of Adullam. His relations now seek to him: many persons in desperate circumstances join him: Saul's rage against him breaks out with more and more violence: *Doeg the Edomite*, having informed Saul of Ahimelech the priest's kindness to David, Saul causeth the priests of Nob *to be slain, and the city of Nob is destroyed by him. Abiathar, one of the sons of Ahimelech, escapes, and flees to David. These are the principal matters contained in this Chapter.*

REFLECTIONS

HERE, dearest JESUS, in the flight of David to the cave of Adullam, I would pause to contemplate thee. Thou art ever precious, ever lovely, ever endearing, in every possible point of view, in which my soul beholds thee; but when I see thee, as David is here represented, *as becoming the Captain of every poor distressed, discontented, and wretched debtor: oh! how doth my soul long to come for ever under thy banner, and hail thee the Captain of my salvation!*

And in this glorious character, as the Leader and Commander of thy people, do I not behold thee as the gift of thy FATHER to this blessed purpose, to the fugitive, distressed band of poor, ruined, and undone sinners? Do I not view thee as becoming Captain over them, as well as Captain to them! For surely, when thou receivest them in the wilderness of their state by nature, thou regeneratest them by thy power, convertest them from the error of their way, and dost not only cancel the debt of the insolvent, and soften and remove the distress of the afflicted; but take away the very cause of discontent in those who have found but too much reason to

he dissatisfied with the ruined state of their nature, and have fled to thee for peace and content, in thy finished righteousness, and blood-shedding atonement. Yes! thou blessed JESUS! thou Almighty Captain of our salvation! it is thine, with the sword of the SPIRIT, both to conquer for them, and conquer in them. Oh! let thy precious word bring with it convictions of our sin, and convictions of thy all-sufficient righteousness; that thy little army may become more than conquerors through thy grace leading them on; until all the Sauls of persecution and opposition, which hunt for their life, are destroyed; and thou shalt bring them into thy holy mountain, thy kingdom, where thou wilt make them kings and Priests to GOD and the FATHER, for evermore. Amen.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

This is an interesting Chapter, and it contains some sweet practical instructions to the exercised believer, in his views of what is here recorded in the life of David. Saul is still pursuing him for slaughter; the LORD works deliverance by David for the men of Keilah; notwithstanding which the men of Keilah intended to deliver David into Saul's hand. David retreats to the wilderness of Ziph, and there has an interview with Jonathan; but upon the Ziphites treachery, in inviting Saul to come and take him, David escapes from thence, and retreats to the strong holds of En-gedi.

REFLECTIONS

READER, let us pause over the perusal of this chapter, if it be for no other purpose than to remark the gracious care of a covenant GOD over his people; and to observe, that though *many be the afflictions of the righteous, yet the LORD delivereth out of them all.*

But let us further learn from the view of it, how graciously the same merciful LORD supports the trials of his people, and makes their back suited to their burden; that *as their day is, so their strength shall be*. Surely nothing but the LORD's grace could have been found sufficient to have borne up David's mind under such heavy afflictions. And who, thus supported, but must have been constrained to say as he did; *It is good for me to have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes?* if trouble, and the malice and persecution of our enemies, be made the means, in the hand of our most wise and gracious GOD, to bring our hearts to live on him; and if, (as is most probable) without these exercises, our hearts would not be found so closely cleaving to the LORD; oh! who would not wish to be driven out from all creature comfort, that we might experience such sweet and holy enjoyment as David did, in communion with GOD.

But chiefly, from the perusal of this chapter, let us, Reader, eye JESUS. Was not that precious LAMB of GOD represented in all David's troubles? Did Saul hunt David from city to city, and from one place to another; and can we forget, how *strong bulls of Bashan beset him around, until his strength was poured out like water; and his heart, like wax, was melted in his bowels!* Yes! thou dearest JESUS, David's LORD and Son! thou wast exposed to the wrath, both of devils and of wicked men, in the day of thy calamity. Thou didst endure *such a contradiction of sinners against thyself;* and wast brought under oppression and suffering, until that thy life was made an offering, and a sacrifice for sin. But here, blessed JESUS, in the view of thine unequalled sufferings, may I always connect with it the cause. All this was not for thyself, but thy people. In the midst of all, thou wast *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens*. And when I see thee in these situations of trial and suffering, and behold thee personating thy people, *the heir of all things, and yet not where to lay thine head; the brightness of thy Father's glory, and yet thy visage marred more than any man:* the wonder, the praise, the adoration of angels, and yet, as thou saidst thyself, *a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and the outcast of the people!* Oh! precious, precious JESUS, what love must have enflamed thy heart, that thou shouldest become all this, and

infinitely more than this, even *sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD in thee*. Hail! holy Saviour! gracious LORD GOD, Emmanuel! add one blessing more, and incline every heart to love thee, that *every knee may bow before thee, and every tongue confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the FATHER. Amen.*

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

The history of Saul's pursuit of David, is continued in the opening of this chapter. But, in this pursuit, the LORD brought Saul into David's hand: his followers advise David to avail himself of the advantage; but David refuses. He takes occasion, however, to remonstrate with Saul, by bidding him take notice what he might have done, and how he forbore. Saul seems pricked to the heart, in the relation: confesses his sin to David, and obtains from David, a promise of kindness to his house. They part.

REFLECTIONS

READ, my soul, in the character of this deluded, wretched, and unwise king of Israel, the sad history of every unrenewed man, by nature. Blind to all his own real interest and happiness; and giving himself up to work all malice with greediness. And is not every man in this state, that goes forth to the pursuit of persecution, and regardless of his own happiness. He sees not the light of life. He knows nothing of JESUS and his righteousness, but is full of envy, hatred, and every evil work. Alas! what shall open his eyes, or awaken his mind to the proper apprehension of good and evil?

Read, my soul, in the unwearied persecutions of poor David, the happy state, notwithstanding all outward circumstances, of the godly in CHRIST JESUS. Though cast out, and fugitives, and vagabonds, too frequently, in the sight of men, or, as David speaks, like a flea, or a dead dog, of no value; yet chosen of GOD, and precious. They are

crucified with CHRIST; exposed to the rage and violence of Satan and bad men; and worse than all, to the remains of indwelling corruption in their own nature. But, O dearest LORD, how sweet and refreshing is the thought, *more is He that is with us, than all that are against us*. All the Sauls, which now persecute us, know as he did concerning David, that the LORD hath established his kingdom in the hearts of his people. Let this, O my GOD, be my everlasting comfort under every trial. Poor, wretched, persecuted, and deeply tried, as I may be in myself, yet JESUS will plead my cause, and bear me out through every difficulty. LORD! do thou carry me through all the caves of *En-gedi*, and the mountains, and wilderness state of my warfare; support me under every burden; lighten every care; bear me up under every trial; lead me through every opposition; bring me constantly near thy throne of grace, and finally bring me home to thy throne of glory.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains a great variety of contents, in its relation. Here is an account of the death of Samuel; the character and behaviour of Nabal towards David; the sin-preventing providence of GOD, in causing Nabal's wife, by her prudence, to avert the intended destruction of Nabal and his house, by David; the death of Nabal, and the wife of Nabal becoming afterwards, the wife of David.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us not dismiss our review of this chapter, nor close the book which records the death of Samuel, without first paying due tribute to a memory so truly valuable. I would for once methinks pass over the consideration of many other beauties contained in this Chapter, in order to gather suitable reflections from the tomb of the prophet. It pleased the LORD to call Samuel to be his

servant in a day of great departure from the LORD. And the LORD was pleased to call him home at a season when corruption abounded. Surely it was a time when such a man was most needed. Saints and servants of the LORD who are eminent in their day and generation, are the salt, the light, and pillars of the earth. When they are gone, their vacancies form sad gaps in the church. How different a death from that of *Nabal!* while the one dies unlamented, unpitied, disregarded: the name of *Samuel* ever lives in remembrance, and his memory is blessed.

But let us not stop here. Do I not see in Samuel a type of the ever blessed JESUS! Not only as a prophet, but as a priest, a ruler, a judge, a deliverer in Israel? Was Samuel *promised* of the LORD as his very name *Samuel* implied? and was not our JESUS the very *promised seed*, in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed? Was Samuel coveted by his mother, and as instantly lent or returned unto the LORD from the womb; and do we not feel our minds in this view, directed to the contemplation of him, who in all ages was the earnestly sought and longed for, *the desire of all nations*, and who was given as a covenant of the people, dedicated to GOD, and consecrated in the service of redemption, from his miraculous birth. Yes, blessed JESUS! the outlines of thy unequalled character thou wert pleased to have marked out in the several servants of thine, which ministered in thy church before thy coming. The early call of Samuel, and his being appointed to the prophetic office; his ministry, his unkind treatment, and rejection by the people; his benevolent labours, prayers, and intercessions for Israel; these, and many other circumstances which marked his life, became typical of thee, and thy divine mission, when for the government, instruction, and redemption of thy people, thou camest on earth as the almighty prophet of thy church, and as the faithful priest whom GOD the FATHER promised to raise up, that should *build him a sure house, and become his anointed for ever*. Oh, blessed JESUS! the gift of our GOD and FATHER *unasked*; and here as in a thousand other instances, infinitely surpassing all the Samuel's thy servants, be thou to me both prophet, priest, and king! Do thou now by the rich anointing of thy blessed SPIRIT, graciously teach me of thyself and of thy FATHER: guide me and lead me into all truth, and when thou hast

accomplished all thine holy will and pleasure concerning me in this my day and generation; LORD, take me home to thyself to behold thy glory, that *where thou art there may I be also*.

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

The history of David's persecution by Saul is again opened, and continued through this Chapter. The Ziphites inform Saul against David. Saul goes in quest of him. David is favoured with another opportunity of slaying Saul, but will not avail himself of it. A similar interview takes place to what happened before between David and Saul; after which they depart one from the other.

REFLECTIONS

READER! again the HOLY GHOST calleth us to behold the implacable and unmerciful malice of Saul, and the gracious exercises of the mind of David, in a renewed instance of the evil designs of the one, and the deliverance GOD wrought for the other. Let us obey the sacred call, and pause over what we have read, in order to mark the different dispositions, of these men; and yet more especially to behold the gracious interposition of GOD, in defeating the evil schemes of Saul and prospering the hand of David.

But may we not without violence to the subject, behold in the unremitting persecution of David by Saul, somewhat more than the mere jealousies of nature in the envy of Saul to David, respecting his *succession in the kingdom*? *Are there not traces to be seen of the still greater envy arising in the mind of the unregenerate, in the view of the LORD's favour towards his people in a spiritual kingdom. Alas! what bitterness do the children of the wicked one manifest to the children of the kingdom? Like the corrupt stock from which they shoot, their very vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah. In this spiritual warfare what goings forth of the enemy, like Saul in the*

pursuit of David, are there every day to surprise by ambush, or to take by subtilty? And what Ziphites are there every where to join in the confederacy, to deliver the godly into the snare of the wicked. Ye soldiers of JESUS CHRIST, be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of GOD. Remember your enemies are the enemies of our GOD and of his CHRIST. He will fight your battles. Stand still and you shall shortly see the salvation of GOD. He hath delivered you hitherto, and doth deliver, and therefore trust in him, and he will yet deliver. Ere long the battle will be finished. That promise is absolute. The GOD of peace shall bruise satan under your feet shortly.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

The HOLY GHOST in holding forth to the church the history of David, hath in this Chapter given us a view of this great man in the infirmities of his character. Here are his fears respecting Said, and his want of faith in GOD recorded: his flight to Gath in consequence thereof: Achish the king of Gath, his kind reception of David: gives him Ziklag for a dwelling place. During his residence in the country of the Philistines, David maketh excursions upon the neighbouring states and conquers them, but deceives Achish in the account. These are the principal contents of this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Do not, my soul, pass over the review which the HOLY GHOST gives thee of David's want of faith, in the opening of this chapter, without taking home with thee the important instruction it affords, to teach thee where thy strength is, and where is all thy stay. Oh, blessed SPIRIT! I thank thee for the view. Yes, gracious GOD, I see the need of it. If David failed after such distinguishing evidences of

favor; if he, *the man after GOD's own heart*, was led away from his steadfastness; *Oh! how shall I be supported in a trying hour? There is a way indeed by which I shall be more than conqueror; and that is in thee, O blessed JESUS. Thy servant hath from his own experience assured the church, that they which are kept, are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. LORD, I take occasion from the weakness of David's faith, the HOLY GHOST hath here shown me, I take occasion to bespeak thy grace for every trying hour, and that thy strength may be made perfect in my weakness. To thy precious bloodshedding power would I look; in its divine efficacy would I trust to resist all temptations; and under its sprinkling would my soul come; this, this dearest JESUS, will secure me, and like the holy army in heaven, who overcame by the blood of the LAMB, I shall then be enabled to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

We are hastening to the close of the reign and life of Saul. The Philistines are preparing for a battle fatal to Saul. He is dispirited and dismayed; and instead of looking to the LORD, he betakes himself to familiar spirits; the sad consequence which follows, and the alarms of Saul, are rehearsed in the close of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

IF ever the contemplation of the wicked, in his progress from sin to sin can become profitable to deter from the commission of sin, and to keep back the soul, under grace, from presumption; surely there is not a character in scripture which teaches this more loudly, than that of Saul. Behold him from the moment of Samuel's

anointing him king, to the hour in which the HOLY GHOST hath here sketched his history, and what doth it afford but the very melancholy account of a desperately wicked heart. That heart of Saul was never changed by grace; for though he is said to have had *another* heart from what he had when seeking his Father's asses, when he came to the kingdom; yet not a *new heart created in righteousness and true holiness*. With this deceitful heart of nature, the acquired purple of a kingdom, and the power of a Prince, only furnished means of manifesting what that heart originally *was by nature, and what it ever remained untouched by grace. It only was uniformly making a greater progression and ripeness in evil. Reader! behold in his history how he proposed to himself pleasure in offending GOD; fighting against the gracious hand that had given him a throne; and as one determined to sacrifice every thing rather than that GOD should appoint a successor in his kingdom, who had, unasked, and unthought of, given a kingdom to him. Think herefrom what an awful thing it must be in the wicked to be found fighting against GOD.*

From the view of Saul, let us turn our thoughts to JESUS, whose redemption work becomes the only remedy for all sin, even in his children, who are by nature open and justly exposed to wrath even as others. We read the history of Saul to very little purpose if the sequel of it and indeed every part of it, doth not lead to this conclusion of the apostles; Are we then better than they? Are we in ourselves, and in our fallen state, by nature, less exposed to the same commission of sin? No, in no wise. For the scripture hath before proved all under sin. And GOD hath concluded all in unbelief as well as sin. Well may every truly awakened soul cry out, under the heart-felt conviction of the truth; Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of GOD, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. Here then, Reader! let you and I join issue and rejoice. JESUS is set forth as a propitiation for sin through faith in his blood. He is the salvation and the righteousness of GOD to every sinner that believeth. Oh! LORD, grant us the fullness of grace to believe

the record which GOD the FATHER hath given of his dear Son. And may that precious scripture be ever sounding in our ears, and ever living in its divine and saving influence in our hearts; GOD having raised up his Son JESUS hath sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

This Chapter makes a digression from the prosecution of Saul's history, to relate an event in the life of David. While Saul was distressed in the approach of the Philistines, and Achish was proposing to take David with him to the battle; the lords of the Philistines objecting to it, David is dismissed with kind marks of respect by Achish.

REFLECTIONS

I HOPE the Reader will feel his soul drawn out with mine, both to admire and adore the faithfulness of GOD, in his deliverance of poor David from the snare into which his want of faithfulness in his GOD had brought him. Surely none but a wise GOD could have found the means to have brought him out of the double danger into which his folly and sin had brought him. Apparently there was no way to escape, but either he must have proved a traitor to his country, or a traitor to his friend. And surely none but a faithful GOD would have given grace to have brought him out, when his own unfaithfulness had so justly forfeited the LORD's favour. But oh, thou dearest LORD! how plainly are we taught by this and every other instance, of thy passing by the worthlessness of thy people, that thou dost this not for our own sake, but for thine own great name's sake and thy glory. Hence, blessed LORD, thou dost manifest thy faithfulness in sending the trial upon the heels of our unfaithfulness. And thou dost manifest thy faithfulness in guiding us through the trial. And thou displayest the riches of thy grace and faithfulness, in making the termination of

it minister to thy glory and our welfare. Oh precious JESUS! in every instance of my poor wanderings and unbelief, and fear, and the like, do thou so mercifully and so tenderly deal by me. And while thou dost compassionate my unworthiness, let thy grace be sufficient for me, and let thy strength be made perfect in my weakness. I lament, dearest LORD, that like David, I have too often thought and feared, that notwithstanding all thy past mercies and manifestations, I should one day be left to perish by the hand of the enemy. But in thy after grace in sending difficulties and hedging up my way with thorns, I have proved thy mercy. I can and do therefore set up my *Ebenezer* in all the proofs of thy love, and find cause to say with David, *I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.*

CHAPTER 30

SUMMARY

This Chapter becomes very interesting in its contents, for it relates to a period in the life of David, both important, as it proved to him, and instructive to GOD's people. During the absence of David from Ziklag to attend the army of the Philistines, the Amalekites whom David had before scourged, made an incursion upon the city, and had not only set fire to it but carried away the women and children captives. The distress of David's little army was so great upon this occasion, that they talked of stoning him.— David sought the LORD — the LORD answered him — David by GOD's direction pursued the spoilers, overtook them, recovered all his loss, and made distribution among his soldiers of the plunder.

REFLECTIONS

THE HOLY GHOST hath evidently much instruction to convey to his Church, in what is here related of David's calamity; and I would charge it upon the Reader's soul, and my own, to enquire very humbly, what the will and mind of the LORD is.

My Brother! when like David, our want of faith, and the slenderness of our trust in GOD, tempts us to go out of the path of duty, and a shyness takes place between the LORD and our hearts; is it not a blessed mark of grace, that the LORD doth not leave us to ourselves, and to eat the fruit of our own devices? Doth he not mean everything gracious, when he hedgeth up our way with thorns on purpose that *we shall not find our lovers*; but that our minds, being prepared by his secret workings, may be constrained to say; *I will return again to my first love, my first husband; for then was it better with me than now?*

If then, my Brother, after going out at any time full, we are made to return empty: if our house, which we left in peace, we find disordered, as David and his men did *Ziklag*, at our coming home: if the LORD takes away the desire of our eyes with a stroke; removes our creature comforts; breaks down our creature confidences; makes a sorrow to grow out of the very root which we had planted for ourselves, and promised the sure fruit of enjoyment: what shall I say? If nothing but some severe dispensation will bring us back, when all the milder *methods of his love have failed: will you not count that love, nay infinite love, and wisdom too, which administereth the medicine, however nauseous to our proud, and too much pampered stomachs, because nothing but physic will reach our case?*

Oh! gracious, long suffering, long forgotten Saviour, in every view, and at every direction, how doth thy tenderness meet our ingratitude! How oft, like David, have I said; *I shall one day perish* by the hand of one or another! And even in the midst of deliverances have feared the issue? And how oft like him, have I ran to Philistine confederacies, and an arm of flesh, have *forgotten the LORD my Maker, and feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy; and where is the fury of the oppressor? And* hadst thou, dearest LORD! justly, as thou mightest have done, given me up to the pursuit of my own ways, and to the fruit of my own devices; where would have been my portion? But, oh! thou most gracious JESUS! precious Saviour, how thou hast called me home; allured me, and brought me into some *wilderness* dispensation; and there hast caused *the wilderness and the solitary*

place to be glad; and even the desert to rejoice, and to blossom as the rose. Go on, heavenly Teacher, graciously go on, nor spare the rod of affliction, when the wayward conduct of thy poor, ignorant, and ungrateful child makes it necessary. Only, dearest LORD, come thyself with, and in the affliction, that it may be fully blessed, and sanctified, in bringing back my heart to thee; that when, like David, I have wept till I can weep no more; and sorrows, like a flood, poured over me from within and without, and everything like the threatened stoning of the people, oppress me on every side, like him, I may still find grace and faith to encourage myself in the LORD my GOD.

CHAPTER 31

SUMMARY

This is a melancholy Chapter, which relates to us the sequel of Saul's history; the sad termination of a sinful life. The battle between the Philistines, and Israel, in mount *Gilboa*, in which the Philistines are conquerors, and Saul, *Jonathan*, *Abinadab*, and *Malchishua*, his sons, are slain.— Israel possessed by the Philistines; the camp of Saul plundered, his dead body, and those of his sons, carried away to *Beth-shan*: but afterwards rescued by the men of *Jabesh-gilead*. These are the principal contents rehearsed in this Chapter, which ends the Book.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, Reader! once more over the sad view of Saul's history, and as thou hast been called upon to mark his progress in sin, and the ripening of his mind in iniquity; here behold, in self-murder, the awful close of a life so evil. Oh! how dreadful to die out of CHRIST, uninterested in him; void of all covenant promises; unregenerated in heart, unwashed in the blood of the LAMB, and without the clothing of the

Redeemer's righteousness. Better to die in a ditch, than to die out of CHRIST. The manner of death is nothing: to die any how, any where, by any means; only to die in JESUS. LORD! give to him that reads, and him that writes, the blessed hope in our death, that living or dying, we are the LORD'S. Oh! for a part in the first resurrection, and then the second death hath no power.

Dearest JESUS! thou art the resurrection, and the life. Thou blessed JESUS, by thy death, hast overcome death, so that death now, by thee, is among the inventory of the believer's treasure. To die in time is gain. LORD, give grace, both to writer and reader, that we may so live, as to add death to our sure account of profit; that *whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all may be ours; for we are CHRIST'S, and CHRIST is GOD'S.*

2nd SAMUEL

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Several of the observations which were proposed in the opening of the *first* book of Samuel, will meet the Reader at the commencement of this *second*. As was remarked concerning the supposed author of it, whose name it bears, Samuel, though he might be the writer of the first book in part, that is, as far as took place in point of history prior to his death; yet common sense must know that the events recorded after that period could never have been handed to the church by him. And therefore it will necessarily follow that the whole of this *second* book must have owed its existence to some other penman. And perhaps it was on this account that the *seventy* who formed the scriptures into the present order in which they are placed in our Bibles, judged it more proper to distinguish both this and the former under the title of *the first and second books of Samuel; otherwise called the first and second books of the Kings*.

I think it hardly necessary to detain the Reader from immediately entering on the perusal of this *second* book of Samuel, with desiring him to look out very diligently for the signatures of divine inspiration through all the parts of it. If the writer of this Commentary and the Reader of it, are both brought under the teachings of the SPIRIT, and by his unerring hand are led to trace, through the whole of its departments, his well known characters; these will refresh the mind and carry the truest and indeed the only infallible testimonies to the understanding, of authenticity. And the importance of such a discovery is I hope by this time so thoroughly understood by the Reader, who hath kindly accompanied me through the several preceding books of this Commentary, that I presume it can no longer be needful to insist upon it.

With respect to the annals of mankind, in which, as an history, the second book of Samuel is placed, we find the period to be somewhat about 1060 years before the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The book itself includes the whole reign of David, which continued nearly forty years.

There are a great many sweet and spiritual subjects opened to our contemplation in the several parts of this book; and especially considered as leading the mind to the Person, and Offices, and Characters of the LORD JESUS.

David, whose history it contains, was in many instances so eminent a type of the ever blessed JESUS, that it may well be supposed the HOLY GHOST, (whose office and whose pleasure it is, to be *taking of the things of JESUS to show unto the people*), would not suffer the life of this man to be marked out for the instruction and comfort of the church, without very frequently causing the mind of the Reader to be directed from David's history, to David's LORD. On this feature of the book itself, I would, above all things, earnestly request the Reader to let his eye be fixed. And I pray the HOLY SPIRIT to bless, in a very eminent degree to his view, this most precious part of it. I only take occasion, before I enter upon the commentary of this book (as in former instances) to make a request of the Reader (and in which his own happiness is too highly interested to refuse me); that he will pray over it, and pause over it, in the poor *human* observations presented to his view, for *divine* teachings. Beg of GOD, my brother, to give you *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him*; that, in the seeing eye, and the hearing ear, and the understanding heart, (all which are of the LORD) these sacred books of GOD may come home to the mind, not only *in word, but in power, and in much assurance of faith, and of the HOLY GHOST*.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

The event of the battle between Israel and the Philistines, in the overthrow of Israel and the death of Saul, and his three sons, this

chapter opens with the relation of, as reported to David, by an Amalekite. The sacred historian, gives the account of the distress of David upon the occasion: his anger against the informer, who, thinking to have ingratiated himself with David, boasted of his having slain Saul, and is slain for it. David breaks out into a bitter lamentation on this event, and especially mourns over the death of his beloved Jonathan.

REFLECTIONS

See Reader! in the beautiful conduct of David at Saul's death, how grace enables the believer to stay all enmity, and even to requite good for evil. Depend upon it, nothing but this can accomplish such a purpose; for it is the sole work of GOD the HOLY GHOST.

But let us, in the view of this chapter, go further and remark, that as nothing but grace can throw down all the jealousies of life in our competition with others, so nothing but the same divine principle can reconcile us to our death. Until we know JESUS truly and savingly, we can neither think of death with comfort nor meet it with fortitude, Yes, dearest JESUS! it is thy death, which hath overcome death; and thy blood which hath taken out its sting. Oh! grant me grace ever to be keeping thy triumphs for thy people in view, and never to look at death but with a steady eye also to thee. Thy victory over death, hell, and the grave, is the everlasting consolation of thy people; and death, no more than life, or principalities, or powers, shall be able to separate from thee. *Through death thou hast destroyed him that had the power of death, and hast delivered them who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage.* Oh! thou dearest LORD! give me to see the full privilege of thy triumphs; that my iniquity is pardoned, and my sin covered; that death hath no terrors, nor the grave any alarm; let me hear that blessed voice of thine, and my soul will rejoice in full assurance of faith: *Fear not, I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death. Amen.*

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the relation of David's accession to the throne of Hebron, A party however is formed by Abner the Captain of Saul's host, in favour of Ish-bosheth, Saul's son; which became the source of a long contention between the house of David and the house of Saul. David reigns in Hebron, and Ish-bosheth in Mahanaim.

REFLECTIONS

Behold Reader! in the instance of David in this chapter, that the death of one enemy only makes way for the appearance of another. If Saul be dead, Saul hath a son still to persecute and harass the life of David. If the LORD in mercy delivers his people from this or that trial; others shall succeed. *They that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS must, and shall, suffer persecution.* It is, as our adored Redeemer told his disciples, and all have found it, *through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom.* Though David was elected by GOD himself to the kingdom, yet long conflicts he must go through before he gets even a prospect of obtaining it: and when all opposition in the death of Saul seemed for the time to have died away: yet new *Sauls* arose to oppose. Yes! depend upon it, Reader, the chosen of GOD will never in this world be without the opposition and malice of the enemy. It is and must be so. Nay indeed, it forms one of the very evidences of their character. Let you and I therefore mark this down in large letters, for our every day's memorandum; and let those sweet words of CHRIST not only reconcile our hearts, but cause them to rejoice in the blessed testimony. *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen ye out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Blessed JESUS! May I have these sweet marks, and carry about with me these precious assurances of thy love, to help my mind on to a continually rejoicing in thee and thy great salvation.

But let me not dismiss this Chapter before that I have taken from it another delightful lesson. Did David bring up with him, when the LORD appointed him to go up to Hebron to his kingdom, did he bring up with him all that appertained to him, and leave nothing behind? And shall not my soul rejoice in the blessed certainty, that my David, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST, my king and my GOD, will bring up to that kingdom he is gone to take possession of in eternal glory, all his followers? Is JESUS now in the Hebron of Hebrons, in the heaven of heavens; and will he be satisfied there, while any of his household are left below? Shall there indeed an hoof be left behind in the spiritual Egypt, in the *Ziklag* country of the Philistines? No, thou dear Redeemer, thou saidst thyself before thy departure, that thou didst only go before to take possession of it in thy people's name. Thou art gone *to receive a kingdom, and wilt return*. Oh! for faith in lively exercise to believe *the record which GOD hath given of his dear Son*. Shortly thou wilt come to take me home to thyself, that where thou art there may I be also. Never, never my soul, lose sight of these sweet words of my JESUS; but let their animating assurance have a living influence upon all thy words, and thoughts, and actions. FATHER, *I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me. That they all may be one as thou FATHER art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us. I, in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in me, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.*

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

The account of the struggle on the part of Saul's family for the kingdom with David, is continued in this Chapter. A quarrel takes place between Ishbosheth and Abner. The latter makes overtures to David. David's treaty with him. Abner, while attempting to bring

over Israel to David's interest, is slain by Joab. David's distress at this event. These are the principal points related in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

This whole chapter, except what the first verse of it teacheth, serves to show the Reader and Writer what a mass of treachery, deceit, and evil, the human heart is made up of. Alas! alas! what a state is man reduced to by the fall. Oh! blessed JESUS, how is thy glorious redemption-work raised to our adoration and delight, in the contemplation of it; since but for thy gracious undertaking, all mankind must forever have remained under this mass of guilt and ruin. Blessed be GOD for JESUS CHRIST!

Before we dismiss our review of this chapter, methinks I would have the Reader, as well as myself, pause once more over the consideration of the serious thought induced in the contemplation of the long war between the house of David and of Saul: and let each for himself enquire to which, spiritually viewed, we belong. Then when this point is ascertained, if happily through grace we are of the house and lineage of our Almighty David; let us advance one step further, and examine whether, in the long contests between grace and corruption, nature is waxing more and more feeble, and our better part is renewed day by day?

Reader! depend upon it a real follower of JESUS CHRIST dreads above all things, lest in the end, he should be found mistaken concerning himself in his estimate of an interest in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Are you really, truly, heartily, willing to know? Go before the throne—present yourself now just as you are for judgment. — Are you resting upon any presumptive evidence of what you suppose yourself to have experienced in times past, of awakening, convincing, converting grace; or are your sole hopes founded upon the blessed assurances of JEHOVAH's covenant love and faithfulness solely secured to poor sinners, in the blood and righteousness of JESUS CHRIST? If the *latter* be your *experience*, and not the *former*; if self, with all its feelings, supposed enlargements, joys, and the uncertain ups and downs of the soul, be out of the account; and JESUS, the LORD alone, be exalted in the day you present yourself for judgment; this will confirm, in the long war between grace and

corruption, that the house of David is getting stronger and stronger; and that of Saul is waxing weaker and weaker! LORD JESUS! I would say both for myself and Reader, *Search us, O GOD, and know our hearts; try us, and know our thoughts; And see if there be any wicked way in our souls, and lead us in the way everlasting.*

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

A melancholy relation this chapter hath of the murder of Ish-bosheth by two captains in his band. After they had perpetrated the deed they hastened with the head of Ish-bosheth to David, who so far from approving of what they had done, ordered their execution. These are the principal points here related.

REFLECTIONS

The sudden and unexpected death of Saul's son, while dreaming of an earthly kingdom, may serve to furnish out, both to the Reader and Writer, an important reflection on the sure, but uncertain, coming of our latter end. There is but one security against the evil of that day; and that is, an interest in his blood and righteousness, who by his death hath overcome death, and by his resurrection hath secured the resurrection of his people. That precious, precious scripture, is a motto to be worn in the bosom of the faithful, and to be fixed in the largest characters over the couches of believers; CHRIST *was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.* Thus to be found in CHRIST, is to be found in peace before him. And in this case, sudden death is sudden glory.

Reader! if JESUS be your hope, your trust, your confidence, your rock, you can never be moved. For how can the soul be naked which hath CHRIST himself for his covering? *I know* (says Paul) *whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* What day that might be Paul knew not; but every day he was looking out for it. *I protest*

(says he) *by your rejoicing which I have in CHRIST JESUS our LORD, I die daily.* Blessed Paul! what a happy reckoning did he make of it. And what assurance was founded in it. Reader! let you and I keep JESUS always in view; let us set this precious Redeemer always before us; and depend upon it, living *upon* him, and trusting wholly *in* him, for his atoning blood and justifying righteousness, our departure will be in peace, though the signal be given for our removal without a moment's warning. It is but to close the eyes of the body to this world, and the soul will open them in glory. *Blessed (says JESUS) is that servant, whom his LORD, when he cometh, shall find so doing.*

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with a brighter prospect to David's life and reign than any before. All the tribes of Israel now come to him, claiming relationship, and offering him the whole kingdom. David is anointed. He goeth forth to war; builds a city; receives from the king of Tyre both materials for building and builders; is established in his kingdom; takes to himself more concubines and wives; his children are increased; fights with the Philistines, and is encouraged by the LORD. These things are related in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Before we quit this very instructive Chapter, let us, my christian friend, look at it once more; and while we view the zeal of all the tribes of Israel in anointing David king, let you and I see whether we have manifested an equal readiness to bend the knee to the sceptre of grace before our JESUS, and crown him LORD of all. It is GOD the FATHER that hath constituted him in his mediatorial glory, King in Zion; while, in the fullness of his GODHEAD he is one with the FATHER, Universal LORD over all, GOD blessed for evermore. And in his Almighty hands are the issues of life and death, spiritual, temporal, and eternal. Yes! blessed JESUS, thy kingdom is thy

church; thy body, thy fair one, thy spouse: thou art of our kindred, and we of thine, *thy bone and thy flesh*. Thou hast fought, and art still fighting for us all our battles. Thou hast led us out, and brought us in. Thou feedest thy people with thyself, for thou art both the bread of life, and the water of life. And surely the love, the service, the voluntary homage of thy people, when thou hast made them willing in the day of thy power, is thy lawful, just, and proper right. And when thou hast taken away the blind, and the lame, and entered by thine own Almighty arm and power, into the strong holds of Zion; oh! LORD JESUS, do thou dwell there, and make our souls and bodies thy temple of abode. Reader! have you and I thus bent the knee to JESUS? Have we crowned him with the crown of free grace, in ascribing all salvation to him? Is he dear, is he precious, is he the altogether lovely, is he the LORD our righteousness? Dearest JESUS! give both him that writes, and him that reads, grace to say amen: and let every high thing that would exalt itself against his sovereignty be brought down, and every thought *brought into captivity to the obedience and love of CHRIST*.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

This is an interesting Chapter, and considered as typically, in some points, referring to JESUS, demands our attention the more. We are here informed of David's intention of bringing up the ark from where it had long been in obscurity, during the troubles of Saul's reign, to David's new city. In the accomplishment of this purpose, David meets with an humbling, and most distressing providence.—His behaviour upon it,—the attempt afterwards renewed, and succeeds,—the joy of David and the people on the occasion,—the behaviour of Michal, David's wife,—his displeasure. These are the principal things contained in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! think how wretched and low must have been the state of Israel all the while they were without the Ark, the symbol of GOD's presence. No doubt many a pious Israelite sighed in secret on the occasion. Oh! my Brother! think what a sorrowful heart-breaking event would it be to this happy land of ours, if for the sins of the people the LORD should be pleased to remove the golden candlestick out of place! Even in the bare prospect of it, the heart trembles! Our sweet sabbaths, our solemn feasts, our gospel privileges, and ordinances; once over! And yet, is not the sin of the land enough to call for these tokens of divine displeasure? Who can consider the GOD of all grace, and the FATHER of all mercies, so continually affronted as he is, but must tremble for the consequences. if the soul of Lot was vexed from day to day by the filthy conversation of the wicked; well may rivers of water run down the eyes of the faithful, because men keep not GOD's law.

But Reader! amidst the awful contemplation of such an event may it be your comfort and mine, that should the LORD *lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet*; though we lose the Ark, GOD's people cannot lose him whose symbol the Ark was. Oh! let you and I fetch up the Ark of GOD, even JESUS, to our hearts and to our houses: It is his presence alone which gives a real blessing to ordinances; and without his presence the best of ordinances are nothing. And, O LORD GOD, grant, that neither of us, like *Uzzah*, may presumptuously give a wrong touch unto the Ark, nor vainly think that the Ark of GOD needs our feeble hand to its support. Do thou, LORD GOD, direct all our approaches unto thee, and direct them that they may be after the due order which thou hast enjoined. And then, if the Michals of the present hour despise our joy, and contemn our raptures, let them; it will only serve to manifest yet more whose we are, by the persecutions of the ungodly. And oh! for grace in full exercise, not like David, on this occasion to return *railing for railing, but contrarywise blessing*. May we pass on through *evil report as well as good report*; and in all our lesser trials, seek, dearest JESUS, a portion of thy SPIRIT, that we may *go forth unto*

thee, without the camp, bearing thy reproach; rejoicing that we are counted worthy to suffer shame for thy name.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

This chapter affords a pleasing view of David's mind. His zeal for GOD's honour and glory, prompts him to the desire of building an house for the LORD. He confers with Nathan the prophet on the subject. The LORD at night reveals his will on this occasion, and commands him to communicate the same to David. Upon receiving this message, David goeth in before the LORD, and offers a Most delightful prayer.

REFLECTIONS

I would pause over the perusal of this chapter to admire the blessed properties of grace, in disposing the heart of David to such a frame of thankfulness, and grateful affection to GOD. It is sweet to see the mind brought into this suitable frame, to discern from what source all our mercies flow, to give the author of them all the glory, that while we receive all the benefit, GOD may have all the praise.

But I would pause yet more, to admire the blessed tokens of distinguishing grace, and above all, the Great Author of that grace, whose infinite benignity and condescension shines yet more and more bright (like the heavenly bodies in the darker nights) from being manifested, notwithstanding all the unworthiness of the objects of his clemency. Yes! Great Source and Fountain of all the sure mercies of David! it is from the covenant love, and faithfulness, and grace, given us in CHRIST JESUS, thy ever dear, and ever blessed Son before the world began, that this kingdom promised to David and his seed, is made sure, permanent, and eternal. Even thee, thou blessed JESUS, in thy glorious mediatorial fulness, and finished salvation, art the gift of GOD our FATHER. And no less, the HOLY GHOST, with all his saving gifts and graces, and influences, cometh forth to thy people as the Sent, both of the FATHER and the SON.

LORD GOD! make this sure house thou didst promise to David and his seed, sure to my soul. And amidst all the unworthiness of my heart, let thy promise, like thyself, be my constant comfort and support. Though thou hast said, if the children of the LORD JESUS commit iniquity, and break thy statutes; though they break thy laws; yet thou wilt not break thy promised mercy. Though thou visit our sins with the stripes of men; yet thy covenant wilt thou not break, nor alter the thing which is gone out of thy lips. *Thou hast once sworn by thy holiness thou wilt not lie unto David.* Oh! precious promise of a more precious promising GOD in CHRIST! *Be it unto me according to thy word!*

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

We have a very different view of David in this chapter, from the view we had of him in the former. There we looked at him in his communion with GOD; and here, in his conflicts with men. Here are his conquests over the Philistines; the Moabites, Zobah, thy Syrians, and the Edomites. Here is also, the account of the rich gifts made to David; his courts of Justice, and his officers. So that altogether we see David here in a state of prosperity.

REFLECTIONS

While I behold the victories of David, upheld by the arm of Omnipotence, and the LORD his GOD preserving him whithersoever he went, oh! for grace to look unto the same covenant GOD in CHRIST, that I may go forth against all the spiritual enemies of my salvation, conquering and to conquer; upheld by his Almighty arm, and kept by his gracious power from all danger, through the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS. And, LORD! do thou endue my soul with the same spirit as thy servant David, to consecrate all gifts, and all attainments to thee, the bountiful Source and Giver of all; that both gain and substance may be cheerfully offered unto thee, *the LORD of the whole earth.*

But chiefly, while I read those victories of David, oh! let my soul pass over the review of David king of Israel, and behold JESUS the King of heaven and earth, going forth thus against all the powers of darkness, the confederacies of earth and hell, in the salvation of his people. Yes! dearest JESUS, I do behold thee as the Great Captain of salvation, boldly waging war with sin, with Satan, and the host of foes in our corrupt and carnal hearts. But thy weapons are all spiritual; and thy victories all eternal. *Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for the rebellious, that the LORD GOD might dwell among them.* And now, LORD, having slain thine enemies thyself; it is thou which ledest on thy people to the same victory over them, by the sovereignty of thy power. Do thou, blessed JESUS, lead me on, and bring me through, and make me more than conqueror; and in all my spiritual warfare, let me set thee, *the LORD, continually before me, for if thou art on my right hand, I shall not be moved.*

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter continues the history of David, and is directed to that part of his character which represents the amiableness of his mind, in his kindness towards the house of Saul. Finding, on enquiry, that Jonathan had left a son behind him, David searcheth him out, makes suitable provision for him, and sets him at his own table.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! In the view here presented of David's generosity to the family of Saul, do not fail to remark the sweet and sure properties of grace. Depend upon it, *if a man have not the Spirit of CHRIST he is none of his.* And how shall you and I testify that the Spirit of CHRIST dwelleth in us, but by a conformity to the actions of the Son of GOD? If David, therefore, sought out the ruined family of Saul, and took them into favour, shall not you and I seek out the scattered sheep of

JESUS, and bring them home to his fold? Can I behold one of those precious souls for whom CHRIST died, in circumstances of distress, and feel nothing like what actuated the Son of GOD, in commiserating and relieving the sorrows of our common nature? Surely, I behold in every one of them thine image, blessed JESUS; and methinks I hear thee say, *Inasmuch as ye have shown kindness to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have shown it unto me,* But oh thou David's LORD, from whom David received the very grace which prompted him, and enabled him, to show grace unto others; do thou regard me as the Mephibosheth of the fallen house of our first father. I am, by nature, lame in both my feet, a cripple from my mother's womb: I bow myself before thee, overpowered with astonishment that thou shouldst look upon such an unworthy creature as I am. And wilt thou indeed, dearest JESUS, take me home to thy table? Wilt thou cause me to eat bread in thy presence? Oh! for grace to live *upon* thee, as well as *with* thee; to entrust in thine hands, with full assurance of faith, all the concerns of my salvation. And, while I eat at thy table below, to live in the glorious expectation and confidence of the arrival of that blessed day of GOD, when thou wilt come and take me home to thy table above to be eternally supplied at those *fountains of living waters, where GOD hath wiped away all tears from all eyes.*

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

In following David's history, we are here again presented with the relation of war. David sent a friendly message to the king of the Ammonites; but he receiving it unfriendly, and treating the ambassadors of David ill, David enters upon a war with him, and entirely defeats the king of Ammon, and the Syrians, whom he had called to succour him.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! What a correspondence do we find, in all ages, in the circumstances of the people of GOD. The LORD said at the fall, that he would put enmity between the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent; and how evidently do the effects of it appear. In civil, as well as in religious life, what false constructions are frequently put upon the best intentioned actions. And what unjust, and base foundations do men of the world sometimes make, like the children of Ammon against David, to cover over their hatred to the people of GOD.

But principally, against thy gospel, blessed JESUS! how do the minds of all the carnal unite to treat thy gracious offers with contempt, and to abuse thy precious salvation. Is it because thy offers are of no value; or because men need them not? Alas! What but the most consummate blindness, can suggest the one; or the most horrid deception of the mind, could give rise to the other. But oh! thou blessed Redeemer, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, do thou graciously hold forth the sceptre of mercy to my soul! Break down all the strong holds of Satan; give me to see, to feel, to embrace, to rejoice in the fulness, preciousness, and everlasting value of thy rich, free, and finished redemption. And in all the gracious offers thou art making, of peace and friendship (as David did to the king of Ammon) to the souls of poor, ruined, and undone sinners; oh! LORD, accompany thine offers with thy saving power, and make them willing to be saved in thine own way and purpose. This, LORD, I know will be the case of all whom the FATHER hath given unto thee, and whose salvation thou hast purchased with thy blood and righteousness; but, blessed JESUS! cut short this work in righteousness: *Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou as the roe, or the young hart upon the mountains of Bether.*

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

This Chapter, which is still the prosecution of David's history, exhibits him in so painful a light, that for the honour of human nature, to say nothing of the honour of a child of GOD, we feel distress to add such a page to David's history. But the HOLY GHOST, for the edification and comfort of the church, hath caused it to be written; and we dare not, we wish not indeed, to extenuate, or to soften, a tittle of the whole transaction. Here is shown us David committing adultery and murder; endeavoring to pass off the fruit of his baseful commerce with another man's wife upon the unsuspecting husband; involving his army in the participation of his guilt, and after all, feeling no remorse nor compunction of heart for his crimes.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let you and I make a most serious pause over the perusal of this chapter, and endeavor to gather the improvements from it which GOD the HOLY GHOST plainly intended the church should gather from the awful subject.

See! that the blessed SPIRIT hath suffered nothing to be kept back in the relation. Everything that can possibly tend to give it the most finished representation of infamy and sin is marked in it. And after the enumeration of adultery, with the art and baseness to conceal it; even leading to drunkenness, and to murder; not barely of one, but of many; we discover (and what is in the representation as awful a view as any) the most consummate boldness in sin, rioting in the fruits of it, in the marriage with the accomplice of his former shame, and a total insensibility and hardness of conscience, as if he had committed no evil at all.

And what may we suppose to be the intention of the HOLY GHOST in thus unfolding to the church's view the shame of David? Is it not, Reader, to teach every child of GOD those most useful, however humbling, lessons; that the best of men are but men, and as liable to fall into the worst of sins as the unrenewed and

unawakened. Corrupt nature; in the mass of flesh and blood, is the same in all. That the LORD's people are regenerated only in their better part, their spiritual faculties. The body still continues earthly, sensual, and tending to earth and sensuality. If therefore the affections of the body in the people of GOD do not break out, and show themselves as vilely as in the unregenerate; this is not from any greater purity in their earthly parts than others, but from the restraining grace of GOD. This is one precious design which we may venture to believe GOD the HOLY GHOST had in view, in causing this fall of David to be so particularly and fully recorded.

And there is another we may as confidently suppose intended by it, and that is, to teach the infinite importance of being always kept by sovereign grace. David himself was so conscious of it that he cries out in a fervor of the greatest earnestness, *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me.* Depend upon it, my Brother, the withdrawal of GOD's Spirit from a child of GOD, though but for a short space, is the saddest evil in our pilgrimage state. GOD hath other ways in the stores of his omnipotency, of punishing the sins of his children, than casting them into hell. It is only, as no doubt it was in this instance of David, (in his first giving way to the lust of his corrupt nature, in looking wantonly on Bath-sheba) it is only for the LORD to suspend the operations of his HOLY SPIRIT, and the enemy, who waits for our halting, joining with our own hearts, and the world around, soon makes us to fall. And, if the LORD be withdrawn, the heart, like a cage of unclean birds, is open to the admission of every evil. And who knows what a succession of sins, like those of David, treading one upon the heels of another, may follow during the LORD's suspension of the operations of his grace? How doth the heart, as in his instance, become more and more hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Oh! let us, like him, daily, hourly, minutely, if possible, pray, LORD! *take not thine HOLY SPIRIT from us!*

And, is there not a *third* sweet lesson, believers in CHRIST have, to draw from this view of David? Yes! blessed SPIRIT! I venture to assure myself that in thine own most lovely and gracious office, in glorifying the LORD JESUS, thou didst, above every other consideration, design to teach the church, in the fall of David, the

infinitely precious doctrine of redemption by CHRIST JESUS; and that there is *salvation in no other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* Oh! dearest LORD, let this view of David serve to impress on my soul this grand truth, in yet stronger and stronger characters. Give me to see, to feel, to be convinced, that if a man after GOD's own heart, (of whom it is said by the word of truth itself, that *save only in this matter of Uriah he turned not aside from anything that the LORD commanded him all the days of his life.* See 1 Kings 15:5), if such a man needed redemption, oh! how infinitely endeared to every poor sinner's view ought to be the person, offices, relations, and characters of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Yes! thou dear Redeemer! with my latest breath, and earliest song, would I chant those sweet words, as the sum and substance of all my trust; *We have redemption through thy blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of thy grace.*

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This chapter is a continuation of the same subject as the former; and relates the method the LORD was pleased to adopt for the recovery of David after his fall. Nathan the prophet is sent from the LORD to David; opens his commission with a parable. David's behaviour upon this occasion. The LORD's mercy; and his judgment in the death of the child which Bath-sheba bore to David. A relation in the close of the chapter of the war, and the event of it.

REFLECTIONS

LORD! give me grace in the perusal of this chapter to gather all the precious instructions thine HOLY SPIRIT mercifully intended, in the publishing such a record for thy church and people. Do thou, HOLY SPIRIT, graciously accompany thy written word with the influences of thy divine power, that it may be profitable to my soul, *for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*

And here, first, cause me to learn, from this view of thy servant David, what my nature is, even in its highest attainments. The best of men, if left to themselves, may fall into the worst of sins. So I behold it here, and let the view of it humble my soul to the dust before thee.

In the next place; LORD, teach me also, from what I here discover, that a child of GOD when fallen cannot arise of himself. The first advance towards a recovery must come from thee. The conviction of this most certain truth is enough to make a soul go humbly all his days.

And, blessed GOD, when thou hast wrought these truths in their own living characters in my heart, oh! lead us to see that from the nature of thy blessed covenant, in the blood and righteousness of thy dear Son, thou wilt not leave thy fallen children in their low state, but wilt recover them for thy name's sake, and for thy righteousness sake thou wilt heal them. Thou wilt send some Nathan, some heavenly messenger; nay, blessed JESUS, thou wilt come thyself, and by the sweet influences of thy HOLY SPIRIT, in convincing of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, thou wilt heal their backslidings, and love them freely. And though by afflictions thou mayest bring them down, yet for thine own sake thou wilt not cast them off. Unworthy, LORD, as we are in ourselves, yet in JESUS thou beholdest us with complacency. Though thou visit our offences with a rod, and our iniquities with stripes, yet thy loving-kindness wilt thou not take from him, nor suffer thy faithfulness to fail.

Here then, LORD, let my soul rest. And when I have gathered all these sweet and precious instructions from the relation the HOLY GHOST hath been pleased to give of David's fall and recovery, in the instances before me; when I have beheld every thing connected with it in a way of improvement, as it refers to his case, and as it concerns my own; let the whole have this blessed effect on my poor, fallen, corrupt, and sinful nature; to endear yet more and more the LORD JESUS to my heart, and to form him there, the one only sure and certain hope of glory. Yes! thou dear IMMANUEL! thou art the LORD our righteousness! for other righteousness the whole race of fallen Adam can have none. *In* thee do I trust; *on* thee do I lean; *to* thee do I come, and *with* thee pray everlastingly to be found. Be thou made

of GOD to me, *wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that (according as it is written) he that glorieth let him glory in the LORD.*

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

In this Chapter is related the beginning of David's domestic troubles. Amnon his son ravisheth his own sister Tamar; and Absalom, another of his sons, murders his brother Amnon. David's extreme sorrow in consequence.

REFLECTIONS

Think, Reader, in the perusal of the history of Amnon's gratified lust, how wretched the man that is given up for a prey to his own corrupt passions! Think also, in the sudden departure of his soul into eternity, in the moment of sin and drunkenness, what an awful termination to a life of iniquity; and how horrible his state, closing his eyes in sin, and opening them again in everlasting misery.

Behold, Reader! in the history here presented to thy view of David's family affliction, how sure the words of the LORD are in their accomplishment. The LORD had told him, that he would raise evil out of his own house, and here we see it. It hath been but a short time since David rioted in adultery and murder; and already we find he had gathered the bitter fruits of the sinful tree he planted. Incest and murder already stain his walls, and these, as the sequel of his history shows, were but the beginning of sorrows.

Precious JESUS! what a relief doth the remembrance of thee, and of thy sweet compassion to our nature, afford in the recollection of the sorrows of it! What but the tidings of great joy, which thy rich, and free, and full deliverance from all the sorrows of our nature brought from heaven, could tend to bind up the broken heart under its manifold afflictions! But when my soul turns to the contemplation of my JESUS, and the everlasting remedy he is in himself, and his complete salvation, here in him alone I find a relief

for every sorrow, a balm for every care. Yes, thou sweet Redeemer! my eyes dry up their tears when I consider that every sin, sorrow, and affliction, hath lost its force, and almost its very name in thy gracious sanctification of it by thy blessed, glorious, gracious, and complete redemption. Oh! heavenly LORD! kindly go on to overrule the powers of Satan, and defeat his triumphs over our poor fallen nature, in leading us to sin, by counteracting his malice, and bringing our hearts nearer to thee. Correct, LORD, the angry passions of our nature; let our lusts of uncleanness be subdued; and when at any time the enemy cometh in like a flood, do thou, blessed GOD, lift up a standard against him. Let me behold with the eye of faith JESUS hastening to my relief, and in the innumerable sorrows that I have in my heart, let the precious promises of thy glorious gospel be the comforts to refresh my soul. Make them as good news from a far country; as rivers of water in a dry place; or as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

The afflictions of David are not over, and therefore in this chapter we are presented with the preliminary step leading to a new scourge. By the ministry of Joab methods are adopted for a reconciliation between David and his son Absalom. The king permits him to come back, and after some little difficulty a good understanding is established between them.

REFLECTIONS

Blessed JESUS! Let me find grace from thee, dearest LORD, in the perusal of this chapter, to consider how very like to Absalom my heart is, when by sin and shame I have been running away from thee. But how superior, dearest LORD, art thou to the tenderness of the tenderest parents, in calling home thy banished ones to thy presence; for thou seekest them out, and instead of allowing them to return, thou bringest them home, and bringest them in, and takest

them to the bosom of thy love and mercy. Oh! dearest LORD! how often hath sin and Satan made me their captive; and how often hast thou recovered me from their snares. Keep me, blessed JESUS, near thyself, and suffer me to wander no more. Let JESUS *kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine.*

In the mistaken tenderness of David to his unworthy son, LORD, lead me to see, and as strongly to feel, the evil tendency of nature's affection, when those affections are striving against GOD. Oh! bring down every proud thought and disobedient lust, which would tend to dishonor my GOD. Let me have strength from thee to pluck out an eye, to cut off a right hand, and do all holy violence to the improper demands of nature, when my GOD and Saviour makes it the mark of my duty towards him. I would be found, dearest LORD, wholly thine; and like *Levi*, not acknowledge my brethren, nor know my own children, which have not observed thy word, nor kept thy covenant. I would bend the knee, and bow myself with my face to the ground, in token that thou art my rightful Sovereign, and that I am thy servant; thou hast loosed my bonds. *Therefore shall every good man sing of thy praise without ceasing, O my GOD, I will give thanks unto thee forever.*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

This chapter opens with the subject of what may be considered as the foundation forming for Absalom's unnatural rebellion against his father. We are here informed of his courting popularity,—his open avowal of his seeking the crown—the party he formed—and his several operations in prosecution of his design. We read also, in this chapter; David's distress upon the occasion, and the sad state to which this rebellion of his son reduced him.

REFLECTIONS

Pause, Reader! over the perusal of this Chapter, and in the contemplation both of the father and of the son, David and Absalom,

learn to observe what nature is, and how much grace is needed to correct and reform poor fallen man. Behold in Absalom the awful consequence of indulging the corrupt and pampered passions of children. Had David, as a king in Israel, followed up the divine law, in punishing him for murder, painful as it might have been to nature, yet perhaps the LORD would then have sent his servant the Prophet to interpose; and Absalom being convicted and convinced of the atrocious sin of murdering his brother, would have called forth mercy in his exemplary sorrow and repentance. At least this effect would have been produced by it, that he could not so shortly after have been found in open rebellion against his father. But, when David in the feeling of the father lost sight of his duty as a king, and took again to his bosom the murderer of a son, can it be wondered at, that the serpent so fostered should sting him, or that the wretch forgiven the blood-shedding of a brother, should so ripen in iniquity, as to aim the dagger at the father! Oh! what hath sin wrought in our fallen nature! What is not the heart of man capable of devising in evil, void of divine grace!

Reader! let us remark in David also, how sure GOD's judgments are, and how certain it is that our sin will find us out. How much more amiable David appears in ascending the hill of Olivet, weeping as he went, than when triumphing in his conquests over Bath-sheba and Uriah! How very gracious the LORD is in condescending to correct his people, in order to bring their hearts home to him, when without those corrections they would wander from him forever.

Precious JESUS! how dear are thy recoveries! Oh! how very sweet, to thy people, are thy many, many redemptions. Yes! dearest LORD, thou hast not only redeemed us to GOD by thy blood; but the everlasting efficacy of thy precious blood-shedding and righteousness, again and again pleads for us, when by our frequent departures, thy corrections for our recovery are rendered necessary, Oh! LORD! grant that such may be the views, both of him that writes and him that reads, (if it be thy blessed will), of all thy tender corrections for our trespasses, that though thou mayest bring us down by affliction, our faith may yet be assured thou wilt not cast us off: though we are, chastened, yet not destroyed. Though in us there is nothing of worth, yet with JESUS there is perpetual merit. He ever

liveth to make intercession; and his blood cleansed from all sin. Now, LORD, would I sing that song, even before I quit this mortal life; and ere long I shall chaunt it loud amidst the heavenly host: *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood.*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

The history of Absalom's rebellion, and David's distress, is continued through this chapter. Ziba, by a false report against Mephibosheth to David, obtains his master's inheritance. Shimei cometh forth and curseth David. Ahithophel counselleth Absalom.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! learn from this view of David's sweet frame of mind under very heavy afflictions, the preciousness of faith, and the blessed effects of it. No doubt, in David's estimate of life, those seasons were most highly valued by him, when upon a review of them, after the trying hours were over, he could look back and see how graciously the LORD had led him *through* them, supported him *under* them, and brought him *out* of them. And, Reader, do you mark it down in your experience, for I desire never to lose sight of it in mine, that, painful as afflictions are, a true believer in JESUS is ultimately a gainer by every conflict and trial he is called upon to go through. That promise must be sure, *All things, how discouraging soever they may now seem, work together for good to them that love GOD, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* And, if our faith be enabled to give due credit to GOD, depend upon it, GOD will give due reward to faith. And to live upon GOD's perfections, his promises, his covenant engagements in JESUS, when all the avenues, as they appear to us, are shut up, by which those engagements can be fulfilled; this is precious faith indeed! Dearest JESUS! grant me grace so to live! May my confidence in thee, my interest in thee, my resourses from thee, and my life upon thee, be

always such, that whether, like David, the streams of outward comforts run low, as in this flight of his from his city; or whether the communications of thy grace remit their accustomed flowing; yet, knowing that thou art the same, and the sovereign efficacy of thy salvation admitting no abatement, my assurance in thee may be the same also. And let my song be like the prophet's, that *though the fig-tree shall not blossom: neither fruit be in the vine; the labour of the olive fail, and the fields yield no meat; the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stall; yet will I rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the GOD of my salvation.*

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

The history of Absalom's rebellion, and David's difficulties in consequence thereof, is prosecuted through this chapter. Ahithophel's counsel being rejected by Absalom, and Hushai's accepted, Ahithophel hangeth himself. David receiveth secret intelligence how to act.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let not this chapter pass away from our review, until that we have first gathered from it those gracious instructions, the HOLY GHOST so kindly gives us in it. Do you not behold, in the restraints of Ahithophel's advice, a resemblance of that restraining power of our gracious GOD, over the enemies of our salvation? Would not the Absaloms of the present day, like mad horses, come upon us while we are weary and weak-handed, and tread down and trample us under their feet? And how is it that our enemies are prevented from destroying us? LORD, it is the bridle of thy providence, which thou hast put into their jaws; and thy fear, by which thou overrulest the designs of their hearts. Yes! dearest JESUS! it is thou which, by keeping the reins of government in thine hands, controullest their power; and thou speakest to them as to the proud waves; *Hitherto shall ye come, and no further!* Methinks I hear thee saying now to

my soul, as to the church of *Smyrna* of old; *Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer*: though the devil will cast some of you into prison, it is only that you may be tried; and though you have tribulation for ten days, yet fear not. No! blessed LORD! be thou my Counsellor, my strength, my confidence, and I shall never fear. I know that the devil would, but for thee, cast us (not into prison, but) into hell. And I know that in his prison he would keep thy people until they rotted, and died there. But he dare not: *ten days* only, is his limitation! Oh! keep me faithful unto death, and I shall have from thee, *the crown of life which fadeth not away*.

Reader! let David's troubles, sweetened and sanctified as they were at the river Jordan, and the hill Mizar, bring with them to our view, this gracious conviction; sanctified sorrows are precious things. A real sanctified sorrow, in the present wilderness, can never come too often. JESUS parcels them out to his people from his own unerring wisdom and love; and the cover of every one of them is marked in his own blessed hand: *as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten*. Depend upon it, in David's view, when he came to sum up his mercies, those he counted most precious, which had brought with them most of GOD. And in our estimate of real blessings, whether trouble or joy, our calculation will be the same, if so be we know the LORD, as he did. Lead me then, dearest LORD JESUS! lead me as it seemeth best to thy infinite wisdom and love, through all the various paths of the present wilderness state, whether marked from the land of Jordan, or the Hermonites, the hill Mizar. Let the way be ever so intricate, ever so rough or thorny; yet if thou art with me, I know it will be *a right way to a city of thy habitation*. And oh! LORD GOD, fill my soul, my heart, all my faculties, all my powers, with the same love to thee as thou didst David's; for then my very tears, like his, which were his meat day and night, will be; to me, sweeter than the spiced wine of the pomegranate. Then shall the goings forth of my soul, bear a sweet correspondence to his devout aspirations, and my heart will be the echo to his, when he said: *As the hart panteth after the water brooks; so panteth my soul after thee, O GOD. My soul thirsteth for GOD; yea, for the living GOD: when shall I come and appear before GOD!*

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This Chapter concludes the history of Absalom's rebellion, and an awful conclusion, to the rebel it proved. David sendeth forth his armies; gives a charge to his officers to deal favourably with Absalom. Absalom is slain. Victory determines in favour of David; but the king mourneth for his son.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! are you a parent, a father or a mother! And are you yourself a partaker of grace, while those of your household are graceless! If so, you will best be able to enter into a proper apprehension of David's feelings for his son. Oh! the unknown, the inexpressible agonies of the mind, in seeing those whom the LORD hath made near, and dear to us in the bonds of nature, totally void of union in the bonds of grace! Oh! did those pious parents, whom the LORD calls to the painful exercises of nature, in the breaches made by death, in their infant years, did they but recollect the accumulated aggravations of sorrow, which attend the deaths of graceless children, ripened in years, and ripened in iniquity; how would they learn to bless GOD, in those instances of preventing wisdom and mercy! Surely, Sirs! it is far, far better, and a far higher privilege also, to follow infants to their tomb, than have them remain longer with us, to be trained for everlasting misery! What a wound the very thought gives, as it enters the imagination!

But, Reader! what an aggravation to misery is it, when, as in the case of David, the LORD's hand is to be traced in the evils which grow up out of our house, from the children of our own bowels. When David looked round the walls of his dwelling, and beheld the vacancies there made by death, and marked them as divine chastisements, well might he exclaim, O Absalom! my son! my son!

And is there no relief for such a state? *Is there no balm in Gilead: no physician there?* Yes, blessed be GOD, there is both. Oh! precious, precious JESUS! where, but for thee, should balm be found: or what physician, but thyself, could heal such complicated diseases.

Teach me then, dearest JESUS; teach him that reads; teach every poor distressed, exercised soul that believes, to do as David did, after all this series of troubles. Teach our souls to look to thee. And when our *Absaloms*, our *Amnons*, and all our sorrows are multiplied, to look to JESUS, and say as David did; *Although my house be not so with GOD; yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. And this is all my salvation, and all my desire, though he make it not to grow.*

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

The mourning of David for Absalom, is checked by Joab. David it invited back to his capital. This event is accomplished. A circumstance concerning Shimei, is related. These are the principal matters of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! Was it not a gracious act in the LORD, to cause Joab's faithfulness to be successful in rousing David from the unbecoming grief he had fallen into, by the death of Absalom? And shall not you and I consider that graciousness of our dear LORD to us, when by his faithful ministering servants in the gospel of his dear Son, we are roused to a sense of those things which make for our everlasting peace, before they are for ever hid from our eyes? Methinks I would have all ministers faithful, like Joab in this instance. A warmth and zeal for JESUS, ought to mark all GOD's servants. Soft, easy, cold, and lifeless discourses, do not suit those who stand forth to show men their sins, and to inform them of their danger. That was a solemn charge of Paul to Timothy, and needful to be given to all that, like Timothy, labour in the word and doctrine: *I charge thee therefore, (says Paul) before GOD, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom, preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering, and doctrine.*

The behaviour of aged Barzillai suggests a very profitable instruction to aged believers. Though he declined going over Jordan to the court of David, yet he had his views directed to go over the Jordan of death, to the court of David's LORD. And so, my aged friend, should be your views. Oh! Sirs! if JESUS be indeed lovely, truly lovely, and desirable in your esteem, will you not desire to be with him? Can the voice of singing men, or singing women, now any longer delight? Can the mere taste of earthly things be important in your regard? What! have you lived thirty, forty, nay, perhaps, threescore years in a sinful, miserable world, and yet not weaned from it. And will you say your affairs, your children, your families tie you to life. *Barzillai* had his *Chimham*. But this son, and perhaps it might be his only one, he gave up to the king. And if *you* have truly given up your own soul to JESUS, surely you can trust your children's with him also. See then, my aged Brother! that JESUS is truly precious; for if so, death will have no terrors. Your dying day, will be your Jubilee day; and like Paul, you will *long to be dissolved, and to be with CHRIST, which is far better*; knowing that, when *absent from the body*, you will *be present with the LORD*; and you will labour, as he did, that whether *present, or absent, you may be accepted of him*.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

A new scene of distress to David this Chapter opens with, in the rebellion of Sheba. Amasa is slain. Joab pursueth Sheba. A woman, by her wisdom, saveth the city. An account of David's officers. These are the heads of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! though the perusal of this chapter before us opens a renewed occasion for reflecting on the troubles of David; yet, I pass by the consideration of these things, for the present, in order to direct your attention, and my own, to the contemplation of our

adorable JESUS, in that sweet and most invaluable part of his character of Mediator, which the view of the wise woman in Abel of *Beth maachan* naturally suggests. If it be pleasant to see this mother in Israel, saving a city by her interposition; think, Reader, how very delightful ought it to be, to behold JESUS saving a world, by the exercise of this glorious office. He came in the name of JEHOVAH, proposing terms of peace. And such terms as astonished angels. Not that one of our rebellious Chieftans, like Sheba, should be given up: Not that a thousand, or ten thousand should die to ransom the rest; though that had been an unspeakable mercy. But that He, the gracious, the merciful, the mighty Ambassador would mediate peace, and reconciliation, by the gift and sacrifice of himself. Well might the prophet exclaim, *Wonder O heavens, and be astonished, O earth!*

But, oh! thou precious JESUS! while I fall before thy footstool, overpowered with wonder and astonishment in the prospect of this mercy, I behold, with increasing love and surprise, the manner of thy gracious performance of the work.

Yes! dearest LORD! as my soul gazes on thy sacred Person as the Mediator, fully qualified, and fully prepared, as GOD and Man in one Person, to the office; I look also, until my whole-soul is lost, and overwhelmed in the view, with what infinite wisdom, tenderness, love, and pity, thou earnest to propose the terms, lay the foundation, and complete the whole work, for delivering thy people from *the wrath to come*. Be thou eternally praised; eternally loved; eternally adored, for this thy gracious interposition! My soul, on knees of holy transport, thankfulness, and joy, accepts thee, LORD, with all thy works of grace, desiring in time, and to all eternity, to bless and praise GOD for his unspeakable gift!

Reader! think, if it be possible, how it must grieve his HOLY SPIRIT, when sinners neglect, and despise this great salvation! Think! how unalterable must be their state, whom, in consequence thereof, he leaves to wander and perish!

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

More troubles of David are related in this Chapter. Here are mentioned three years famine in Israel. To implore GOD's mercy, a sacrifice is made, at the request of the Gibeonites, of seven of Saul's sons. A daughter of the house of Saul, named Rizpah, showeth kindness to the dead. After this, David burieth the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan.

REFLECTIONS

See, Reader! in the solemn events of this chapter, in the giving up the sons of Saul to death, how awfully true that denunciation of the LORD is, of *visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him*. Oh! ye that are parents! let this sad example before your eyes, prompt you to seek grace from GOD, to be kept back from sin; lest the LORD smite the fathers with the children, and both are involved in the evil of their ways.

Precious JESUS! it is impossible to turn to any part in the Bible, or to any subject, or person, or thing contained in it, without finding somewhat that, either by immediate allusion, or in direct reference, points to thee. Everywhere, methinks, I discover thee. And in everything indeed, would I desire to have my soul exercised in the contemplation of thee. For, dearest LORD! that subject loseth all its beauty, all its loveliness, however pleasing in itself, that terminates not in thee. And though the bloody house of Saul is as remote, (and infinitely more remote), as hell from heaven, compared to thee; yet, when I see the ordinary law of our GOD broken, that in their hanging up, they might be suspended betwixt earth and heaven, until that GOD was entreated for the land: how is it possible, not to have my mind instantly led to thee, thou sinners' Surety, and sinners' Friend, who literally, and truly, wast made both sin and a curse for thy people, when thou knewest no sin, on purpose that they might be made the righteousness of GOD, in thee. There on thy cross, blessed JESUS, would I forever fix my eye, unless, indeed, now and then to

follow thee, in the contemplation of thy conquests over it, in thy triumphal entrance into heaven. On JESUS would I forever gaze. In every ordinance, in every providence, in every prayer, in every song of praise; there, there would my ravished soul look, and say; there hangs my hope, my joy, my everlasting security! And on thee, and thy dear Person, do I hang all the glory of my Father's house, and all the glory of my own salvation. Oh! the precious, precious, Person of my adored Redeemer! So sweet, so suitable, so gracious, art thou to my soul, as a poor convinced sinner, that, like Paul, my determination is fixed; henceforth, *I will know nothing among men, but JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified.* And, blessed be my GOD, I hope and trust I can, with the same assurance of faith, say as he did, *for I know him to be the power of GOD, and the wisdom of GOD for salvation to me, and to everyone that believeth.*

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

The prosecution of David's history is interrupted through the whole of this Chapter, in order to introduce his Song, or Psalm of praise. It is not said when David wrote it; but it is said when he spake it, for the title of it expresses that it was when the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and particularly out of the hand of Saul. It contains therefore, from beginning to end, manifold praises for manifold deliverances.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let us not dismiss this chapter with all its precious contents from our minds, until that we have duly pondered the blessed things it contains; and as duly examined our own personal interest in them. Can you and I say with the same lively sentiments of praise and love, and gratitude, as David did, The LORD is my rock, my shield, my tower, my refuge, my Saviour. Oh! precious thought, when the soul hath a well grounded assurance of a covenant interest in JESUS.

But Reader! while we seek earnestly for these things, let us learn also from it, how all such as are called to an interest in JESUS, are called also to a fellowship and conformity in the trials of JESUS, and the persecution of enemies. Communion with our Great Head must necessarily subject every member of his mystical body to a participation in suffering. Waves of death, and floods of ungodly men, will compass us about. We wrestle with flesh, and blood, with evil angels, with ungodly men, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with the Sauls, and, the Absaloms, and the Shimei's every where around. Oh! for grace to see, and faith to believe, that in GOD'S strength alone our victory must be wrought. JESUS will light our candle; JESUS himself will be our shield, our sun, our hiding place, our refuge.

But principally, in the review of this chapter, LORD give both Writer and Reader to contemplate JESUS, the Almighty David of his people, as conquering sin, death, hell, and the grave; and beating down all the foes of our salvation, which opposed the deliverance of his people. Yes! Almighty Conqueror! thou art all that is here; rehearsed, and infinitely more, to thy people! In thy complete and finished work, when thou camest forth for the salvation of thy chosen, thou didst triumph over all opposition; thou hast spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, nailing them to thy cross. Blessed GOD! enable me to follow thee to victory, and continually to go forth in thy strength, and in thy name, making mention of thy righteousness, even thine only, saying I shall be more than conqueror through thee who has loved me.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

This chapter contains some of the last words of David, and as such cannot but be very interesting. To these words of David is added a list of David's worthies, his mighty men.

REFLECTIONS

How sweet are the last words of dying saints. And how doubly so when they are sanctified to lead to JESUS. Reader! amidst all the trying dispensations in the life of the patriarch David; yet observe what confidence in covenant engagements can do, to give a soul comfort and holy joy. David's troubles were so many, so grievous, and so complicated, that it is quite proverbial when we speak of the man, to speak also of his sorrows; LORD *remember David and all his troubles*. But oh! how enviable the trouble that is sanctified! How coveted the situation which JESUS blesses. He saw the day of CHRIST, like another Abraham, afar off; as a morning without a cloud. He comforted himself in the assurance of the covenant, which was ordered in all things and sure. And he could, and did, take all the consolation of it as the whole of his salvation, and the whole of his desire, whatever outer circumstances in his life arose to exercise his mind.

Blessed JESUS! give my soul, like David, to see thee to be the whole of the covenant; and in thee, and thy finished redemption-work, fix the whole of my desire. Let a throne of grace witness for me, that I would seek life with all its dependencies; life temporal, and life eternal; wholly as David did upon the ground of the Covenant, the everlasting Covenant, through thy blood and righteousness. In all the actions of my life, and with my dying breath, I would say as David; *It is all my Salvation and all my desire*. And oh! thou dear Redeemer! As all my hopes, my expectations, are from thee in thy covenant righteousness, without an atom of any thing of mine to add to it; LORD give me grace to live as I hope to die, in making these my constant study and delight, my songs of rejoicing in the house of my pilgrimage. To JESUS would I daily, hourly come; in him be found. To him would I cleave. With him would I walk; venturing upon CHRIST, resting in him, and hanging upon him. And as it is said, they shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house, so would I the whole of my salvation. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; *to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen*.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

We have, in this chapter, a part of David's history, the date of which is not certain. He is here in a state of trespassing against the LORD, by numbering the people. The prophet Gad is sent to reprove him, and to propose to his choice one of three plagues with which the LORD would chastise him. We have also the relation of the chastisement, and David's repentance.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! with this chapter we close this sacred book of GOD, which brings us in point of historical relation, very nearly, though not completely so, to the end of David's life. Let us not close it, however, until that we have first blessed the LORD for so truly valuable a part of the Old Testament records: and more especially, for that part of David's history contained in it, which bears evident allusion to the Great Redeemer of mankind, of whom, in many instances, David was a lively type. It is a precious thing, and most highly to be valued by the true believer in JESUS, when we are led to see the tenderness and love of GOD our FATHER to the church, in thus holding forth, under such a variety of similitudes, and representations, to the early ages, the prominent features of a redemption, which was, in the fulness of time to be wrought out, and completed by his dear Son. And it is as thankfully to be remembered by the believer, in honour and glory to the HOLY GHOST, that in his blessed office of glorifying the LORD JESUS, he hath so sweetly caused to be recorded, for the exercise of the faith of Old Testament saints, as well as the establishment of New Testament believers, the very many outlines of His person and offices, whose one glorious work of salvation, hath perfected forever, them that are sanctified!

Hail! Holy! Holy! Holy! Undivided THREE IN ONE; FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST! Blessed be the LORD GOD, JEHOVAH, for all his covenant love, and mercy, in JESUS! and for all the precious records this book contains, of the glorious events of redemption by him. And, oh! thou dearest JESUS, thou blessed Reconciler of a gracious

GOD with poor fallen man! Thou art the Author, the means, the end, the sum, the substance of all true peace in the church, above and below. Give me to see thee, blessed JESUS, as David did, as the gracious Interposer, to stay the destroying angel's hand over Jerusalem. And may my soul go up to the threshingfloor of the poor Jebusite, to offer the sacrifice of thine own blood and righteousness; and these, on thine own sacred Person, the Altar which sanctifieth the gift; that I may find peace with GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. And blessed, forever blessed be the GOD of peace, which brought again from the dead, our LORD JESUS CHRIST, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, that he hath been entreated for our guilty land, and the plague of sin, death, hell, and the grave, is forever stayed from his Israel. All our peace is made in the blood of the cross; and henceforth, there is now *no condemnation to them which are in CHRIST JESUS, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. Amen, and Amen.

1st KINGS

COMMONLY CALLED
THE THIRD BOOK OF THE KINGS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

We cannot with greater certainty than mere opinion, determine to whose instrumentality we are indebted for this and the following book of the Kings. It hath been generally supposed that some of the Scribes in the respective ages of the Church, compiled those histories. But there is no certainty on the point. But though we are left to mere conjecture concerning the writer, there can be none concerning the authenticity, or divine authority, of those sacred Books of GOD. For beside the historical part, many sweet passages are here and there treasured in them, which stamp their truth, and display the seal of the SPIRIT upon them.

This book of the Kings, and the second also, which is but a continuation of the same, contain the history of the Jewish Church and nation from the end of David's reign to the destruction of Solomon's temple, comprising a period of somewhat more than four hundred and thirty years, beginning at about 1016 years before the coming of CHRIST, and ending with the commencement of the Babylonish captivity. Solomon's reign comprised a period of about forty years. After the division of the kingdom in the succeeding reign of Rehoboam, the kingdom of Israel, which forms one branch, was continued under the successive government of nineteen kings; and the kingdom of Judah, the other branch, under the government of the same number of kings. But what becomes more immediately interesting in the annals of those different monarchs, is the marked attention which is all along paid by the sacred historian, in the preservation of the genealogy of CHRIST. The prophets Elijah and

Elisha, in their respective ministry, form a very interesting part in both these books of the kings.

I only beg the Reader here, in the opening of this book of the Kings, to be continually on the look out for what the HOLY GHOST is teaching the church in it concerning JESUS, and his gospel. The more hidden and obscure these precious subjects are, the more earnestly should our diligence be called forth in the investigation. It will be an ample reward to labour, if, through divine teaching, we are enabled to discover what the church in those distant periods, was taught concerning the person, and mission of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Depend upon it, Reader, in no age of the church hath the LORD left himself without witness, that the Scriptures testify of him. Vouchsafe, blessed SPIRIT, in this thy gracious office-work of glorifying to take of the things which are here of JESUS, and show both to Writer and Reader. The blessing we implore from thee, O LORD, on the present occasion, is, that *a spirit of wisdom and revelation may be given us in the knowledge of him;* that our souls, by faith, may have a clear apprehension of *the things which are freely given to us of GOD.*

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

David, in his old age, unable to keep warmth, hath an handmaid provided to cherish him. Adonijah, his son, taking advantage of David's imbecility, usurpeth the kingdom. Solomon, by David's direction, is anointed king. Adonijah fleeth for refuge to the altar. These are the principal things contained in this Chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! do not overlook, in the melancholy view which is given us in this chapter of poor David's cold and perishing body, what dying worms the greatest of men are; and how sure and certain it is, that death passeth upon all men, because all have sinned! Precious JESUS! what a relief is it to the souls of thy people, that

amidst all the dying circumstances of themselves and the world around, thou livest for ever. Oh! the unknown, inexpressible glory, contained in these words, JESUS CHRIST; *the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever*. And, *because I live ye shall live also*.

How sweet is it to behold dying saints, like David, anxious to provide gracious successors. Particularly dying ministers and servants of our JESUS. Of all the thoughts which lie near the heart of a faithful pastor in JESUS, this must be one of the most anxious, Whom will my God appoint over this household? Whom will the Lord send to go in and out before his people! David's anxiety for thrusting out Adonijah, and establishing Solomon in the kingdom, could not be half so interesting as to a dying, faithful minister, is the concern that the Lord would cast out all the Adonijah's who serve not him, but their own bellies, and send the people pastors after his own heart, which should feed his people in understanding and knowledge. But Reader! amidst the anxious concern of faithful stewards in the household of JESUS, let us comfort ourselves with this pleasing assurance, JESUS hath still the keys, and is still in the midst of the throne to govern. As the church of JESUS, let all his people hope and trust in him. When David dies Solomon shall reign. If he puts out one light he can easily cause another to shine. He hath the stars in his right hand.

But Reader! let us not close the chapter before that we have taken another view of the coronation of Solomon. Surely, as we behold our eyes may well be directed to the contemplation of a more glorious person: for a *greater than Solomon is here*. Yes, dearest JESUS! if Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, anointed Solomon king; and if the shouts of the multitude, on this occasion, were so great that the very earth rent with the noise; surely heaven and all its powers must take a part in that unequalled joy, when every poor sinner, such as I am, is by thy almighty grace enabled to crown thee LORD of all. Thou hast on thy head many crowns. The crown of the GODHEAD, being one with the FATHER. The crown of thy GOD-man, thy mediatorial glory. The crown of redemption which thou hast won, and now wearest. The crown of victory over sin, death, hell, and the grave. And yet, oh! thou dearest JESUS, is not the crown which the sinner puts upon thy sacred head, when thou

hast not only wrought out salvation *for* him by conquering all his foes; but wrought out salvation *in* him by conquering his own wayward will, which opposed thy government over him; is not this crown precious in thy sight! Oh! LORD JESUS, be thou my sovereign GOD and king! Gladly do I bow the knee before thee; gladly doth my heart, my soul, and all within me confess, that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the FATHER.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

David's whole history we are brought to the conclusion of in this chapter. Here is his farewell charge to Solomon, and his death. Solomon's succession is soon followed with the deaths of Adonijah, Joab, and Shimei.

REFLECTIONS

READER! after gathering all the instructions from this chapter which the HOLY GHOST graciously intended from it, for the comfort and edification of his church and people, let us direct our views to the contemplation of David; and, having here seen his end in his death and burial, first consider the character of this man as he is in himself; and, secondly, in the light in which he eminently stands in the church, a type and figure of the ever blessed JESUS.

When we consider David in his original obscurity of situation, as the son of Jesse! When we behold him brought forth and placed in a state so high and exalted! When we view him in all his private life, and public usefulness! When we see him in his most exalted seasons of piety! and when we behold him no less in his falling into sin—What a wonderful character, taken together, doth he appear! The most extraordinary perhaps that ever the LORD brought forward from among the sons of Adam. No doubt, eminently intended to be held forth as a monument in the church; that his most astonishing heights of devotion might comfort, encourage, and animate the people of GOD. And no less that the sad falling into sin, from which almighty

grace recovered him, might encourage poor penitent transgressors to hope in his mercy, in and through JESUS.

But, when we have duly pondered over the character of David, as he was in himself, I would beg the Reader to look at him yet more leisurely and attentively, as he stands in the church, a type and figure of our ever adored Redeemer. Here he comes forward in a more eminent manner, and challenges our more serious consideration.

Chosen of GOD from among the sheepecotes, and from the lowest obscurity, how doth he prefigure Him who was taken from among the humblest of men, and set up in the councils of peace from everlasting. And if David was the man after GOD'S own heart, who can overlook in him the type of JESUS, JEHOVAH's elect, in whom his soul delighteth; the man whose name is the BRANCH, and concerning whom a voice from heaven proclaimed him GOD'S well-beloved Son, in whom his soul was well pleased? Did David fight the battles of the LORD; did he conquer Goliath, and the armies of the uncircumcised Philistines? and did not JESUS obtain the victory over all the enemies of our salvation? Was David anointed king over GOD'S people contrary to the wishes of Saul, and all the expectation of Israel? and was not JESUS crowned king in Zion in direct defiance of Herod, and all the expectation of the people of the Jews, who declared that they would not have this man to reign over them? Did David make his way to the throne through a series of persecution, affliction, and distress? and who can forget the sorrows, persecutions, and oppositions, dearest JESUS, by which thou didst purchase the crown of redemption, before it was put upon thy sacred head? Was David surrounded with his worthies, the captains, and elders of Israel; and what a noble army of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, followed the LORD JESUS? Was David the sweet psalmist of Israel, and did he compose songs for the sanctuary? And what songs of salvation hath our JESUS taught his people, both in the temple service below, and in the realms of bliss above, when the redeemed of the LORD shall come to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away for ever! Hail! blessed JESUS! thou hast the key of David; thou art both the root and the offspring of David! David's son after the flesh, and David's LORD and GOD in the divinity of thy nature. Truly, LORD, many kings have

done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Oh! may the history of all thy servants lead my soul to thee. They shall lay on thee all the glory of thy Father's house; and on thee would I lay all the glory of my salvation!

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

This chapter opens with the relation of some of the first events which took place in the beginning of Solomon's reign. His marriage with Pharoah's daughter. GOD's appearance to him in a dream. His choice. And the chapter concludes with an account of his sound judgment, in deciding a matter of controversy between two harlots.

REFLECTIONS

Oh! how precious the testimony the HOLY GHOST hath given in this chapter to Solomon, that he loved the LORD! wilt thou, merciful GOD, shed forth a portion, and let it be as large a portion as my Soul can find capaciousness to admit, of the same heavenly principle in my poor heart also. Oh! dearest JESUS! give me grace to say, though, like Peter, a thousand actions seem to have denied it, LORD, *thou knowest all things! those knowest that I love thee.*

And wilt thou, HOLY SPIRIT, visit me in the visions of the night! shall mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I may be occupied in thy word! will the FATHER of mercies come! will the LORD JESUS come; agreeably to that promise, and make his abode in my soul? Doth GOD indeed speak to me? Doth he graciously say, *Ask what I shall give thee?* Precious JESUS! give me thyself; for, having thee, I shall possess all things. LORD, it is not thy salvation only I desire; but thee. Not thy gifts only, but thyself also: not thy grace only, but thy person too: not that I may have life only, but that thou mayest be my life, and my portion forever. Yes! dearest JESUS! my soul through thy blessed teaching me these sweet lessons, my soul cannot rest short of anything but thyself. Since thou wert first pleased to look upon me, and speak to me, and show me thyself, my heart is not my

own; thou hath drawn it up to heaven; and now, LORD, keep it forever, and give me thine. And since GOD my FATHER, and all his fulness is in thee; all joy in thee; all happiness in thee; I desire no happiness but thee. Witness for me, ye ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who are the heirs of salvation; JESUS is my all, and in all. Whom have *I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart fail, but thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!*

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us Solomon's splendour and greatness, An account of his princes; his twelve officers; the peace and extensiveness of his kingdom; and of his great wisdom.

REFLECTIONS

IN beholding the greatness and majesty of Solomon, as this chapter represents him; his riches, his courts, his retinue, his servants, and more especially his great wisdom; I desire to ascribe all due praise and glory to the LORD GOD of Solomon, in distinguishing his chosen with such marks of his love and favor; and to bless so bountiful a GOD in having given such power unto men. But from the court of Solomon, and all his grandeur, my soul desires rapidly to take wing, and flee by faith to the court of heaven, and behold JESUS in the midst of the throne, as possessing all power in heaven and in earth. What was Solomon in all his glory compared to him who maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind? Nay, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed in point of beauty like even the lilies of the field. But thy throne, blessed JESUS, as one with the FATHER, in the nature of the GODHEAD, was and is thine, from everlasting, and so must be to all eternity. And as the mediator, thou art in full right of the throne forever and ever. Methinks the thought of Solomon's court, prompts my soul to contemplate with the eye of faith the unfailing splendors of thine.

Yes! heavenly King! my soul beholds thee as king over all; GOD blessed for ever. I see thy princes like Solomon's. I view thine officers whom thou hast appointed over thine household, to give thy people meat in due season. I behold thee encircled with all the innumerable host of angels; the spirits of just men made perfect; the noble army of martyrs; the glorious company of apostles; the venerable host of patriarchs; the sacred band of prophets; the multitude which no man can number, who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the LAMB; the church above triumphant; the church below still militant; all Judah and Israel, and the nations that are saved by thy blood: all! all! are of thy court, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour unto it. To thee then, King of kings, and LORD of lords, do, come to hear thy wisdom, to see thy glory, to adore thy name, and to bow my knee before thee, as my Saviour, my king, and my GOD.

Oh! then blessed JESUS, do thou maintain thy kingdom in my heart. There reign, there rule, there govern; there give out of thy fulness and of thy wisdom. And while the services of every creature, the praises of every angel, and the love and affection of every redeemed soul, become thy just revenue; oh! LORD GOD, let the poor worm that is now looking up to thee partake of thy bounty, and be enabled to give to thee of thy praise; till from living under the grace of thy courts here upon earth, thou shalt call me home to live eternally under the more immediate view of thy glory, and the everlasting enjoyment of thy presence in thy courts above; where the city hath neither the need of the sun, nor of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of the FATHER doth lighten it, and thou dearest LAMB of GOD, art the light thereof. Amen! Amen!

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

We have in this chapter the congratulations of Hiram, king of Tyre, which he sent to Solomon on his accession to the throne,

Solomon's answer. Hiram furnisheth timber at Solomon's request to build the temple. An account of Solomon's workmen and laborers for the service.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us pause over what we have read in this chapter, and in the view here afforded us of such workmen as Hiram's servants, behold how striking a representation it bears to numbers in the present day, to whom abilities of nature and of art are given, but to whom perhaps is given no grace! how many possess the ordinary gifts of the SPIRIT, who know nothing of his gracious work upon the heart! how many minister in holy things, who are yet no partakers in the spirit of holy things! of all the awful scriptures to this amount we meet with in the word of GOD; none can exceed in terror that declaration of JESUS: Many will say unto me in that day, LORD! LORD! have we not prophesied (that is preached) in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils; (that is perhaps have been made instrumental to others in the delivery of the word of salvation, by which the strong man armed is cast out of the soul) and in thy name done many wonderful works. And what can be more wonderful than to behold sinners awakened and converted through the instrumentality of a preached gospel? And then, saith JESUS, will I profess unto them, "I never knew you:" that is, perhaps never knew them in a way of vital union, their own souls never having been savingly brought into fellowship and communion with the LORD JESUS. Oh! Reader, what an awful consideration, to have been made helpful to the salvation of others, while uninterested for our own. To be daily ministering in the temple without a real connection with the LORD of the temple!

Let us turn our thoughts from the contemplation of a state so dreadfully alarming, to the consideration of the reverse side of the subject, and in the happy, the inexpressibly happy state of the souls built upon the same foundation as the apostles and prophets are, which is the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the chief corner-stone; look up to our GOD and FATHER in CHRIST JESUS, with an humble hope that he is our portion. Yes! dearest JESUS! I would say for myself, and all thy people, thou art the foundation of all my hopes, all my desires, all

my wishes, and all my joys. GOD, my FATHER, of his infinite love laid this foundation. On thy glorious person, as the GOD-man, the whole structure rests; thy blood and righteousness is the grand cement which unites and keeps it eternally together; and in thee the whole building, thy church, which is thy body, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the LORD. Come, then, blessed JESUS! carry on, complete, adorn and finish, the work in my soul; let thy mercy be built up forever, and let the top stone of the spiritual building be brought forth with shoutings of grace, grace unto it.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

This chapter furnisheth a number of interesting particulars concerning the building of Solomon's temple. The time it took in building until it was finished. In the earlier part of this service the words of the LORD came unto Solomon with promises concerning it.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, Reader, over this chapter, and while beholding the vast design of Solomon's temple and the greatness of the work in the accomplishment of the building, behold that a greater than Solomon is here. Was it not, dearest JESUS, upon the foundation of infinite love that thou with the everlasting FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, didst lay the foundation of the temple, which is thy body, and reared and completed the whole work of our redemption? Not indeed in temples made with hands; not in the limitation of time in seven years, or seventy times seven; but from everlasting. Yes! LAMB of GOD, who wast intentionally slain from before the foundation of the world: thou hast built the temple of the LORD, and thou hast borne, and must for ever bear, all the glory. Everlasting praises to thy dear name for the unspeakable mercy.

While I behold the temple of Solomon, and figure to my view the piles of cedar and the wedges of pure gold! oh! lead my soul beyond these outward adornings, and these outward things, to the

contemplation of all that inward glory which thou hast, by thy one glorious undertaking in redemption, wrought out and accomplished for all thy people. Thy person, thine offices, thy righteousness, thy gifts, thy graces; all precious JESUS which are thine, and of thee, and in thee; these are the true temple both of Jew and Gentile, both of bond and free; both of the church militant and the church triumphant. Here in thee may my soul find a temple eternally to dwell in, and do thou, dearest JESUS, from an union with thee by thy SPIRIT, make me a living temple in which JESUS may everlastingly dwell, until the building of this house shall be taken down, and my soul shall be called to *the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*. And oh! thou blessed, holy, gracious JESUS, when thou shalt have brought me home with all the church to fill thy courts above, and to surround thy throne, there shall I behold the streets of the city of the new Jerusalem of pure gold, infinitely surpassing all the splendour of the golden floor in Solomon's temple. There cherubims will not be of ornament, but of reality. And there the workmen will forever have ceased from their labours, and have entered into their rest, as our GOD hath done from his. But chiefly, and above all, JESUS himself will be there with GOD our FATHER, and the HOLY GHOST; and no temple will be needed there; for the LORD GOD Almighty, and the LAMB, are the temple of it. In the glorious expectation of this great day of GOD, do thou, blessed JESUS, give me daily to be beholding my sure foundation in thee, and my soul's complete resting upon thee, that as a lively stone in the spiritual building of thy church and people, *I may be growing up unto an holy temple in the LORD, for an habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT*.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

To the building of the temple, succeeds in history, the building of Solomon's house, which this chapter records: likewise, the house of Lebanon, and of the house of Pharaoh's daughter. Here is the

relation also of the works of Hiram, and of the vessels Solomon made for the house of the LORD.

REFLECTIONS

MAY we not gather instruction from the view of Solomon's house, and the house of the forest of Lebanon, and from the riches with which he adorned the temple! Surely the house and the forest, may serve to teach us how JESUS and his people dwell together. Here JESUS certainly visits them. Here he secures and defends them! And as the windows are both ornamental and useful; is it not through these that that holy, that fair one, looketh forth at the windows, and showeth himself through the lattice? And as JESUS looketh in upon our house through the windows of ordinances, and through the lattices of his kind means of grace; do we not look in also, through the same, to him? Reader! do you not know what that means, when the soul is going out after him in desires, when in reading his precious word, singing his praises, attending at the service of ordinances, we send forth the soft, but earnest breathing of the soul, that we love him, long to see him, be with him, and like children at the windows of a prince, look in to catch if it be but a glimpse of the king in his beauty! Oh! dearest LORD! what a gracious Sovereign art thou! Thy wonderful condescension, is not barely manifested in sending out thy servants at supper time to call us, from the mere looking in at the windows, to come in and to sit down with thee; but thou comest even to the door of our hearts, and there invitest thyself in, to sup with us, and we with thee. Come then, LORD JESUS, refresh my soul continually with thyself; thy love is better than wine.

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

This is a most beautiful chapter. It contains the dedication of the temple. Solomon's blessing of it: his prayer: his sacrifice of peace offering: his dismissal of the people with joyful hearts.

REFLECTIONS

SOLOMON! I would honour thy memory with great honour, for the view which the blessed SPIRIT hath been pleased to give me of thy ministry, as set forth in the dedication of the temple. Surely, never didst thou appear so truly great, as in this instance, where thou art represented so truly humble. Thou hast shown herein, a dignity well meriting imitation: and manifested, that the most supreme station any mortal can be advanced to in life, is to minister as the servant of JEHOVAH.

But while I behold Solomon thus honoured of his LORD, I would pass over all thoughts of the servant, to contemplate the Master. Thou, dearest JESUS! art formed to eclipse all creature excellence. Even Solomon's temple was but a faded glory, had it not been for the representation it made of thee, and of thy redemption. Oh! precious structure, the temple of thy body! Oh! sacred building, not made with hands. United to the GOD-head, the foundation is eternally sure, and all the blessings contained in it, endless blessings to our souls. Here, dearest LORD! in thee I see security from all evils whensoever, or wheresoever, any poor sinner who feels and knows the plague of his own heart, directs the eye of faith to thee for salvation. Though he trespass against his neighbor; though he trespass against his own soul; though he transgress against the LORD his GOD; and though he be carried away captive by his spiritual enemies, far from the land of his fathers; yet, if from thence, his whole heart and his whole soul be directed to JESUS, JESUS will hear from heaven, the habitation of his holiness and his glory; for he hath said; *Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am GOD, and there is none else, beside me there is no Saviour!* Help me then, dearest JESUS, to have mine eyes and my whole heart eternally fixed on thee. It is thy gracious office to know all my circumstances, to direct all my ways, to observe, to pity, to regard, and still to love me in every state and every case. Oh! LORD GOD! let not only my eyes, but the eyes of all poor sinners, whose redemption thou hast purchased with thy blood, be gazing upon thee with holy longing, fervent waiting and continual desire: and even under the most discouraging circumstances, even if, like Jonah, I am tempted

at any time to exclaim, *I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes*; yet, like him, to have faith still to say, *I will look again towards thine holy temple*. Oh! let that precious experience in thy blessed word be mine; in which it is said; *they looked unto him and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter relates the gracious circumstance of the LORD's second appearance to Solomon. An interview takes place between Solomon and Hiram. Solomon's yearly sacrifices are also mentioned in the close of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

CHIEFLY, and above everything related in this chapter, let my soul ponder over the wondrous condescension of GOD to Solomon, in what is here said of this *second* manifestation to him of his grace and love. And while I mark the tender mercy so shown, let me not forget that *such honour have all his saints*. Yes! blessed JESUS, though not equally splendid, yet equally certain, equally gracious, are thy visits. For thou hast left it upon record as if to silence all doubts and unbelief, that *he that loveth thee shall be loved of thy FATHER*, and thou hast added in that assurance, *I will love him, and will manifest myself to him*. Oh! wondrous love! oh! matchless grace! LORD how is it that thou dost manifest thyself unto thy people, and not unto the World!

We are not astonished, O ye carnal men, that you should gaze with such amazement as ye sometimes do at the followers of our JESUS! that we are (as David said) a wonder, to many is not so strange, since we are a wonder to ourselves. That we are born from above; that GOD condescends to acknowledge us for his children by adoption and by grace; that JESUS is not ashamed to call us his brethren; and the HOLY GHOST makes our bodies his temple; when

we think of these things, and consider our high calling; when we look within our hearts, and behold such coldness, deadness, and the want of affection to him, who hath so loved us as to beget us by his glorious redemption and his FATHER'S grace to such an inheritance, oh! how passing in wonder must be the love of GOD which passeth knowledge!

My brother in JESUS! you I address, who profess to live in the hope and faith of these precious, these distinguished privileges! think, I charge you, (and while I charge you I desire to feel the full force of it upon my own heart) think, *what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness!* Was the LORD thus gracious to Solomon? Did he appear to him twice? Did he solemnly charge him to flee from idolatry, and a breach of his holy covenant? Oh! then, let us consider the infinite importance of living to him who hath purchased our redemption with his blood; whose we are, and to whom we belong. If under the Old Testament dispensation of types and shadows, GOD was so jealous of his honour; can you suppose that now the whole is confirmed and sealed to us, as it is in the New Testament revelation of his blood, that he is less jealous of his honour, or that he will give his glory to graven images? Oh! my brother! if the LORD hath manifested himself to our hearts, and the grace of GOD hath appeared unto us, let us never forget what that grace teacheth, and what high claims are upon us; namely, that *denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

An interesting relation is given, in the opening of this chapter, of a visit made to Solomon by the Queen of Sheba, drawn by the report

of his great wisdom. Solomon's riches are again noticed in this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! added to the view we have taken in this chapter of Solomon's wisdom and greatness, as a shadow of him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; are we not led by what we have read to behold in this Queen of the south, thus coming to Solomon, a picture of the whole Gentile church coming to CHRIST? Was it not a promise of our covenant GOD concerning him, that *Gentiles should come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising?* And in allusion to the same blessed and glorious event, did not the LORD JEHOVAH promise that *the multitude of camels should cover him; the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; they from Sheba should come, they should bring gold and incense, and show forth the praises of the LORD.* And how is the mind overpowered in the contemplation, when we behold these great predictions accomplished in the first fruits of the wise men from the East coming to CHRIST in the moment of his Incarnation; and now in the dispensation of the fullness of times the LORD gathering together in one all things in CHRIST?

But Reader! while our souls are deeply impressed with the contemplation of the stupendous blessings and mercies in JESUS; shall we not advance one step higher in the wonderful subject, and look at JESUS himself thus gloriously shadowed forth in the several striking features of Solomon king of Israel? As far as the excellencies of Solomon go, they were surely descriptive of Solomon's LORD GOD, and Saviour. And here (though not in the infirmities of the man) as we read the relation (but in the wisdom of the king) we are constrained to cry out in the representation, and say, *a greater than Solomon is here.* Yes! blessed JESUS; as the LORD sent by the hand of Nathan to David, and at the birth of Solomon called him *Jedidiah*, beloved of the LORD; so by a voice from heaven at thy gracious entrance upon the work the FATHER gave thee to do, thou wert declared to be the true Jedidiah; the beloved Son of GOD, in whom the soul of thy FATHER was well pleased. And thy wisdom hath not only called forth the whole earth to admire and adore; but

all the powers of heaven join to acknowledge thee to be the power of GOD, and the wisdom of GOD, for salvation to everyone that believeth. Thy kingdom was but faintly represented by the peaceful reign of Solomon; for of the increase of thy government and peace, there is, there can be no end. Well may every true believer, like the Queen of Sheba, and yet in higher notes of gratitude, love and praise, exult and say; Happy are thy redeemed ones; happy are thy servants who minister in thy great name, and stand continually before thee! And blessed be the LORD JEHOVAH, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, who hath constituted our JESUS the Solomon of his people, and hath given him an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that ruleth over all. LORD! hasten thy kingdom, and thy glory; take to thyself thy great name, and rule and reign forever.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

A melancholy account is here given of Solomon's fall. His many wives and concubines, in his old age, lead him into idolatry. The LORD'S displeasure. Solomon's chastisement, and death. An account of his successor in the kingdom.

REFLECTIONS

READER! in the fall of Solomon let us learn what human nature is in its highest attainments. Who that beheld Solomon in his dedication of the temple; who that heard his sweet and gracious prayer on that occasion; who that contemplated the LORD GOD in his condescending visits, and revelations, and promises, to him; would ever have conceived the thought that this wonder of wisdom, this devout, highly favoured servant of the LORD, should have apostatized to such an extreme length, as not only to drown his body in filthy lusts, but sink his soul into idolatry. Oh! sad instance of human depravity! *Tell it not in Gath; publish it not in the streets of Askelon!*

But Reader! when you and I have duly pondered over Solomon's history, let us look at our own. *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall!* LORD! give we to see, and feelingly to acknowledge, that by nature all men are the same. All equally prone to evil; and all, but for the blessed influences of preventing and restraining grace, subject to the same sin and condemnation. Oh! dearest JESUS! let a deep sense and conviction of this truth lead my whole heart to thee! LORD! *keep thy servant from presumptuous sins, that I may be innocent from the great transgression.*

But principally, and above all, blessed LORD! let the view this chapter holds forth of Solomon direct my soul to the clearest and most settled conviction, that as all have sinned, and come short of thy glory; so nothing but thy precious blood and righteousness can be the sinners refuge, and the sinners salvation. Yes! blessed JESUS! do thou fix and engrave in my heart this most unquestionable truth. It is thou, and thou only, whose finished work in redemption hath made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. May it be my happy portion to be found in thee, having redemption in thy blood, the forgiveness of all sins, according to the riches of that grace, whereby we are made accepted in the beloved!

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, succeeds to the kingdom. He begins his reign in refusing the old men's counsel, and follows that of young men. Ten tribes of Israel revolt. The chapter concludes with an account of Jeroboam's idolatry.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a sad page for the most painful reflection doth the HOLY GHOST give us in the view of Rehoboam's folly and Jeroboam's sin! what a train of evil is induced by the fall! what is every man by nature but blind, ignorant, wayward, and perverse! Reader! have you

ever remarked how sinners, like Jeroboam, work all uncleanness with greediness? Like soldiers in Satan's army; they enlist under his banner; they wear his uniform; they volunteer in his service; they clothe themselves with his armour, and wield the weapons of sin, enmity and malice. And unless recovered out of the snare of the devil, if living and dying in his service, their end must be destruction, and their wages everlasting death.

Precious, precious JESUS! what everlasting thanks hath my soul to offer to thee, thou great and glorious captain of my salvation, in that thou hast, at no less expense than thine own blood and life, brought me out of his slavish ranks, and made me free indeed in thy service. Oh! LORD! give me grace to reverence thy temple, thine ordinances, thine house of prayer, thy sabbaths; and never more, like Jeroboam, set up in my poor heart any idol of abomination. Let every imagination be cast down, and every high thing that would exalt itself against the knowledge of GOD, be taken away, and let every thought be brought into captivity to the obedience of CHRIST. Be thou, dearest LORD, everything to me that is precious; and do thou reign and rule in my heart, *the hope of glory!*

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

A prophet cometh to Beth-el. Jeroboam, in opposing him, hath his hand withered; which at the prayer of the man of GOD is restored, The prophet himself for his disobedience is afterwards slain by a lion. Jeroboam still continueth hardened.

REFLECTIONS

My soul! pause over the perusal of this chapter, and contemplate in what a variety of views thou mayest gather spiritual improvement from it under the blessed SPIRIT'S teaching.

In the awful character of Jeroboam, learn the truth of that solemn scripture; *though favor be showed to the wicked; yet will he not*

learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

In the character of the false prophet, grown old in sin as well as years, what an alarming representation is held forth to what a desperately wicked state men may advance, who though ministering in holy things, never feel their power, and live and die unconscious of their influence.

In the character of the man of GOD acting with such faithfulness in daring the impiety of Jeroboam, and yet falling under the slender temptation of the deceiver, may we learn what a mixture of faith and unbelief makes up the characters of the LORD'S followers.

Where then, blessed JESUS, under all these views, where shall we direct our thoughts for perfection and for comfort but to thee? Thou art indeed holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Here then, dearest LORD, in thee and thy complete righteousness, may my soul direct her sole regard for acceptance and for favor. All altars, sacrifices, worship, doctrine, government, ordinances, and services, which look not to thee are alike false. But in thee all true sanctuary service finds acceptance. As a nail fastened in a sure place by the master of assemblies; on thee, thou precious Lamb of GOD, which takest away the sin of thy people, would I hang my life, my hope, my confidence, my all!

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

In this chapter begins the history of Israel and Judah in the division of the two kingdoms; so that attention should be paid in the reading to distinguish to which the subject belongs. The chapter opens with the relation of the affairs of Israel under king Jeroboam, and concludes his reign. The latter end of the chapter relates to the affairs of the kingdom of Judah under Rehoboam, and the close of his reign.

REFLECTIONS

WHILE we have reason to shudder in beholding the sad consequences of our fallen nature, in an example so truly dreadful as that of Jeroboam; and while I would for myself and Reader pray for grace to lay low in the dust of self-abasement in a conscious sense, that if we differ from him it is grace alone that hath done it; I would pause over the beautiful account that is given of the man of GOD, and pray that the LORD in mercy to the present hour would grant his church many, many *Ahijahs*. Blessed JESUS! I would say, send forth faithful ministers who will neither fear the frowns, nor court the smiles, of any man; but speak the whole truth as it is in JESUS, and keep back nothing that may be profitable to the alarming of sinners, the comforting of saints, and to the building up thy people in their most holy faith.

But while I would thus look up and beg a blessing for a faithful ministry, shall I contemplate the servant and forget the master? Shall not the view of Ahijah lead my soul to thee, thou great Prophet and Priest of thy people? Yes! blessed JESUS! if I forget thee let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. Thou art indeed a faithful high priest! and thy faithfulness and truth in making manifest thine and thy father's laws, which our whole race have broken, have been the blessed means, through the influence of thy HOLY SPIRIT upon our hearts, of turning thy people from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan to thee the living GOD. Yes! dearest JESUS! thou art a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the LORD pitched, and not man! and thou hast not only proclaimed to us our faults, and by the influence of thy blessed SPIRIT convinced us of sin, but thou hast in infinite mercy constrained us to thy love, and turned our hearts back again. LORD JESUS! break down all our idols! take away all our false refuges of lies! do thou sit, blessed JESUS, as a refiner and purifier of silver; and purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. For then the promise is sweet, and will surely be fulfilled; *then shall the offering of Judah be pleasant to the LORD as in the days of old, and as in former years*. Hasten, blessed

JESUS! the accomplishment of this glorious end; purge away all my dross, and take away all my sin.

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The history of the two kingdoms is again carried on through this chapter. The former part of it relates the history of two kings of Judah; Abijam and Asa. And the latter part of the chapter records the history of two kings of Israel; Nadab and Baasha.

REFLECTIONS

WHILE I read of the miseries of war, and behold in the succession of kings, like what is here represented in this chapter, one rising up to the destruction of another; how sweet and gracious a relief is it to my mind, to contemplate him of whom the prophet, ages before he came, thus delightfully predicted the features of his character; *Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind; and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of great rock in a weary land.*

All this, and infinitely more, blessed JESUS, art thou to thy people! Thou art a king indeed under whose government thy happy subjects live in peace and everlasting security. And thou art a covert and hiding place; a sanctuary and refuge; a fountain indeed of waters, even living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

In thee, and under thy gracious reign, whatever enemies arise, thou lightest all our battles, and makest thy people more than conquerors through thy grace enabling them. And oh! when I consider how secretly and securely in the union with thy person, and by virtue of thy finished redemption, thy subjects are eternally safe from all the possibilities of danger; how doth my soul rejoice, and my heart is made glad. Yes! blessed JESUS! I can and do speak to my soul in the sweet words of thy prophet, and enter into an heart-felt participation with the church of old of all its blissful properties; *Sing*

O daughter of Zion; shout O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments; he hath cast out thine enemy. The king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee; thou shalt not see evil any more.

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This chapter relates nothing of the history of Judah but wholly concerns the kingdom of Israel. Jehu comes with an alarming message from the LORD to Baasha. His ruin and death; the reign of his son Elah; the conspiracy of Zimri; the division of Israel after the death of Zimri between Tibni and Omri; the beginning also of the reign of Ahab; and more especially the rebuilding of Jericho which fulfilled the curse of Joshua.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over the reading of this chapter, and carefully mark the dreadful end of all the workers of iniquity! and what doth the history of all ungodly men furnish, whatever rank or situation they move in, but sad examples of the same. Under what striking images and similitudes doth the word of GOD represent them. They are said to be captives and slaves, the servants of sin, and that cannot cease from sin. And how do their lives give evidence, to the reality of such figures! For what is the wretched effect of carnal pursuit in the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, but the hire, the wages, the sure reward, in the sorrow that must follow? And are not all characters of this description, however diversified in their different occupations and pursuits, treasuring up unto themselves sure misery, here in this life not unfrequently recompensed to them, and endless sorrow in that which is to come; and are not these like the covenanted wages of the hireling and the servant, which he expects and hath a right to, in the termination of his labour?

Blessed JESUS! how refreshing is the thought to thy people, that thou hast brought them out of the service of Satan, and made them free in thy service. Thou graciously didst search for them in their haunts of sin, when, like others, they were children of wrath, and were wandering far from thee, on the same mountains of iniquity, and vanity, and worldly enjoyments. And now, having brought them, by the illumination and conviction of thine HOLY SPIRIT, into the bond of the covenant, thou preservest them from falling into those depths of sin which swallow up the ungodly. Dearest JESUS! be thou my Guide, my Counsellor, my Keeper, and my supreme joy; then sin shall not have dominion over me, nor the vanities of the world draw me into perdition. Having *put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, I shall put on the new man, which after GOD, is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

We have in this chapter, for the first time, introduced to us, that eminent prophet and servant of GOD, Elijah. He comes to Israel, prophesying of a long season of drought. He is hidden of GOD, and fed by ravens. Afterwards he sojourneth with a widow, at Zarephath: works a miracle to supply her and household with food: and raiseth the widow's son, when dead.

REFLECTIONS

IN contemplating the character of Elijah, as represented to our view in this chapter, what an illustrious example doth he stand forward, of the noblest faith! With what confidence do we see him going in before the idolatrous king of Israel, to tell him, that for his impiety, GOD had shut up the heavens, and their influences! With what confidence in his GOD doth he proceed to hide himself by the brook, where there could be no sustenance, but what should be sent to him miraculously! With what cheerful resignation doth he remove to Zarephath, when the brook became dry; still depending for his

daily supply from the same resource of faith! And while he knew, that Jezebel was feasting the false prophets with luxuries, at her table daily, how delightfully doth Elijah feast himself on the product of the barrel of meal, and the cruse of oil, under the favor and smiles of the LORD? And yet, if possible, still more, when by the alarming visitation of his hostess' son's death, the LORD seemed, for the moment, by this breach, to have made a breach in her affection to him, and all his peace and comfort; how truly glorious doth the man of GOD then appear, in the exercise of a faith almost unparalleled. And,

Reader! what shall be our improvement in this view of the prophet? What indeed, should it be, what ought it to be, but to look more stedfastly than ever we have yet done, unto all-precious JESUS, who is the Author and Giver of faith! Was it not the SPIRIT of CHRIST which was in the prophets, which did signify to them the sufferings of CHRIST, and the glory that should follow? The HOLY GHOST, by his servant the apostle Peter, hath graciously taught the church that this was the case! And may we not, from the same blessed authority, conclude that it must have been the same SPIRIT of CHRIST in the prophets, which led them on to such glorious deeds, as are recorded of them in his holy word? And shall we not then, under this precious assurance, look up to JESUS, all-gracious JESUS now, and beseech him to give us the like precious faith, through the righteousness of GOD our Saviour? Yes! thou Almighty Author and Finisher of our faith, to thee would I direct mine eyes, beseeching thee to grant me such measures of this blessed principle, in the view of thy servant the prophet here set forth, that when called upon in public, I may be bold for thy truth, and when retiring into private, I may live by faith upon thee, thou Son of GOD, when all creature comforts, like the brook, shall dry up. And, LORD JESUS! grant that I may be the follower of them, who now, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. And being compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, may we lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset thy people, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS!

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us the further history of Elijah. The time being arrived for his appearance again before Ahab, the LORD commands him to go on this embassy. An account of this interview. Elijah demands a decision between the prophets of Baal and himself before all Israel, who is the GOD. The day of determination. The LORD'S answering by fire. Israel convinced. Baal's prophets destroyed. And the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

REFLECTIONS

I WOULD pass over, methinks, many other considerations which this sweet chapter holds forth to view, to behold in the prophetic character of Elijah what a wonderful degree of faith the LORD GOD had given to him for the arduous service to which he was called. What firmness and magnanimity were manifested in his whole conduct! When the LORD commanded him to show himself to Ahab, not a word of request to be spared the unpleasant embassy, but an instant readiness to obey. And when in the first interview with Ahab the monarch accused him with being the troubler of Israel; with what zeal did he refute the charge, and return it home upon the king. Reader! shall not you and I, in the contemplation, look up and bless the great author and giver of such faith, and pray for a portion of the same blessed SPIRIT? But let us pass over these lesser instances of this most wonderful gift of GOD in the former part of Elijah's conduct, to behold him in the exercise of it, when singly and alone he stood at mount Carmel, opposed by 450 persons. Oh! what confidence must he have had in GOD as the GOD of Israel, that the LORD would answer by fire, consume the sacrifice, and dry up the water, when in the fulness of the SPIRIT'S influence upon his heart he commanded to drench the whole in such a way as should call for one miracle upon another, to prove the LORD faithful. Who that reads this history of Elijah but must rejoice in beholding the great blessedness of faith which is capable of producing such things. And who but must be led to bless the great author of the principle itself, who both

implanted that grace in the heart, and so graciously crowned it with divine approbation!

But Reader! while looking at the servant, let us look higher also, and contemplate the master. Yes! blessed JESUS! it is thou which art the sole author and giver of it. And therefore to thee would we ascribe all the glory. Had it not been for thy gracious undertaking, such is the human mind by nature, universally speaking, that not one spark of faith could ever have been kindled in the breast of any. Here every man is the same, without any predisposition, or inclination to believe. Nay, with every prejudice against it.—The water poured over the sacrifice of Elijah did not tend to damp the materials more than the prejudices, darkness, and natural hatred of our hearts tend to damp all divine impressions. Shall I not then, blessed JESUS, adore the riches of thy grace, in that thou condescendest to kindle a flame of faith in my heart, when everything that pride, ignorance, self-righteousness, and an unconscious state of my own condition, and thy suitableness as a Saviour, stood in opposition against it? Blessed JESUS! everlasting praise to thy dear name, like the sacrifice of the prophet, the fire of thy love and mercy hath descended from heaven and consumed all. And my soul hath been constrained to say not only, The LORD he is the GOD; but that the LORD is my light, my JESUS, my salvation, my GOD and Saviour for ever.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

The event in the destruction of Baal's prophets calling forth the anger of Jezebel, Elijah fleeth to the wilderness of Beersheba. The LORD comforts him there. He returns by GOD'S command, and anoints Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, Reader! over this chapter, and take another view, not less profitable to our souls, though less to the prophet's honour, than

what we regarded before in the conduct of Elijah. In the former chapter we beheld him, indeed, *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*. But here we see him, and human nature in him, shrinking at the bare apprehension of fear, and running away from the post of duty, as if Elijah's GOD could no more save. But Reader! let me charge it upon my own heart, while I earnestly and affectionately recommend it to yours, let neither of us lose sight of the sweet and blessed lesson the HOLY GHOST most graciously holds forth to our view, in the contemplation of the short-comings of his faithful servants. When we see a prophet thus shrinking with fear at the threat of Jezebel; or an apostle, like Peter, at the charge of a servant maid; for what doth the example serve in either case, in such eminent followers of the LORD, but to teach us how far short the highest characters are from perfection; and that they, as well as we, stand in need of the same justifying righteousness of the LORD JESUS, whose holy life is the only righteousness which comes up to the standard of the divine law. Yes! dearest, blessed JESUS! most fully we are hereby taught, and our souls rejoice in the contemplation, that none but thou canst justify thy people. *In thy name, O LORD, would my soul rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness make my boast.*

Let us, Reader, also gather another sweet lesson from this chapter; and in the precious assurance the LORD gives his prophet, that while he thought himself the only one left of the LORD'S servants, there were seven thousand; let us take comfort that even now, in the present dark and degenerate day, there is still *a remnant according to the election of grace*. Yes! Reader! though it be but a remnant, and a small remnant, yet JESUS hath said; *Fear not little flock, it is your heavenly FATHER'S good pleasure to give you the kingdom*. JESUS will preserve it. For it is the FATHER'S gift; it is JESUS'S own purchase; and the conquest of his SPIRIT'S grace on the heart; and therefore it must be preserved, And however small, or inconsiderable in the eyes of men, yet when the whole come to be brought together in glory, it will form *a multitude which no man can number*. *In my FATHER'S house, (saith JESUS) there are many mansions*. LORD! grant, if it be thy blessed will, both to Writer and Reader, to be found among that multitude.

Lastly. Reader! let both of us from this chapter be very diligent while reading the call of Elisha, to see that we make *our calling and election sure*. Oh! for grace to discover the preventing, unexpected, unmerited and sovereign call of GOD! Dearest JESUS! do thou pass by, and cast thy mantle upon us: thou LORD GOD of the prophets! do thou give Us the yielding, willing heart, to follow thee at thy call. And do thou grant that we may leave the oxen, the cares of the world, father and mother, and all creature enjoyments, and like Elisha, run after thee whithersoever thou goest; and like Ruth, to Naomi, may resolve to live with thee, and to die with thee, convinced that *to live is CHRIST, and to die is gain*. Oh! for faith, precious faith to have JESUS for our portion; for in him *we have all things*.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This chapter relates more to the history of Israel as a nation, than to the government of the church. It informs us of a battle between Syria and Israel, in which the Syrians are worsted. Ahab doth not avail himself of his victory, for which he is reproved by the prophet.

REFLECTIONS

READER! the perusal of this chapter ministers to our minds two very opposite reflections; but both such as may be rendered sweet and profitable under the LORD'S teaching. It is hardly possible to look at Ahab in the determined hardness of a corrupt heart, which neither the fear of man nor the mercy of GOD proved sufficient to subdue, but with the most painful consideration on the awful state of the wicked. To what an extent of power must Satan have reigned and ruled in this man's mind! Deaf to all danger: to all the alarming providences of GOD around him! Deaf to all the calls of grace and mercy: neither moved by the alarms of Benhadad's army, any more than as it concerned temporal safety: nor moved by the gracious

message of GOD, though twice repeated, and as often followed with the promised deliverance: we hear nothing of his expressing any sense of his undeserving; nor of his thankfulness for the great and unmerited deliverance. Having eyes and seeing not; and having ears, and hearing not; neither regarding the works of the LORD, nor the operations of his hands.

But how blessed is it, in the midst of all the unworthiness and continued provocations of Ahab, and of his people, to see the LORD still saving his Israel and remembering his covenant-mercy. Oh, LORD! let these precious tokens of thy love comfort my soul, amidst all mine unhallowed and soul-distressing departures I am continually making from thee. Oh, Holy FATHER! let me never forget that tender, that unparalleled love of thine, who, though thou knewest I should be a transgressor from the womb, still didst not keep back thy Son, thine only blessed Son, but gave him up for my salvation! Oh! most precious JESUS! cause my soul to hang for ever on thee, in the contemplation of thine unheard of mercy, when for my sake thou didst endure the cross, despise the shame, and art now sat down on the right-hand of the Majesty on high. And oh! thou HOLY GHOST, the Comforter! for ever blessed be thy matchless love to me, in that thou hast condescended, in defiance of all my carnal enmity and hatred to the ways of salvation, which by nature my whole frame was full of, to become my teacher, and to make me willing in the day of thy power! Oh! LORD GOD! JEHOVAH! now reign and rule in all, and over all my affections, that while, like Ahab, men of the world go down to their houses heavy and displeased, I may come to Zion with Songs of everlasting joy upon my head, with all the redeemed of thy people; and sorrow and sighing may flee away forever.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

The history of Ahab still continues a melancholy, because a sinful history; to the end. Here he is presented to us as coveting his

neighbor's vineyard. By Jezebel's stratagem he succeeds. Elijah is sent to him with an awful message from GOD.

REFLECTIONS

IT is impossible to behold human nature, as represented in such characters as Ahab and Jezebel, but with the most humiliating pain and sorrow, from our connection in the general mass. When I consider that, by nature, we are all alike children of wrath, enemies to GOD by wicked works; oh! how humbling is the view! But when, through grace, our souls are brought to look at the rock whence we are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence we are digged; oh! how precious, how inestimably precious is that mercy, which is so distinguishing. Never, blessed JESUS; never, I beseech thee, dearest LORD and Saviour, suffer me to read of such awful characters in thy sacred word, without feeling the blessedness of that question of thy servant the apostle, applied and brought home to my soul; *Who maketh thee to differ from another: and what hast thou which thou didst not receive?* And, LORD! suffer me to ask another mercy from thee: while beholding the miseries of our nature, the sufferings of the oppressed, and the cruelty of their oppressors; oh! give me to behold the virtue, the efficacy, the merit, the power, the all sufficiency of thy precious blood, in cleansing from all sin. Here let me gaze on thee and thy cross, until my whole soul goeth forth in the most ardent faith and dependence upon thee. LORD! impress upon my mind, in yet stronger characters, thy eternal excellency. And let my dying moments bear one uniform correspondence with my living conviction; that salvation is in no other; neither is there any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

In this chapter, some account of the history of the kingdom of Judah, which hath not been taken notice of during the five preceding

chapters is again revived. After a three years peace between Syria and Israel, war is sounded afresh, and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, joins Ahab, king of Israel, in the battle at Ramoth-Gilead. Ahab is slain. Ahaziah succeeds him. Some account of Jehoshaphat's reign.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us not close this first book of the Kings without taking with it into our minds the many gracious lessons the great author of it evidently intended that the church in all ages should gather from the records contained in it. In passing over the lives, the actions, and pursuits of the several successive monarchs it holds forth to view, we behold, though diversified by various characters, one general subject, though here and there it may be a page a little less stained with evil, of the dreadful effects of pride and ambition. In general a total departure from GOD. The *form* indeed with some kept up, but *the power of godliness* wanting. For though we make some exceptions, as in the instance of Solomon in the former part of his reign, yet after all allowances to soften the shades of the history, what is the whole picture but a perspective of fallen man exercising the long-suffering and patience of a most gracious covenant GOD.

In the lives of the few faithful servants and prophets of the LORD, raised up to minister in holy things amidst the general corruption, how delightful it is to read that the LORD hath not, and will not, cast away his people whom he foreknew. The period promised shall come. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Successive ministers in his church shall arise to keep alive the remembrance of this great event. And with an eye to him, in whom all nations of the earth shall be blessed, the LORD will have his heart engaged for Israel, from one end of the year even to the other end of the year.

Blessed JESUS! thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Stedfastly would I fix my eye on thee while passing through the several ages, and the reigns of those monarchs in Israel and Judah. And when I behold thy church oppressed, thy worship despised; idols desecrating thine altars, and impious men profaning thy sanctuary; I would be consoling myself with the assurance that in the worst of times thou hast a seed that serve thee;

and while thy faithful ones are discouraged, as if none were left to call thee blessed, many a thousand yet thine eyes regard, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. *The glorious LORD therefore will be unto his people at all times a place, of broad rivers, and streams wherein shall go no galley with oars; neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the LORD is our judge! the LORD is our lawgiver; the LORD is our king; he will save us!*

Hail! then, thou blessed LORD GOD, JEHOVAH, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST! the gracious almighty covenanters in redemption. All scripture joins issue in this, and all the faithful rest secured in the mercy, that the LORD is bringing home his church through the wilderness of this world to glory; and whether evil men, or devils, rise up in confederacy against it, or whether by terrible things in righteousness the LORD is pleased to work, that period is ripening, and will unfold its blessed fruit in the very moment already appointed; *The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our LORD and of his CHRIST; and he shall reign for ever and ever.—*Amen.

2nd KINGS

COMMONLY CALLED
THE
FOURTH BOOK OF THE KINGS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

AS this *Second* Book of the Kings is but a continuation of the same subject as the *First*; it may not be amiss to remark, that the same general observations, which were proposed to the Reader's consideration in the opening of the *former*, will be proper to be kept in remembrance at the entrance on *this*. The Reader of discernment, whose mind is under divine teaching, will discover in this, as in the preceding book of the Kings, many precious things contained in it, beside the history itself: which, to an awakened, and enlightened understanding, will abundantly tend to satisfy him, both of its divine authority, and of the gracious design of the HOLY GHOST, in causing it to be written, for the comfort and edification of the church in all ages.

Indeed there is one circumstance, and that of great note, to be attended to, in the perusal of the *second* book of the Kings, with which *the first* hath not such immediate connection: namely, that the greater part of the prophets, whose writings are placed at the end of the Bible, ministered to the church in their respective ages, during the period which this second book of the Kings records; that is from the days of *Uzziah* to the time of the Babylonish captivity. All from *Isaiah* to *Zephaniah* (*Ezekiel* and *Daniel* excepted) exercised their ministry during the years this second book of the Kings compriseth. It will be a point of no small importance, to the help of the pious Reader to keep this in his recollection, while going over this book of GOD.

In regard to the period of history contained in the second book of the Kings, it includes somewhat about 340 years; carrying on the history of the church from the death of *Ahab*, to the death of *Jehoiachim* which brings down the age of the world to between five and six hundred years before the advent of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. And as, by so much the nearer the circumstances of mankind are seen to approach to that one glorious era, which alone gives importance to the history of man; everything in reference to it, must be found to rise in importance also. I would therefore beg the Reader to have his attention the more awakened as he prosecutes the history, that he may catch here and there, if possible, some precious glimpses of JESUS. For if, from the earliest dawn of revelation, in the days of the patriarchs, the great Covenant Head of his church never left himself without witness, but frequently (as if to manifest how much he longed for the period of his becoming man for the redemption of his people) he showed himself to the faithful; surely, as that period drew nearer, it might be reasonably supposed, that he would now and then give a glance of his lovely Person, or (as the church beautifully expresses it) *from behind the wall of our nature look forth at the windows, and show himself through the lattice*. In this book, if I mistake not, several instances of the kind occur. Happy will it be, both for Writer and Reader, if their discoveries correspond!

I only, upon the present occasion, as in the former, desire to send forth my poor labours, accompanied with the humblest prayers to him, whose blessing can alone make them profitable, that both to him that writes and him that reads, this sacred book may be blessed. Vouchsafe, gracious GOD! to instruct both by it, in that knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS. Amen.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with relating a circumstance of sin in the conduct of Ahaziah. Elijah is commissioned to send an awful message to him. The king, in consequence, commands the prophet to appear before him. His messengers are destroyed. Ahaziah dieth, and Jehoram succeeds him in the kingdom.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, awfully behold, in the sad example of Ahaziah and his captains of fifty, with their fifties, how sin hardens the heart, and renders men ripe for punishment! See in them thine own picture by nature; and, but for grace, how justly the features would be marked still. To what a desperate length should I have run, had not the mercy of my GOD interposed, and stopped me in my daring career! Enlisted under the banner of sin and Satan; wearing his livery, and equipped with his armour, bow readily in those days of unregeneracy, should I have contended with his faithful servants, and from ignorance, malice, and deceitful lusts, have dared to oppose all that was gracious. Blessed JESUS! at what expense of love, of grace, of mercy, and of blood, hast thou redeemed me, and made the deadly weapons of opposition fall from my hands.

To whom but thee, thou HOLY ONE of Israel, who hast made our peace in the blood, of thy cross, shall I ascribe this great salvation? Yes! blessed JESUS! thou, and thou alone, as thy FATHER'S precious gift to poor sinners, art the sole deliverer of the captive; for thou hast indeed taken away the captives from the mighty, and the prey of the terrible thou hast delivered. And now, LORD! what is the language of my heart, but like the poor submissive suppliant at the foot of Elijah, I would say to thee, as he did to the prophet; *let my life, I beseech thee, be precious in thy sight.* Oh! JESUS! thou Man of GOD, thou Man at GOD'S right-hand, who art fellow to the LORD of Hosts; again I say, as he did, let my life be precious in thy sight! Haste then, come down quickly, O LORD, and let my soul live before thee. So shall I

live to thy glory while here below, and to thy redeeming praise when thou shalt take me to thyself above.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This is an interesting Chapter, in that it contains the history of the removal of Elijah to heaven, and of establishing Elisha as his successor in the prophetic office upon earth: the dividing of Jordan; healing the waters: the children mocking Elisha, torn and destroyed.

REFLECTIONS

I PASS over all lesser considerations in the perusal of this chapter, to behold with all suitable thankfulness to the LORD, as the gracious author of the mercy, thy happy privilege Elijah, whom thy GOD was pleased to take to himself in glory, without passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Thou wert indeed an highly favoured servant of our LORD! no doubt as Enoch, so Elijah, found the translation by faith. For nothing but GOD'S covenant love and grace in CHRIST JESUS, *could either have first procured heaven, or have opened a way of translation thither. In this believing view of JESUS, and by faith in his blood and righteousness, all the faithful have lived, and died as they lived, in the exercise of it. In this most dear and holy name I would hail thee, thou prophet of my GOD and Saviour on this happy departure of thine. And though now so many ages have run out since, yet in the faith of him who is the same yesterday, and today, and forever; I would bless the LORD JESUS in the recollection of his grace and goodness toward thee. At the same time praising his most holy name for all his departed servants, who while passing through the grave to their home in glory, were not less beloved, neither less happy, but found in the same complete and finished salvation; the same entrance being abundantly administered unto them, into the everlasting kingdom of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.*

But let not my meditations end here. Do I not behold in the servant some of the faint outlines of the master? Shall I see the prophet Elijah going up by a whirlwind into heaven, and shall I not recollect that the LORD GOD of the prophets ascended visibly into heaven in the presence of his apostles, attended with angels to grace his triumph? Yes! precious LORD! thou risen, ascended, and exalted Redeemer, my soul would take her flight on the wing of faith to the mount of Bethany, and gaze on thy blessed person, until that I followed thee to the right hand of power, and beheld all things put under thy feet! And surely the distinguished mercy manifested to the prophet Elijah in this instance, was principally with a view to show to thy church under the Old Testament dispensation, that such would be thy glorious triumphs when thou hadst conquered sin, death, hell, and the grave; and hereby opened thy kingdom to all believers.

And was not this Elijah a type in many other similar situations wherein a servant might be supposed to mark out the features of his LORD. Was the prophet poor, and was our JESUS rich? Did he go in the strength of the LORD'S sustenance forty days and nights to mount Horeb? And was not JESUS led up of the SPIRIT forty days into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil? Did the widow's cruse multiply under Elijah's ministry by the word of JEHOVAH? And shall I not call to mind, blessed JESUS, how the loaves and the fishes multiplied under thine own Almighty hand, to give bread to the people in the wilderness? Did the LORD so far honour his servant as to raise the widow of Zarephath's son; and shall I overlook him who by his own power called from death the widow of Nain's son; and as a confirmation that he was GOD, brought up Lazarus from the grave, and will at the last day raise the bodies of all his saints, because he is the resurrection and the life? Oh! precious LORD of all thy people, I would bless thy holy name in all I read of thy ministering servants, of grace and mercy manifested to them. And in all I behold of miracles wrought by their instrumentality, I would ever be looking unto thee as the cause. Thou art the author and the finisher. By thee kings reign, and princes decree justice. Patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, and the faithful in all ages, have acted under thy commission, and in thy name. To thee they bend the knee, and now

the whole army of them, both in heaven and earth, joyfully confess that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the FATHER.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

We are here presented with some account of the reign of Jehoram, In an enquiry concerning a quarrel between Israel and Moab, Elisha is commissioned with a gracious message from the LORD to Israel. The Moabites are conquered.

REFLECTIONS

I stay not to remark all the interesting things which this chapter contains; otherwise I might charge it upon my soul to admire and adore, what I have read of grace and mercy transcending iniquity and undeservings. But I pass over; for the present; the consideration of all these, important as they are in themselves, to contemplate JESUS: most beautifully shadowed forth in the prophet's prayer, being answered in the time of the morning sacrifice. How sweetly was the prophet's mind prepared for the expectation of this mercy when the HOLY GHOST; whose office it is to glorify JESUS, poured out of his blessed influences through the medium of this minstrel. But how glorious an object is it thus to behold in ages so remote from the hour of the Redeemer's sacrifice, its blessed efficacy in bringing down all needed blessings.

Pause, my soul; I charge thee pause, and say what upon earth can impress thy mind more in token of the infinite importance of the redemption by JESUS's sacrifice, than that JEHOVAH, in so many instances; made even the hour when in after ages that sacrifice was to be offered memorable, in the pouring out of his mercies. Did the LORD GOD appoint the morning lamb, and the evening lamb, a standing daily memorial of his lamb slain; and did all his faithful servants eye JESUS in their morning and evening oblation? And wilt thou, my soul, now thy JESUS, thy GOD and Saviour, hath by that *one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified*; wilt thou not

eye him in all thy poor presentations of the sacrifice of prayer and praise. Precious JESUS! grant me to look on thee continually. Thou art the only sacrifice for sin. Thou art the only lamb of GOD for a burnt-offering. The golden altar of thy divine nature, on which the sacrifice can alone be offered; and the everlasting High Priest by whom all can be presented. Thou, thou art the sum and substance of all. Oh! Holy FATHER! having boldness to enter into the holiest by his blood; behold I come in his name, making mention of his righteousness, even his righteousness only. Covered under his complete, all justifying robe, and washed from all impurities in his blood: let me enter into the sacred retirings of the LORD GOD. Yes! most gracious, indulgent FATHER! the remedy is of thy own providing; it is thou, blessed be thy glorious name, thou who hast *reconciled all things to thyself* by JESUS CHRIST. Look, holy FATHER, upon the face of thine anointed! and say, Canst thou deny me any mercy while I ask it in thy dear Son's name? And blessed, forever blessed, be GOD the HOLY GHOST, for having left upon record that sweet scripture to confirm those well grounded assurances in JESUS's name and work; *He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things?*

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

In this chapter the prophet Elisha is again introduced. He multiplieth the widow's oil. A son is given her. The child dieth. Elisha raiseth the child again. At Gilgal he healeth the poison in the pot. He feedeth an hundred men with twenty loaves of barley and ears of corn. These are among the contents.

REFLECTIONS

How lovely is it to behold in this *great* woman of Shunem, (as she is called) the blessed fruits of real piety. Reader! if we love JESUS, we cannot but love his people. *This commandment have we from him, that he who loveth GOD love his brother also.* She did not

say to the prophet; *be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding, the things are not given which are needful to the body.* But, like another *Lydia*, her language was; *If ye have Judged me to be faithful to the LORD, come into my house, and abide there.* And shall I not constrain thee, thou blessed JESUS, as oft as thou passeth by, to turn in unto me, that we may eat bread together? And be thou not as a way-faring man, that tarrieth but for a night; but I would constrain thee to continue to the breaking of the day: and do thou, dearest, honored LORD, do thou make thyself known to me *in breaking of bread and of prayer.* And though I have nothing to provide thee; nothing, like this *Shunammite*, to give thee, (as the *bed*, and the *table*, and the *stool*, and the *candlestick*;) yet, when thou comest, thou wilt bring all things with thee; and thou thyself wilt be all things to me; light to my darkness, a rest for my wearied soul to repose upon, and *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that all my glorying may be in thee, O LORD!*

My soul! do thou learn from this great woman, *another* sweet lesson. While men of the world, *from* the world are seeking their portion, and would rejoice at the offer of being spoken of to the king of an earthly court; oh! for grace, like her, to see the happiness of dwelling among that people, whose distinguishing character it is, that *they shall dwell alone, and not be reckoned among the nations.* Yes! blessed JESUS! I would be spoken for to thee indeed, and count it my chief joy to be of thy people.

And lastly, before I take my leave of this precious chapter, let me look up to thee, thou blessed Author and Finisher of faith, that thou wouldest give me a portion of the same precious spirit, which this *Shunammite* possessed in so large a degree. Is it possible, dearest JESUS, that I can thus read of a woman, who lived in ages so remote from thy coming, acting faith upon covenant promises, to such an extent as really to receive her dead child, by virtue of it, raised to life again; and yet who live so many ages after thou hast wrought out and completed thy salvation, possessing all thine exceeding great and precious promises, doubt and fear, and too often call in question, the certainty of them? Oh! for grace to believe the record GOD the FATHER hath given of his dear Son. LORD! I would pray, above all things, give me faith, that I may be a patient follower of

them *who now through faith and patience inherit the promises.*
LORD! make me faithful unto death, that I may obtain *that crown of glory which fadeth not away.*

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

The interesting ministry of Elisha is continued throughout this chapter. The prophet healeth Naaman, the Syrian, of his leprosy. He refuseth the gifts and rewards of the Syrian. Gehazi, his servant, taking them, is in judgment smitten with the leprosy.

REFLECTIONS

READER! though I have already detained you, as we have passed through this chapter, with several suitable reflections, as they appeared to my view, and arose in my mind, yet I would call upon you before we close the book, to gather up a few more of a spiritual nature, which I pray the LORD to make profitable.

If we have been reading the history of Naaman's leprosy, as a matter remote from ourselves, and simply no other than a transaction which occurred in the annals of Israel, many years since; we have lost all the gracious designs which the HOLY GHOST had in view, in causing such *a* memorable event to be recorded. Reader! you and I, and every child of Adam, bring with us into the world the leprosy of sin. *Behold!* (says David) *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.* Are you, Reader, sensible of this? Do you know it? Do you believe it? Oh! then, I say as the captive maid in Syria; Would to GOD you were with the Prophet that is in Samaria, even the LORD GOD of the prophets, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, for he would recover you of your leprosy!

And, Reader! do not come, as the Syrian did, with chariots and horses; do not seek with gifts and rewards to purchase redemption. Our JESUS is too rich to need our gold; too gracious to accept anything from his creatures. He hath a fulness, a suitableness, an all-sufficiency in himself; and his precious blood cleanseth from all

sins. Dearest JESUS! behold I come to thee. No Naaman, no leper at the foot of the mountain; no Ethiopian can need cleansing more than I the cry of my soul is, *Lord! if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean!* Oh! then put forth thy gracious hand; put forth thy sovereign grace in my soul, and pronounce the healing word, *I will; be thou clean;* and immediately my soul shall be healed. And healed by thee, like Naaman, my soul will be fully convinced that there is no GOD in all the earth, no other name under heaven given among men, whereby sinners may be saved! Oh! for grace to know with Paul, now that *we are washed, that we are sanctified, that we are justified in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the SPIRIT of our GOD.* And shortly we shall *then* come to sing that song with all the congregation in heaven, who were once leprous as ourselves, but have been cleansed in the same laver of redemption; *thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood.*

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

The account of the ministry of Elisha is continued yet further through this chapter also, as in the former. He causeth iron to swim. He discloseth the king of Syria's counsel. He smiteth his army with blindness.

REFLECTIONS

IN the perusal of this chapter, methinks I would behold the prophet Elisha with the greater attention in the several interesting services here recorded of him, by way of having my soul directed, with more awakened earnestness, to contemplate the grace of his heavenly Master. Surely it is refreshing and comfortable, and highly encouraging to the souls of the faithful, when we see the gracious condescension of the LORD in the employment of such men. What a series of servants the LORD hath called forth in his church! And to what a noble, employment have they been called! And when we call to mind the cause of their ministry; and more especially their

Employer; how is the mind overpowered in the contemplation of that love of CHRIST which passeth knowledge. He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints; for the work of the ministry; for the edifying of the body of CHRIST; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST.

But is it possible, my soul, to look at these, even all of them, though of the highest order, and pause a moment in the review, without having all the finer affections exercised, and called forth in the contemplation of thee, thou blessed JESUS, thou Prince of prophets, thou LORD of all thy faithful apostles, and of the innumerable host with which thou art encircled on mount Zion, where, as a Lamb that hath been slain, thou still appearest to manifest the everlasting nature of thy priesthood, and the eternal efficacy of thy redemption! Oh! precious LORD GOD! how do all prophets, priests, and kings sink to nothing before thee! Be thou my unceasing meditation! Teach me, LORD, to behold thee so as to have all my soul's affections drawn out after thee, and unto thee. Oh! for grace to behold the LORD always before me, and to set him on my right hand. May my eyes, by the lively exercise of faith, gaze upon him with unceasing, and increasing, delight, until he shall come to take me home, to behold his glory in one full blaze of everlasting day; and never, never more shall I then take off my ravished eyes from beholding his beauty. *Make haste, my Beloved; and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

The ministry of Elisha is continued through this chapter. The prophet, in the midst of dearth, foretelleth an immediate, and incredible plenty. An unbelieving lord treating the prophet's

prediction with contempt, Elisha foretels his death, which accordingly takes place.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us in the view of this siege of Samaria behold a lively emblem of the soul's distressed state by reason of sin. Alas! what a famine, not of bread and of water, but of all spiritual comfort, ease, or satisfaction. In the contemplation of the unexpected deliverance is not JESUS and his great salvation beautifully represented! how graciously discovered! how unexpectedly found! the soul of the sinner, like the leprous man while going from one tent to another, in the discoveries of JESUS'S love can hardly be brought to think it real. How is it, LORD! he continually cries out, as he enters into the enjoyments of salvation, how is it dearest JESUS, that thou hast manifested thyself unto me and not unto the world.

But oh! Reader, let us also learn from the awful history of the unbelieving lord, what everlasting dangers sinners are exposed to, and what everlasting horrors they must ultimately fall in; when neither the gift of the FATHER in his dear Son, nor JESUS'S love in the free-gift of himself, can work upon the hardened heart to believe unto salvation. What aggravated misery will that be to the unawakened, unregenerated heart, to have lived under the sound of the gospel, but never regarded its gracious calls! to have seen, like this unbelieving lord, the plenty and fulness of redemption, but never to have partaken of it. Oh! dearest, blessed, precious JESUS! add a blessing to all thy finished work, and give me not only to see and to hear with the outward means, but to taste and enjoy the blessed inward power of thy saving truth to the salvation of my soul!

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

The history of the Shunammite, which was in part given before, is prosecuted yet further in this chapter. Her land is restored to her. Here is also a short relation concerning Hazael, the Syrian. This

chapter also contains an account of Jehoram's wicked reign, and of Ahaziah his successor in the kingdom.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us pause over our review of this chapter, for many are the gospel instructions we may take home to our own hearts under the HOLY GHOST's gracious teachings. In the restoration of the *Shunammite's* land, let us recollect with holy joy that our JESUS hath effectually secured our inheritance, notwithstanding there hath been for many a seven year a famine and poverty indeed in our souls. JESUS our king will restore the whole, and infinitely more than we lost, by the apostacy of our first Father, Yes! thou dearest LORD, thou hast accomplished the redemption of all our mortgaged possession, and it is thou which will finally put us into the enjoyment of them again; thou art indeed thyself our inheritance, our portion, our joy forever.

In the account of Hazael, Reader, let us not overlook the general character of all men by the fall. That you and I perpetrate not such crimes, is not from any difference in nature, but wholly from the preventing and restraining grace of our GOD. Oh! blessed JESUS, teach me by such views how to appreciate thy great salvation more and more, and with the greatest thankfulness of soul, give thee all the glory, that I am kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation. And Reader, let the view which the HOLY GHOST hath here given us in the character of Hazael, when by a change from an humble station to the highest, the seeds of iniquity were thus ripened, and brought forward to the production of its deadly fruit, Oh! let it teach us how much wiser and more gracious the LORD is than we are ourselves, in choosing the lowest stations for his people, to keep them from evil. Yes! dearest LORD, I thank thee for the very place thy wisdom hath appointed me. I know it must be the best because thou hast ordained it. Thy love, as well as thy wisdom, was in it. Bring me therefore, LORD, according to thy promise, as a poor, blind, ignorant creature, in a way that I knew not; leave me not to my own understanding, but give me grace to be always committing my ways unto the LORD, and to acknowledge thine hand in all; for thou hast said thou wilt direct my paths.

One thought more, Reader, before we quit this chapter, in that precious account which is given us concerning Judah, that *the LORD would not destroy Judah for David's sake*. Oh! the blessed thought! oh! the soul-reviving consideration, amidst all the discouragements of sin, and the feats of unbelief! Judah's LORD still lives, still reigns, and the efficacy of his blood and righteousness is of everlasting duration. Learn, my soul, henceforth to live out of thyself upon this covenant GOD in CHRIST. In him is all thy fullness and sufficiency. And in so improving and using CHRIST, according to GOD the FATHER's gift and design concerning him, all happiness and security must be found. In thy name, blessed JESUS, would I rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness may my soul be exalted.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the anointing of Jehu: his slaughter of Joram: the death of Jezebel, and the relation of her being eaten by dogs.

REFLECTIONS

READER! what an awful view doth this chapter afford of the miserable end of Ahab's race! and how is the mind struck in the contemplation, that a family such as his was in all its branches, should sell themselves to work evil with greediness. It is hardly possible to go through the review of what is related in these histories of Ahab and Jezebel, and their household, without being again and again prompted, as we prosecute the history, to exclaim from whence arose such determined resolute impiety!

But we read the history of Ahab to very little profit if it doth not serve to lead the mind further than to the history of a single person or family, and not to behold in it the outlines of wicked and ungodly men in all ages. In the dreadful opposition Ahab made to the GOD of Israel and his prophets, do we not behold the representation of all the Ahabs of every age, in their avowed hatred and opposition of the

blessed gospel of the LORD JESUS? Do not some of this description of men seem as if every faculty was in league against the LORD JESUS? Their hearts boiling with implacable bitterness; their ears resolutely stopped to all the grace of the gospel; their voices uniformly raised against it. Despisers of divine things, haters of GOD and of his CHRIST! *Oh! my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honor be not thou united.*

But, Reader! how sweet to the view is JESUS after looking at human nature, and human wickedness, in such awful characters! and farther, how increasingly so is the view of JESUS under these considerations, when we are enabled to trace our preservation and upholding from such awful examples on ourselves! Yes! dearest, almighty JESUS! it is to thy preventing and restraining grace we cheerfully ascribe all the praise and the glory. Truly must I say (and, Reader, do you not the same?) by the grace of GOD I am what I am! that I have been, that I now am, and that I feel confidence for the future I shall be kept; on my bended knees, in transports of rejoicing, would I give the whole glory to the adorable Redeemer. It was JESUS who committed to his FATHER his church for this blessed purpose in the close of his ministry, and just before his death. And it is to this one source the preservation of his people must be everlastingly ascribed. *Keep* (said the gracious Redeemer as he placed his dearly purchased flock in the hands of the LORD) *keep, Holy FATHER, through thine own name those whom thou hast given me.* And hence under the unquestionable evidence of this great truth, would I cry out with the apostle, and say, *Blessed be the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten to this lively hope all his people, who are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation.*

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

In following up the commission Jehu had received from the LORD for the destruction of Ahab's house, we are told in this chapter how

he caused 70 of his sons to be beheaded. He destroyeth, the worshippers of Baal. But yet himself, the close of the chapter relates, departed not from the sins of Jeroboam.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us pause a moment over the perusal of this chapter, and, in the character of Jehu, mark the possibility of possessing great gifts, and great appearances of zeal for GOD's service, without any real possession of vital godliness. A man may cry out, as Jehu did, *Come, see my zeal for the LORD*; but if that zeal be truly put to the test, it will be as Solomon saith; *as the fining pot for silver and the furnace for gold, so is a man to his praise*. Let a man profess what he will, void of regeneration, yet all his performances spring from himself. A pool of water, when the rain descends plentifully, will swell and look large, but having no source, when the sun and the drought come on, it dries up. Oh! blessed JESUS! let all my zeal for thee and thy glory, arise from that well of water which thou hast promised, and which is from thyself, springing up unto everlasting life.

In the total overthrow of Ahab's family, mark, I beseech you, the sure termination of the ungodly. The LORD hath said in his covenant engagements, that he will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him! Reader! do not forget; the same promise which becomes sure to the believer, because of the faithfulness of GOD, makes his threatenings to the unbeliever, equally sure and certain. The LORD is not slack (saith *an* apostle) concerning his promise, as some men count slackness. The day of the LORD will come as a thief in the night. Precious JESUS! where, in that tremendous day, would my soul find shelter, had I not thy righteousness to justify, and thy garment of salvation to cover me. Let a throne of grace witness for me, that now, even now I plead this, under all the accusations of conscience, the deceitfulness of a corrupt heart, the charges of Satan, and the threatenings of the broken law of GOD. And in that hour, when GOD shall arise to shake terribly the earth, then shall I plead it with full assurance of faith; nothing fearing any condemning sentence from my Judge, while standing secure in the justifying righteousness of

GOD my Saviour, and triumphing in the covenant promises of my FATHER's sovereign grace. Lord JESUS! let the view of the treachery and deceitfulness of man's heart, as in the instance of Jehu, lead me to be everlastingly suspecting my own. And let a perfect conviction that thou, and thou only, art the righteousness of thy people, make me more and more earnest to know thee, to love thee, to live to thee, to walk in thee, to act faith upon thee, and to rejoice in thee as my portion, in time and to all eternity. Precious, precious LORD JESUS! even so, Amen.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

The sacred historian in this chapter is relating the affairs of the kingdom of Judah. Athaliah destroys all the seed royal; one only escaped the general massacre, which is Jehoash. At six years of age Jehoida anoints him king. Athaliah is slain.

REFLECTIONS

IT is delightful to observe how the LORD, in the worst of times, hath his servants ready to execute his gracious designs. He hath a Jehosheba to hide when matters render it necessary; and a Jehoida to bring forward his chosen according to the counsel of his own will. Reader! how truly profitable is it thus to trace the LORD's hand in all his doings! And how encouraging, in all our intricate circumstances, to remember whose government we are under.

But, Reader! may you and I pass over the court of Judah in the history of Joash, and contemplate the LORD JESUS brought forth the lawful King of his people, against all the usurpation and tyranny of sin and Satan. Behold JESUS, showed to us as the King's Son, the rightful heir of all things, by whom JEHOVAH made the worlds. Behold him in the glories of his Person, being the brightness of his FATHER's glory! Behold him as the great Covenant-head of his people set up from everlasting, although hidden, and his name secret through the several intermediate ages, until the fulness of time,

appointed of the FATHER for his being revealed as a Saviour unto Israel. Contemplate him in all the Old Testament promises, types, and prophecies! See him in his convention with the FATHER for the purposes of redemption, when he stood up, like Joash, before the people and became our Covenant-head and King. Trace him in his incarnation, life, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and glory! And what is he now? Surely he is the same. He stands in his temple as Joash stood by the pillar, as the manner was, to confirm the covenant, of which he himself is the whole sum and substance for his people, and to his people. He comes to us revealed in all his written word. He makes discovery of himself in his blessed gospel in all the suitableness of his precious offices, relations, and characters. He is JEHOVAH's Standard and Ensign for his people, implying that he maketh war against all treasonable usurpations (like Athaliah's) for his people, and maketh them more than conquerors, through his grace and love, leading them on to victory! Hail! blessed, holy, gracious, all-powerful JESUS! my soul would shout aloud, and I would clap my hands in testimony of the greatest joy, that JESUS reigns. Be thou, dearest sovereign, LORD and Master, be thou my GOD and King; and let all enemies which would rise up in treasonable rebellion against thy princely government, like Athaliah, be laid hands upon, without the temple, and slain before his face. Amen Amen.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the history of Jehoash's reign and death. He governed well during the life of Jehoiada, but after was led away from his uprightness. His death was induced by the treachery of his servants.

REFLECTIONS

READER I would wish for myself, and, if the LORD pleases, may he graciously make it profitable to you also, in the review of

this character of Joash, to consider what instructions we may gather from it considered with an eye to gospel times, and to the blessed redemption believers have in the LORD JESUS. When we see what a sad conclusion the life of Joash had, to so promising a beginning, it ought to induce inquiry into the circumstances of spiritual declensions, and the sad cause why it is that some who seemingly set out fair for the kingdom, flag and tire by the way. The apostle Paul, as the penman of the HOLY GHOST, hath plainly assigned the reason in his third chapter to the Church of the Galatians; where he calls them foolish Galatians, because having begun in the Spirit, they afterwards thought to be made perfect by the flesh. When souls shift the foundation of their faith and hope, and leave their first love, leave JESUS, and seek a partial justification before GOD in their own works, they soon find leanness in their souls. Reader! I charge it upon you, if you know anything of CHRIST, desire to know nothing *but* CHRIST. Make him what he really is, the Alpha and Omega of your salvation; the Finisher as well as the Author of it; and you will do well. Did you not renounce everything of your own, and what was in yourself, when you first came to JESUS, and would you now take somewhat of your own to purchase CHRIST? Did JESUS give life to your soul at the first, when by his SPIRIT he quickened you; and must he not give life still? Having *begun* (saith the apostle) *in the Spirit are you so foolish as to seek to be made perfect in the flesh?* Oh! thou blessed, blessed Source of all our hopes and joys; thou precious JESUS, be thou all in all to the souls of thy people! Here, LORD, I beg once for all totally to renounce myself, and as I first came to thee guilty, poor, and wretched; so, LORD, I would come still. Blessed be thy name, for that thou hast taught me to know the plague of my own heart, and to see and be convinced that in myself, after all thou hast bestowed upon me, I am no more worthy now, than when thou didst pass by and *beheld me in my blood, and bid me live*. Yes! dearest LORD, I desire to lie low in the dust before thee in token of my nothingness and unworthiness, while hanging upon thee the full assurance of my salvation. And, LORD, let it be my daily desire to exercise every act of faith upon thee, to undertake nothing but in thy strength, and to seek acceptance only in thy blood and righteousness. And oh! may I know thee with increasing joy under

that blessed character whereby thou art revealed to thy people, as *the LORD our righteousness*; being convinced that thou art made of *GOD*, to us *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, that all my glorying may be in the LORD.*

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

The most interesting part of this chapter is that which contains the death of the prophet Elisha. We have heard nothing of this man of GOD for some time. Here we are introduced to his history afresh, and the relation of his death. Here is also an account of the wicked reign of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. A remarkable circumstance is related of the revival of a dead man by being cast into the sepulchre of Elisha.

REFLECTIONS

I PASS over every other consideration, which the perusal of this chapter affords, to take the larger, and more attentive review of the dying moments of the man of GOD, Elisha. No doubt the recollection of the wicked reign of Jehoahaz and Joash; the infinite clemency of a most gracious GOD, notwithstanding showed to such impious monarchs and their people, and the deliverances wrought out for them by the LORD; no doubt these contemplations would open a large door for improvement. And indeed, I pray the Reader not wholly to pass them by. May the HOLY GHOST sanctify them to the soul both of Writer and Reader. But I pass the more quickly over those things, to take a more deliberate view of the dying prophet, which this chapter records. And as with this chapter, the life and ministry of Elisha terminates, methinks I would gather up, from the fragments of a life so illustrious, and so highly honored, somewhat to contemplate to the honor of the saint, and yet infinitely more, to gather therefrom in reference to the Saviour.

And shall I, blessed SPIRIT of all truth, shall I humbly venture to ask, while lying low in the dust before thee, is there not somewhat in

thy servant the prophet Elisha, which forms a resemblance, however imperfect and far short of the original, to the person, character, and offices of our LORD JESUS CHRIST? Didst thou, blessed SPIRIT, graciously design that thy church should be led to such a contemplation! Look then, my soul, while waiting the HOLY GHOST's teaching, look to Elisha, and see whether he was not intended to shadow forth somewhat of JESUS, in his life and ministry!

A double portion of the Spirit was promised Elisha at the river Jordan, when entering on his prophetic office, on the departure of Elijah. And was it not at the same river the HOLY GHOST descended on the Person of the LORD JESUS, at his entrance on his ministry, when *the SPIRIT was given to him without measure*? Did Elisha divide the waters hither and thither with the mantle of Elijah, in testimony that the LORD GOD of Elijah was with him: and are not the waters of death, and the depths of destruction dried up, and a passage made through Jordan for CHRIST's ransomed to pass over, by his robe of righteousness, which forms the justifying covering and mantle of all his people before the LORD JEHOVAH forever? Did Elisha work miracles; heal the waters, and cure the barren ground by the cruse of salt: and hath not our JESUS healed all the springs of bitterness in us and our corrupt nature, and by the salt of grace, and the covenant blessings, his precious and finished redemption work hath wrought in us, and for us; hath he not brought in such everlasting healing to the nations, that henceforth, JEHOVAH himself hath said, and confirmed it with an oath, *There shall be no more dearth, or barren land, for in CHRIST JESUS his people shall be saved with an everlasting righteousness, and shall be neither ashamed nor confounded, world without end!* Did Elisha multiply the pot of oil, raise the Shunammite's son; restore the poisoned food to wholesomeness; feed an hundred men with twenty loaves; cure Naaman, the Syrian, of his leprosy in mercy, and fasten it on Gehazi in punishment: and did he those great deeds in the name of the LORD? Yes! all these and many more, in confirmation of his commission, in whose name he acted; and, like another Moses, was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after. But as for thee, thou blessed JESUS, thou, as a Son over thine own house, and as the LORD and Sovereign

of Elisha, to whom he, and all that went before, and all that followed, ministered to thy coming; thou hast indeed in an endless perpetuity of miracles, not only during the days of thy flesh upon earth, but now in the everlasting possession and exercise of thy glory in heaven, still carrying on the same gracious and blessed designs in the accomplishment of thy redemption. The widow's oil which the prophet multiplied, might indeed shadow forth the oil of grace, which thou art dispensing, by thy SPIRIT, upon all thy people; but oh! how weak a representation of the fulness, by which thou art forever supplying the impoverished state of the insolvent, and the wretched. Elisha, by thy command, did raise the Shunammite's dead son. But thou, blessed JESUS, art raising millions of dead sinners to a new and spiritual life, which are by nature dead in trespasses and sins. Elisha to manifest the power and grace of the GOD in whose name he acted, might be permitted to convert the poisoned broth into wholesome food. But thou, Almighty JESUS, in thine own power, and by thine own sovereign mercy, hast converted the very poison of sin into streams of salvation: by death thou hast destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and hast delivered them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. Hail! holy, blessed, precious, LORD JESUS! LAMB of GOD who hath all power in heaven and in earth. Not one or two only of widowed women, leprous Syrians, or famished men hath thy grace and mercy been manifested to by the ministry of thy servants, but millions of souls and bodies of thy redeemed, amidst all their poverty, leprosy, and famished state of endless ruin, but for thy gracious interposition, hast thou restored to life, and health, and joy, and liberty. *Men shall be blessed in thee, and all nations shall call thee blessed.* Here let me bow down before thee thou LORD GOD of the prophets, Elisha's GOD and Saviour, *in whom, and through whom, and for whom,* all his ministry was exercised. And in the view of his life, and indeed of all thy servants who shadowed forth thy coming, may this one gracious truth be fully brought home to the soul, and made blessed both to him that writes, and him that reads, that to him, even to JESUS, gave all the prophets witness, that through thy name, dearest LORD JESUS, *whosoever believeth in thee, shall receive remission of sins.*

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

This chapter brings some consolation, to the mind in the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, in relating to us the good reign of Amaziah. He is slain, however, by a conspiracy; and is succeeded in the kingdom by Azariah. Here is an account also of the reign of Jeroboam king of Israel.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, in the ruined state of Israel, which this chapter presents to thy view, the sure consequence of sin and the evil thereof. Whoever hardened himself against GOD, and prospered?—Is this Israel whom the LORD brought out of Egypt; carried him on eagles wings; rained manna from heaven for his food, and gave water from the rock to his thirst; led him by a pillar of a cloud by day, and sheltered him in a pillar of fire by night? Is this the same? Alas? *how is the gold become dim! how is the fine gold changed!*

But behold also, may soul, the bowels of mercies of Israel's covenant GOD. The LORD saw the affliction of Israel. And will not the LORD send deliverance to his people? Yes! blessed be his name. The deliverance is only in him. He hath sent a Saviour, and a great one, and he hath delivered them. Oh! for grace to receive JESUS, to believe in him, to rest upon him, and on the bended knee, in transports of rejoicing, to bless GOD *for his unspeakable gift!*

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The history of Israel and Judah is carried on through this chapter. And this is the period in which the prophets Hosea and Isaiah exercised their ministry. Here is a succession of several kings both in Israel and Judah.

REFLECTIONS

READER! can you review the successive history of these kings without emotion! Is there not here enough to teach any man, and every man, the folly, emptiness, and unsatisfying nature of all human greatness void of the grace and favor of GOD? Is this all the history of greatness that these men were born, that they began at such a period to reign, that they reigned so long, did evil for the most part in the sight of the LORD, and at their death were succeeded by others! Alas, alas! if this be the only arithmetic of human greatness, who would covet the envied purple, or look with longing desires to be among the higher ranks of this life.

Blessed JESUS! how sweetly in this instance, as in every other review of the present circumstances of human life, doth thy person, and our interest and relationship in thee, appear. Allied to thee, dearest LORD, thy people are royal indeed; for they are begotten of GOD the FATHER, the king of heaven, and earth, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away: they are the children and brethren of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with CHRIST; and by the HOLY GHOST made partakers of the divine nature, married to JESUS, and entitled by him to all the portions and revenues of royalty, and to a crown of glory hereafter that shall endure forever. Reader! pause and contemplate their privileges! Behold! See, even now, amidst all the disadvantages of their earthly state, though poor in outward circumstances, and the world owns them not, but their mother's children are angry with them; yet are they still but like the heirs of a kingdom in disguise, going home to glory, and each one of them bears the features, and resembles the children of a king. Their spiritual clothing, like the king's daughter, *is all glorious within*. The imputed righteousness of their husband and their LORD, is royal apparel indeed. Their provision in spirituals is all heavenly, being the bread of GOD which came down from heaven, the flesh and blood of JESUS; they ride moreover in the royal chariot of the LORD JESUS, the pillows whereof are silver, the bottom thereof gold, *the covering of it of purple, and the midst thereof paved with love*. They have a royal guard also to

attend and guard their persons, angels being their ministering servants, and the LORD himself their GOD, their glory.

Think, then, ye humble followers of the humble and lowly JESUS, think of your high privileges in him, and his lawful right, who is *the LORD your righteousness*. And if ye are indeed *a chosen generation, royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; show forth the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*. Live as children of the LORD. And seeing that *ye have received a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve GOD acceptably with reverence and godly fear*.

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This chapter is wholly spent in recording the evil reign of Ahaz, king of Judah. The close of the chapter brings in a relief to the mind the introduction of his son Hezekiah, who succeeded him.

REFLECTIONS

*How painful a thought is it to behold in this history of Israel and Judah the sad proofs of a fallen state! whether we read of one king or another, the general features of all are the same; All have sinned and come short of GOD's glory! But with what increased distress do we behold in the priests of GOD, as in this awful character of Urijah, the dreadful apostacy of mankind! and in the end, what must be the awful consequence. *Begin at my sanctuary*, saith GOD in his judgments. And if judgment begin at the house of GOD, what must the end be of them that obey not the gospel of JESUS? For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Ye ministers of JESUS, think of these things. And dare be zealous for GOD's honour and glory, though it expose you to the hatred and anger of men.*

But how is my soul relieved from contemplating such a king as Ahaz, and such an High Priest as Urijah, in calling to mind the prophet's commission when sent to Ahaz to proclaim to him the

approach of that hour, when the LORD would fulfil that promise of raising up to himself a faithful priest, who should do according to what was in the heart of the LORD. Precious JESUS! thou art indeed a priest upon thy throne. And all the impiety of Ahaz, and the worthlessness of Urijah, I would lose sight of in thy faithfulness and truth. Thou art the very one which the LORD gave as a sign to Ahaz: thou art IMMANUEL, GOD with us, GOD in our nature, the hope of glory! Blessed assurance! for, as GOD the work of redemption is neither too great, nor too heavy, for thee; and as man, GOD dwelling with us, and being one in our nature, thou wilt be on our side, and both accomplish and render effectual the salvation thou hast undertaken. So that we may cry out, *If GOD be for us who shall be against us?* It is GOD that justifieth, who-is he that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of GOD. Nothing therefore shalt be able to separate us from the love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to the history of the kingdom of Israel. Hosea's wicked reign is recorded, and which terminates the Israelitish kingdom; for the captivity takes place in the destruction of Samaria, after a period of about 260 years. A mixture of religions takes place also on the event of the captivity.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over this chapter, and behold the awful visitations of GOD upon his own people. Well may every truly awakened soul take part in what he reads here, and tremble lest, for the wickedness of our own land, the LORD should send similar judgments. Are we better than they? (saith the apostle upon an occasion not unlike this) No, in no wise. For he hath before concluded all under sin. And though from the relation GOD the FATHER stands in to his people in his dear Son; though from the

ransom he hath received from our Almighty Surety, the everlasting welfare of the regenerate is secure; yet for the honour of his holy name, to prevent the abuse of his covenant-mercy, and for the holiness of his nature, GOD will correct (and to what extent who shall say) the unhumbled state of his people in their sins and transgressions.

Reader! are you a real follower of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? Hath the HOLY GHOST convinced you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment? Hath he led you to the precious JESUS for the whole of your salvation? And if so; can you be unmoved in the view of the present state of the church in this highly favoured land, and behold the languishing condition of Zion among us, unconcerned. How did holy men of old feel on such occasions? *My flesh trembleth* (saith one of them) *for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments! for these things* (saith another) *weep, mine eyes run down with tears. When I heard* (saith a third) *my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones.* Are you unmoved! Oh! for grace from him who hath the residue of the SPIRIT, to be earnest in prayer with him for his sparing mercy!

Precious JESUS! where shall we flee, to whom shall we come, but to thee? We are indeed a guilty, sinful land, a wretched, unworthy people. We are sadly gone away from thee. We are a race of evildoers, children that are corrupters. We have sinned, what shall we say, O thou Preserver of men? But, LORD, help us to return, Let thy grace induce, in all ranks, a spirit of reform. Oh! thou exalted Prince and Saviour! pour out thine ascension gifts of repentance, and remission of sins. Bring us before thee, looking with an eye of faith to thy blood, beholding thee as the Lamb that hath been slain, and wearing thy Priesthood still. And oh! be thou very jealous for this land, and heal thy people. Come, gracious LORD, return to thy people with pardons to bless, with grace to purify, with love to allure; and draw our hearts unto thee. And let us hear those soul reviving words; *I am returned to the British Jerusalem in mercy.* Then may our souls answer to the words of thy grace, and say; *Who is a GOD like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage. The LORD will not retain his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again. He will have*

compassion upon us. He will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the account of Hezekiah, and his good reign. His destruction of idolatry. A further account of the captivity of the people of Israel. The chapter, after this, returns to the relation of the history of Hezekiah. Jerusalem is besieged by Sennacherib.

REFLECTIONS

THERE are many improving observations which arise out of this chapter. In the first place, I would call upon the Reader to remark with me, that though Hezekiah is said to have been the best of all the kings of Judah, yet Hezekiah was not without his afflictions. We see in the very midst of attempting the reformation of the people, and the abolishing of idols, the LORD permits an idolatrous prince not only to come against him, but for a time to succeed. Reader! it is so, it must be so, in the life of grace. Faith must be exercised, that it may be more precious than gold that perisheth, JESUS saith, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. LORD! I would say in answer, spare not thy rebukes, nor suffer thy child to be spoiled for want of the rod, when thy wisdom seeth it necessary. But oh thou, most blessed LORD, give me the penetrating eye to discover, under all the frowns of thy providence, the sweet smiles of thy love. And let my faith be always alive, in full exercise, to be looking forward to that happy period, when thy child shall leave the school of learning, to rest in thy bosom in the full enjoyment of the knowledge and perfect love of thee, forever.

I would learn, in the next place, from the trial of good king Hezekiah, that, as this world is not the believer's home, so his

security from trial is never over, until he arrives safe at his FATHER'S house. My soul, was it not a precious mercy in the LORD, to take off Hezekiah's mind from all confidence in creatures, when he was thus feelingly taught to put no confidence in princes? Poor Hezekiah thought to buy the friendship of the king of Assyria with a present, and therefore sent him the silver and the gold which he had for this purpose. It is very true the children of GOD consider, or ought to consider, gold, silver, and precious stones, as objects of no value; and would gladly part with them, if this would make carnal men less angry. But, the LORD will not allow any temporizing. How often would my soul have purchased peace with the wicked at almost any rate, if I might enjoy JESUS unmolested! But this is the believers motto: *If any will live godly in CHRIST JESUS he shall suffer persecution.* This should wave in the standard of the Christian in his holy war. Dearest, blessed JESUS! hast thou said; *in the world ye shall have tribulation?* And hath my foolish heart, in order to stand fair with the world, sought a shelter from it? Oh! my LORD, henceforth let the world frown, so thou but smile: let the Rabshakehs of the present hour utter their reproaches, and pour forth all their contempt, so thou but grant me that unspeakable blessing: *In me ye shall have peace.* By faith in thee I shall overcome the world; and from confidence in thee I shall rejoice; and my joy no man take from me.

In the last place, Reader, let you and I learn from this interesting chapter, to hold our peace, and in our patience to possess our souls, when for a moment the ungodly seem to triumph. It is but a *seeming* triumph, and like the crackling of thorns under the pot. Yes! blessed JESUS! my soul would wait at thy footstool in silence, and in patient waiting would I be found. I know there is One at the mercy-seat, whom the FATHER heareth alway. There I rest my ground of acceptance only in JESUS. He will plead my cause, and bring me forth in the path of righteousness, for his name's sake. Oh! the relief my soul feels, even in the waiting. Heavenly LORD thou hast fulfilled, thou wilt fulfil that promise: *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up*

with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

This chapter relates the effect Rab-shakeh's blasphemy had upon the mind of Hezekiah, when it was reported to him. He sends to desire an interest in the prayers of the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah's answer. Sennacherib sends a renewed message of insolence to Hezekiah. The king goes up into the house of the LORD, lays it before the LORD, and prayeth. The LORD, by his servant Isaiah, comforts him, and sends an angel to the destruction of the Assyrians. Sennacherib is slain by his sons.

REFLECTIONS

READER! in the opening of this chapter we take part with Hezekiah in his affliction, and feel the commiseration of the believer in the view of his sorrows, and desolate circumstances. Behold him in the close of it, and how doth the faithful soul rejoice in the LORD'S deliverance of him out of all. And is it not, dearest JESUS, in all the circumstances of thy people. Without thee, and beheld, only as they are in themselves, what poor, defenseless, oppressed, persecuted creatures are they, bent down under the hand of every foe. But when JESUS appears in their cause, oh! how precious is it to behold their strength in the LORD, and in the power of his might.

What an awful character is this impious monster, this Assyrian monarch! And yet what is he more than all the haters of GOD, and his people. Satan reigns in their hearts; they are scoffers, despisers, blasphemers, sworn foes to GOD and his CHRIST. And their name is legion, for they are many.

Blessed JESUS! how sweet is it to be taught of thee! How precious thy salvation! How great thy mercy in gathering sinners from the service of Satan to thy kingdom. LORD! grant that, like Hezekiah, trouble may lead my heart to thee; in all my afflictions to

cast my burden upon the LORD, who hath promised, to sustain me. I would spread all before thee, O LORD, and wait in faith thy deliverance, for thou art my strength, and my song, and art become my salvation.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This chapter prosecutes the history of Hezekiah. He is visited by sickness; he seeks to GOD in his affliction: receives a gracious answer in the lengthening of his life. His prayer: the LORD's answer. His death; and successor in the kingdom.

REFLECTIONS

READER! what a series of delightful instructions open to our view, in looking at Hezekiah on his supposed death-bed. The greatest favorites of heaven are exposed, in common with others, to the humiliation of the grave. But oh! how different their state! and who is it hath made it so, Even thee, thou blessed, blessed JESUS. It is thou which hast converted the chambers of the grave into chambers of peace and safety. By thy death thou hast overcome death. And by thy finished salvation thou hast delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Hail! O thou glorious, great I AM, who art the resurrection and the life.

Reader! let you and I listen to the sweet, swan-like note of the dying Hezekiah. He laments that he shall see the LORD no more in the land of the living; that he shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. But Reader! you and I know that, when believers exchange by death the outward courts of GOD's house for the inner temple of his glory, we shall see JESUS as he is; we shall awake up after his likeness, and be with him forever. We leave, indeed, the inhabitants of the world when we drop off this earthly tabernacle. But is this matter of regret, to exchange this world for the upper; earth for heaven; sinners for saints; and evil men for

angels and the spirits of just men made perfect? Chiefly, thou precious LORD JESUS, independent of every other, and indeed to the exclusion of every other, thy presence alone is better than life itself. Thy person, thy salvation, thy glory, and the heaven of heavens, thou givest to the souls of thy people; what a happy exchange do they make that die in thee, O LORD JESUS? Oh! for faith in lively exercise, when thou shall give the signal for my departure; when that solemn, glorious hour shall come, and I hear thy precious voice; *The master is come and calleth for thee.* Oh! for faith to mount up with holy joy and rapture inconceivable, and like the patriarch of old, may the last and most precious word that shall hang upon my dying lips be JESUS, as I utter the same words as he did; *Into thine hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O LORD, thou GOD of truth.*

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

The reign of Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, is contained in this chapter; and an awful reign of sin it is. He is succeeded by Amon his son, such another awful character as the father. His death is also recorded, and Josiah his son succeeds him in the kingdom.

REFLECTIONS

READER! mark, I beseech you, in the character of Manasseh, the evident truth of GOD'S holy word, that the father shall not bear the iniquity of the son. Grace descends not from father to son by natural generation. But what a gracious GOD had Manasseh to do with! Oh! how lovely and encouraging is it to poor sinners, to behold such monuments of mercy placed in the church, as if to tell men that there is mercy with GOD that he might be feared. Yes! precious JESUS! thou art the FATHER of mercies; and thou art the mercy promised; thou art indeed, and ever wilt be, JESUS. In that lovely name all mercy is contained. Thou art the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof.

But Reader! while we look at Amon the son of Manasseh, in the very moment our souls feel all possible encouragement in the grace vouchsafed the father, is there not enough to induce trembling, when we behold the hardened state of the son. Like the two thieves on the cross. Who can contemplate that sight without a mixture of joy and terror: Both so near JESUS, and yet the one as unconscious as the dead; while the other manifests forth so illustrious an evidence of the highest faith and truest repentance. Oh! thou, blessed author and finisher of our faith and salvation, grant, if it be thy blessed will, both to Writer and Reader, suited grace to profit by such striking examples. Let everything tend to lead our hearts to thee, for of thee cometh our salvation. LORD open our eyes, unstop our ears, that we may no longer be uncircumcised in heart and spirit; but make us altogether what thou wouldest have us to be, and *work in us both to will and to do of thy good pleasure.*

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

We are brought acquainted in this chapter with Josiah, the good king. Many of his pious deeds are recounted. The book of the law is found by Hilkiah. Shaphan reads in it before the king. Josiah's pious weeping in the rehearsal. He sendeth with humbleness to inquire of the LORD. The LORD's answer.

REFLECTIONS

READER! are you young in years! behold the loveliness of early piety. What can afford a more interesting sight than to see our youths in the first days of their strength, asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, to join themselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant which cannot be broken, and like Josiah, of whom it is said, *that while he was yet young he began to seek after the GOD of his Father.*

Reader! are you aged, or advancing towards the middle of life, and yet unacquainted with salvation, living without a saving

knowledge of the LORD JESUS! Oh! that GOD the SPIRIT, from your reading this delightful account of Josiah, may awaken your heart, and open your eyes to the love and glory of the Person and righteousness of JESUS, that now today, while it is called today, you may seek the LORD GOD of your fathers, before the night cometh when no man can work.

Precious JESUS! let the same impressions of grace which wrought upon the mind of Josiah, be in me. LORD, make my heart tender; give me to humble myself before thee: let my soul be bowed down in the dust in the contemplation of my own vileness, and the iniquity of the land, that when thou comest forth in judgment, thou mayest, blessed JESUS, be my strength, and the security of thy people in the day of visitation. And oh! LORD, grant that in thy blood and righteousness my soul may find an everlasting hiding place, both from the afflictions of this life and the terrors of the world to come. Yes! precious JESUS! on thee do I call, to thee will I come, by thee shall I be saved, for thou art my strength, and my song, and art become my salvation.

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

Josiah conveneth all Judah to the hearing of the book of the law of GOD, which Hilkiyah had found in the temple. This chapter relates the circumstances of this solemnity. The King reneweth the covenant of the LORD, and prosecuteth the destruction of idolatry.

REFLECTIONS

How interesting to good Josiah appeared the law of GOD! With what peculiar delight did he convene all the people to attend the reading of it! And with what holy joy did he celebrate the passover, and renew the covenant GOD had made with their fathers. Think, Reader! I charge you what should be your joy and mine in receiving the gospel, the precious, blessed gospel of the ever blessed GOD!

How should we delight to attend the public assemblies, and gather others to attend also! And if the mere celebration of the paschal feast in commemoration was so interesting, which after all was but a type of better things, founded upon better promises, how should our joy burst forth at the feast of CHRIST our Passover, and with what holy rapture should we attend JESUS at his supper! Oh! thou LAMB of GOD! oh! thou who art both the Passover, the sacrifice, the High Priest, and the golden Altar on which the sacrifice was offered! Be thou my joy, my sacrifice, my righteousness, the whole of the covenant, and my all in all. Let it be said indeed, that surely there never was holden such a passover, as when CHRIST was sacrificed for his people. And never was my soul really, and truly feasted, until by happy faith, I ate of his flesh, and drank of his blood, by which I have eternal life abiding in me.

Let us not take our farewell of Josiah without gathering one improvement more from the view the HOLY GHOST is pleased to give of him. Though it be not always becoming to cull out the shades of good men, yet if the soul be led to improve such views as show the universal imperfection of nature, in order to lead to JESUS, then we may not only with safety do it, but also derive much advantage from it. Yes, blessed LORD JESUS! wherever I look, to whomsoever I direct my attention, I find frailty and imperfection mark them all. But in thee I behold all perfection, all glory. Oh, then! on thee let my soul unceasingly look. Let me behold thee as GOD my FATHER beholds thee; and as far as a poor finite creature can imitate infinite delight, let my ravished soul say in humble breathings, this is my beloved JESUS in whom I am well pleased for salvation. I count all things else but dung and dross that I may know thee. Be thou my joy and my portion forever.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

The ruin of Judah is nearly arrived. Jehoiakim rebelling against the king of Babylon, to whom he had been tributary three years, is

ruined. Jerusalem is taken. Some account of the evil reign of Zedekiah.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT an awful representation is made in this chapter, and, indeed, in the whole history; (for all the world is but one and the same volume) of sinners! Could one suppose it possible, was it not ascertained by fact, that men should brave the divine power, and, as it were, defy the Lord by the most determined perseverance in sin. See, my soul, in the destruction of Jerusalem, the sure and inevitable consequence! The wages of sin is, and must be, death, Oh! Lord Jesus, cause me, in the view of it, to flee to thee for refuge, and let me hear thy voice saying, Oh! Israel! thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help found.

Reader, behold Jerusalem thus ruined! see the people carried away captives. See how the Lord permitted the very heathens of the earth to scourge his people! Who, after this, will take confidence while in sin. O Lord! be gracious to thy land. For Jesus sake be not wroth very sore, neither do thou remember our iniquities forever; but be jealous for thy land, and heal her backslidings, we beseech thee.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

Jerusalem is again besieged. Zedekiah is taken, his sons slain and his eyes put out. The close of the chapter relates that Jehoiachin, who had been long captive in Babylon, was brought out of prison by the kindness of the king, and set at his table.

REFLECTIONS

READER! we are brought to the final close of Judah's history as a kingdom in this Chapter; and therefore let us pause over the subject, and in beholding the desolated state of Zion as a church,

take up the lamentation of the mournful prophet and say, *How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!*

And as we pause and behold the desolation, let us look back at her former felicity, and ask the cause of her present ruin. Beautiful for situation, (*said one of old*) the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion. *Here was not only the royal city of David, but the holy city of our GOD, even David's LORD. It was the LORD that founded Zion, (saith one that answereth the messengers of the nation) and the poor of his people shall trust in it. But where is she now? The LORD hath cast down Zion in the day of his fierce anger.*

And wherefore hath the LORD done this to Zion? Alas! alas! because Zion hath forsaken her GOD, therefore is she gone into captivity, and her kings and priests with her. But will the LORD cast off forever? Will he be no more intreated? Is his mercy clean gone forever? And will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure?

Reader! connect with this view the precious redemption by JESUS. Behold him who came for the recovery of Zion, not merely from the captivity of Babylon, but from the more dreadful captivity of sin and death. Look at JESUS in the accomplishment of redemption, opening the doors of confinement: bringing the prisoners from the prison, and them that sat in darkness out of the prison-house. Yes, blessed JESUS the SPIRIT of the LORD was upon thee, and thou hast come to make a thorough change in all the circumstances of thy people; and not merely to bring thy captives, like Jehoiachin, from the prison to thy table, but to exchange their prison-garments to the robes of salvation and glory. Thou wilt bring them all home to thy house; thou wilt raise up the tabernacles of David that are fallen down, for according to thy promise we look for new heavens and a new earth, even the new Jerusalem, *wherein righteousness shall dwell forever.* Hail! thou holy, blessed, LORD JESUS! Hail thou Almighty conqueror of all the foes of our salvation! Shortly thou wilt come to take all thy banished ones home, and the ransomed of Zion shall return with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Even so, come LORD JESUS. Amen.

1st CHRONICLES

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

THE penman of this Book of GOD is generally supposed to have been *Ezra*, the scribe. *And if so, it must have been written after the return of Israel from the Babylonish captivity; at a period of somewhat more than 500 years before the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

The records here made are very extensive, leading back the Reader to the time of Adam, and treasuring up the several heads of families, in a direct line from our first parent unto David and his descendants, by way of ascertaining the lineage of JESUS; and carrying on the history of the church long after the captivity, including upon the whole, a period of about 3600 years.

This part of the sacred writings, seems to have been written with an eye to the preservation, in the minds of the people of GOD, of the promised seed of the woman, in whom all blessings were to be centered. The HOLY GHOST hath been graciously pleased also to record in this book, several interesting particulars referring to the church, which had either been omitted in former histories, or but in part noticed. As the Gospel of the beloved apostle, John, which was supplementary to the other memoirs of the blessed JESUS, contains many most precious things of CHRIST, which the other Evangelists had not noticed: so the Chronicles may be considered supplementary to the foregoing records of the church; and, over and above, several precious observations are set down, which the former writers had but slightly regarded, or wholly passed by.

But what I would most earnestly press upon the Reader's mind, as I have indeed in every book of GOD we have already gone through the review of, is the looking out for JESUS. It may happen, from such distant periods of the church as the opening of the

Chronicles refers to, we may not be able to make such full discoveries, as the history nearer to Gospel-times may furnish: yet this, methinks, should be only made an occasion for greater and closer investigation, that we may not overlook the LORD JESUS in any part of his word, conscious that He is in and through the whole. Reader! let me charge it upon your heart, and may the HOLY GHOST sweetly influence the same earnestness in my own, that our minds may be led out to seek for JESUS in every page and every chapter of this, as well as all the other books of GOD. And, as we are commanded by our LORD himself, to search the scriptures, because they testify of him; let us never overlook a single passage. The book of Chronicles will be found, not simply the record of endless genealogies, but a faithful account of generations, wholly with an eye to Him, who was made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Blessed Author of this divine treasury! give both to Writer and Reader, as they prosecute the holy volume, increasing views of Him, to whom the whole Bible ministers; that, in whatever part we traverse, being graciously guided by thy blessed illumination, we may be sweetly instructed in his knowledge; and truly possess and enjoy that life eternal, which consisteth in knowing GOD the FATHER, and JESUS CHRIST whom he hath sent. Amen.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

The genealogy of families, from Adam to Abraham, forms the contents of this chapter, containing a period of nearly 2000 years.

REFLECTIONS

READER! pause over this chapter, and mark the several important instructions it contains. What a subject of wonder, of humiliation, and of praise, is here! What *wonder is* opened to our contemplation in the astonishing succession of so many generations! What multitudes have sprung from one stock! And what an immense

and incalculable congregation will it be, that shall; at length, be brought to stand before the judgment-seat of CHRIST, when not one, from Adam to the consummation of all things, shall be found wanting. What *humiliation* also, is in the subject of the genealogy of mankind, when we call to mind, that the whole race is alike polluted and fallen: *All have sinned and come short of the glory of GOD. There is none that doeth good, no not one.* And what a subject of *praise* doth this furnish, in beholding the long-suffering and patience of the LORD, in preserving the race of men from father to son, notwithstanding the universal depravity of all!

But, chiefly and above all, while we admire and adore the divine goodness and mercy in his condescension to the sons of men, think, Reader, of the everlasting love of GOD to our nature, in the provision made for the recovery of man from the fall, by the gracious interposition, benignity, and love of the LORD JESUS CHRIST! Oh! how highly ought we to prize the genealogy of Him, after the flesh, who came *in the fulness of time, to repair the desolations of many generations, and to restore perfect order among all the works of GOD.* Hail, thou holy, blessed, precious JESUS! Thou wast indeed free from the taint of the fallen race thou camest to redeem. Thou wast *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.* And how precious the thought, that thy righteousness, and thy blood, are the effectual source and cause of all our mercy. Blessed be our JESUS, that amidst all the dying circumstances of all generations, *thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever.* Though all things perish, *yet thou remainest:* and though we all *wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture are we changed, yet thou art the same, and thy years do not fail.* Give us, precious JESUS, to rejoice in the everlasting duration of thyself and thy kingdom, and to look beyond the grave with this assured hope, that because *thou livest, thy people shall live also.* Amen.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

The former chapter having, in a short and cursory way, dispatched the history of all ages before Israel; this chapter gives us the relation of what the Book of Chronicles hath chiefly in view, the history of the children of Israel leading to CHRIST. The genealogy in this chapter is carried down as far as the time of David.

REFLECTIONS

READER! in the quick succession of persons and families, as recorded in this Chapter, how feelingly are we taught the littleness, and even nothingness, of human nature. So that at every verse we are prompted, in the language of the Prophet, to exclaim, *Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live for ever?* But oh! how precious amidst all this is it, to behold JESUS, *who is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.*

But again, how is the mind humbled in the consideration, that though the several generations this Chapter records lived but as it were a day, yet in that day how numerous their transgressions? Though this stock of Judah was at length to produce the holy seed, and in the intermediate state was to possess, in several branches of them, both royal and priestly honours; yet we find they all partook of the same common stock of a fallen nature, of whom it is with truth said, *there is none holy, no not one.* And wherefore were they preserved, why are their names recorded with such precision and exactness? Was it not, blessed JESUS, because they all pointed to thee, ministered to thee, and in thee fulfilled the purposes of their generation? Did not the LORD JEHOVAH, concerning every one of them, say, *Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.* There is life in the root; salvation in the stock; even JESUS folded up in the seed, in whom all the family should be blessed? Oh, grace! oh, mercy! oh, wisdom! *How unsearchable are thy judgments, O LORD; and thy ways past finding out.*

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

In this Chapter the genealogy proceeds in relation in the family of David. Here are recorded an account of his sons, of his successors in the kingdom, and of the descendants in his family after the captivity.

REFLECTIONS

READER! it is hardly possible to read the genealogy of David's race without connecting with it our recollection of David's sorrow in his children. What a grief were many of his branches! Well might he say, *Although my house be not so with GOD!* And what is the relief to a sorrowful parent in the contemplation of the degeneracy and impiety of his offspring but what David found; GOD's covenant love in JESUS. Oh, my brother! if you and I can say as he did, then Shall we find the supporting consolation he found! *Yet (saith he) hath the LORD made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*

Reader! let us indulge one sweet thought more over this Chapter. We behold here the succession of David's children, and we know that that succession led to JESUS after the flesh. Oh! then, let the recollection direct our thoughts and our affections to him, (in whom the genealogy of David centered) even to all precious JESUS. *To thee, thou blessed LORD JESUS, would my soul direct all her contemplation! On thee would I fix my longing eyes! In thee shall I find the sum and substance of all desire. With thee would I eternally dwell; and from thee draw all my joy. Thou art both the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.* And while the SPIRIT and the Bride say, *Come;* and all the pressing invitations of thy holy word call upon me to come unto thee, do thou, blessed JESUS, add thine own gracious call, saying, *Surely, I come quickly;* then will my soul echo to thy voice, and with an holy fervor of desire answer, *Even so, come LORD JESUS. Amen.*

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

The history of the genealogy is prosecuted in this Chapter. Here is the posterity of Judah registered, which forms the most illustrious, as well as the most numerous, of all the tribes of Israel. There is an interruption in the register to introduce the prayer of Jabez, which though forming a chasm in the genealogy, yet makes the Chapter itself the more interesting.

REFLECTIONS

READER! it is a sweet thought, in the contemplation of what is here recorded of the tribes of Judah and of Simeon, to recollect that GOD is the GOD of all the families of Israel, both then, and now, and forever. Yes, blessed LORD GOD, JEHOVAH, thou hast loved with an everlasting love, and thou changest not; therefore it is, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. And oh! how glorious is it, to see the eternal security of this love founded in the person, and established in the perfect obedience, righteousness, and salvation of thy dear Son, the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Reader! let us in the character and conduct of Jabez, learn those sweet lessons which, in a gospel sense, and with an eye to JESUS, are afforded us in his example. It is but little that is said of Jabez: but that little opens vast improvement. Though more honourable than his brethren, though so remarkable for his piety, so steadfast in his trust on a covenant GOD: yet how short a relation is made of him among men? How delightful the thought in the breast of the believer, whose life is hid with CHRIST in GOD! However unknown, unobserved, unnoticed, by the world, yet eternally secure, and eternally happy in JESUS! Jabez prayed not to an unknown GOD; not to one uncertain to hear, and uncertain to answer; but to Israel's GOD, a GOD in covenant with his chosen from everlasting. And what was the burden of Jabez's prayer; Oh! that thou wouldest bless me (said he) indeed: that thou wouldest enlarge my coast; that thine hand might be with me; to keep use from evil, that it might not grieve me. And is not this a gospel prayer in JESUS? What is it to be blest

indeed, but to have our sins cancelled in the blood of CHRIST: for how can I be blest indeed until my sins are forgiven, and till I have redemption in JESUS'S blood, according to the riches of GOD'S grace? How will my coast be enlarged, until that CHRIST hath made me free, and enlarged my heart, and mouth, and lips, to the praises of his name? And how shall I be kept and secured everlastingly in this freedom, unless He that pardons still upholds, He that redeems continues still to preserve, and He that sanctifies still shines in upon me, and takes not his HOLY SPIRIT from me? Oh LORD! thou that didst hear and answer the prayer of Jabez, hear me, and grant my request, for all these spiritual blessings in JESUS! Bless me, my GOD, and make me truly happy indeed, by making me all that thou wouldst have me to be in JESUS; that He may be my portion, my hope, my joy, my life, my salvation, in time and to all eternity.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

The genealogies of Israel in the tribe of Reuben, and also in the tribe of Gad, form the principal subjects of this chapter.

REFLECTIONS

READER! do not hastily pass by the view which this chapter affords of distinguishing grace, in the removal of the honor of birthright from Reuben to transfer it to Joseph, and placing Judah above all his Father's household. Evidently here was fulfilled the dying Patriarch's blessing, when he said, Judah! thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise, and thy father's children shall bow down before thee. But oh! how sweet and precious is this view of Israel's family, when beheld with an eye to CHRIST. Truly, thou blessed JESUS, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; for every knee shall bow before thee, and every tongue confess that thou art LORD to the glory of GOD the FATHER.

Reader! let you and I seek for grace, that we may not, like the Reubenites and the Gadites, set up our rest on this side Jordan. No!

dearest LORD JESUS, it is thou that art the rest, wherewith thou wilt cause the weary to rest, and thou art our only refreshment. Be thou, LORD, my rest, my joy, and my portion for ever.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

Prosecuting the genealogy of Israel's son, the tribe of Levi is made the subject of this chapter, and particularly with an eye to the priesthood, in the person of Aaron and his sons.

REFLECTIONS

Who can ever read a portion of scripture concerning the priesthood, without having his heart secretly and sweetly led forth to contemplate the LORD JESUS in his priestly office? Who can behold the sons of Levi, as offering to the LORD an offering in righteousness, without connecting with it the glorious representation of Him, who made his soul an offering for sin, that his people might be made the righteousness of GOD in him? Who could look at Levi or any of his order in their priestly garments, and overlook JESUS there represented: who *wears a vesture dipped in blood, and ever liveth to make intercession for his people.* Hail! Almighty Priest of a *better covenant, established upon better promises.* We see in them that *the law made men high priests which had infirmity:* But thou, O blessed JESUS, wert consecrated with an oath, *by Him that sware and will not repent, that thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.* LORD, help me to come under thy censer, to be interested in thine offering, thy blood, thy sacrifice. Take, blessed JESUS, my cause, my person, my poor offering, all that I have, and all that I am, into thine own gracious hands, and let me be presented in thy most precious offering. Sure I am that I shall be eternally and everlastingly safe, because thou ever livest to make intercession for sinners; and sure I am, that thou canst, and thou wilt, save all that come to GOD by thee, since thou hast, by the one offering of thyself once offered, *for ever perfected them that are sanctified.*

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

The same subject is prosecuted through this chapter, namely, the genealogy of Israel. Here is contained the register of Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Manasseh, and Ephraim.

REFLECTIONS

IT is hardly possible to trace the subject of the genealogy of men, in the succession of fathers and sons, through so many generations, without feeling the mind drawn out and exercised in the contemplation of the insignificance of man in all his boasted strength and power. Well may every one exclaim with the apostle, in the view of it, *for what is your life? it is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away!*

But, Reader, is there no relief to the mind under the exercise of such humiliating views of human life? Is there no resource, no comfort, no asylum, or house of mercy, to take shelter in, from the universal wreck of our poor dying and dead nature? Oh thou, precious, ever-living, and life-giving JESUS! Oh! thou who hast proclaimed thyself, and proved thyself to be *the resurrection and the life*; who hast said, and confirmed it also by the most palpable evidence, that *he who believeth thee, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in thee, shall never die*: dost thou ask me, dearest JESUS, as thou didst the sorrowful sister, whether I believe this? Yes yes? thou Almighty LORD, *I do, I do believe!* Blessed be thy name, it is thou which hast given me to believe. And do thou at all times *help mine unbelief*. The consciousness that thou livest, and that because thou livest all thy people shall live also, bears up my soul above all the dying circumstances of myself, and a world around me. Though this body of mine goeth daily down to the grave, yet in thee, my soul for ever liveth, and shall never die. Thou art the Author of life, the Restorer and Maintainer of my spiritual life, and thou wilt, by and by, be the Perfecter of my eternal life, both soul and body together. Hail then, thou glorious, gracious, lovely, and loving LORD JESUS! *Thy love is*

better than wine. For though wine may comfort the heavy heart, yet no wine can raise the dead: but thy love hath done both. And when flesh, and heart, and all things shall fail, *thou wilt be the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

This chapter takes up the subject of the genealogy of the tribe of Benjamin. In the preceding chapter, we had the introduction to this register of the Benjamites. Here it is again prosecuted and completed.

REFLECTIONS

IT forms no small improvement in the perusal of this chapter, and indeed in the review of the whole registry of Israel, to remark with what honour the illustrious tribes of Israel, are handed down to us in the word of GOD. Here are names with whom, by frequent reading, we may become familiar, who lived and died in ages so remote from the present, while thousands and tens of thousands among the great ones of the earth, who made splendid appearances in their day, no doubt, *their very memorial is perished with them.* Think, Reader! what a succession of men and monarchies have passed on through the world, of whose remembrance not a vestige remains. While those families, even the least and most inconsiderable, because they were the Israel of GOD, are had in everlasting remembrance.

But chiefly, Reader, from this view, let you and I be led to consider the vast importance of having our names written *in the book of life.* Think, Sir, of that awful day, at the audit of GOD, which John describes as he saw it in vision; and which will one day certainly be realized: therein he tells us he saw, *the dead both small and great, stand before GOD. And the sea gave up her dead, and death and hell delivered up their dead. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

Revelation 20:12-15. Oh! precious, precious JESUS, that last delivered thy people from the wrath to come; give me, dearest LORD, to rejoice in the pleasing, glorious hope, that my name, worthless as it is, is written in heaven.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter sums up the subject of the registry of Israel. The Levites are taken notice of. And particular mention is made of Saul and Jonathan's stock.

REFLECTIONS

It is impossible to read this Chapter, and connect with it, in our remembrance, that this opens a new history of the Church after the desolation of the Babylonish captivity, but with very interesting feelings. Let the Reader figure to himself the desolated view of Jerusalem and Zion plowed as a field. The people returned to their beloved city, and finding the whole in ruins. The Prophet Jeremiah, the mournful Prophet, only in contemplation of what it would be, cried out, *How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow that was great among the nations!*

Reader! Pause over the sad picture! See what sin was capable of effecting. And if GOD so punished Israel, what security hath any other nation? If GOD spared not the natural branches, what shall a grafted instock expect in rebellion?

Blessed JESUS! thou glorious, all-prevailing Intercessor, be gracious, LORD, we beseech thee to our land. Say, *LORD*, concerning us, *I am returned to Jerusalem in mercies*. And when thou returnest to bless a land, thou comest with grace to pardon, grace to sanctify, grace to bless, grace to deliver, grace to renew, grace to heal, all our diseases. Oh, then, blessed JESUS, come with all thy quickening, reviving, comforting presence, and say unto us, *Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land be any more termed Desolate; but let the nations of the earth call us the Holy People;*

the redeemed of the LORD. And let us be called, Sought out; a city not forsaken.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

The history of the genealogy of Israel being finished, the book of Chronicles now enters upon the history of Israel as a people. In this Chapter we are carried back to that part of Saul' s history which terminated with his death, with the events that followed, from the men of Jabesh-gilead.

REFLECTIONS

WHO can read the history of Saul, and behold the dreadful end of such men, but with trembling! How dark the night of so promising a morning! But what must the termination of such conduct be, which in direct defiance of better knowledge, against conscience, against all the feelings of honour, justice, and humanity, rushes on the most desperate deeds, what must the end be but darkness and despair? He who murdered the priests of the *LORD* is deserted by the *LORD*, and dies by the murder of his own hands! He who abandoned his dearest friend, who fought his battles and saved his crown, is himself abandoned by all friends, and his very carcass stripped and insulted by his open enemies. My soul! rejoice with trembling! Look wholly to *JESUS*. Fear to thyself on any occasion. Be jealous of every earthly honour, lest like Saul's, it should be unsanctified. Oh! precious Redeemer! keep me near thyself, keep me humble, keep me low, keep me, *LORD*, lest I fall; for they only are safe who are *kept by thy power, through faith, unto salvation.*

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

As the preceding Chapter related to us the account of the death of Saul, this takes up the immediate part which follows in that history, in the elevation of David to the throne. The Chapter closeth with an account of the names of David's worthies.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us pause over the view which this Chapter affords, of the exaltation of David to the throne, and see whether we do not behold in it a figure of the exaltation of CHRIST to the right hand of power, when he had by himself purged our sins, and when forever be sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Doth not your heart say to JESUS; as the men of Israel did to David, *Thou shalt feed thy people, and thou shalt be Lord over them.* And do you not also say so from a consciousness of the same cause, that you are of CHRIST's bone, and of his flesh. Oh! how doubly delightful is it, *first* to see JESUS reign, and *next* to consider our relationship in him. And wilt thou not, blessed JESUS; say to thy people as is recorded in thy words, *to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my FATHER in his throne.*

In the contemplation of the worthies of David, I would pray for grace to become the worthy follower of the Lamb, in the regeneration, that when the Son of GOD shall come encircled with his holy army I may have grace, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. LORD make me the patient follower of them, *who now through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

This Chapter, in prosecuting David's history, treats of the companies that came to join David, and the augmentation of his army.

REFLECTIONS

WHILE we behold David thus surrounded with his worthies, let our thoughts take wing and fly away to the contemplation of David's *LORD*, now attended with his redeemed ones around the throne which is above. Yes: thou Holy and Exalted Saviour! we may, by the eye of faith, look within the veil, and see thee encircled with all the chosen race of worthies, that have followed thee, and been of thine host, from all ages. The glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, all, all, praise thee. And worthy art thou to be praised, thou Holy One of Israel!

And think, ye redeemed ones on earth, whom the *LORD*! hath gathered from among men, and made kings and priests unto *GOD* and the *FATHER*,—think to what high honour ye are called, in that ye are a *chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*. Oh! sound forth *the high praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: who were once afar of but are now brought nigh by his blood: who were once not a people, but are now the people of GOD: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy*. If the worthies of David are thus registered in the *Chronicles*, think of the high honour of the worthies of *JESUS*, made worthy in his worthiness only, in having their names written in heaven. If David's warriors are thus spoken of with such honorable testimony in the book of *GOD*, recollect your dignity, ye soldiers in the holy army of *JESUS*, whose names are *in the book of life*. *Rejoice in the LORD alway, and again I say, rejoice. The LORD is at hand*. Yet a little while and *JESUS* will appear *to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all that believe*. And then the Son of *GOD* will be seen surrounded with all his throng, and not one, even the humblest and least of his redeemed, will be found wanting,

Haste, my beloved, and until the day break and the shadows flee away, be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us the circumstance of David's fetching the Ark of GOD from Kirjath-jearim: the death of Uzzah, for his presumption on that occasion; in consequence of which, the Ark is left at the house of Obed-edom.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, my soul, in the perusal of this Chapter, how precious the ark of GOD was in the sight of all Israel, and learn from hence how infinitely precious he whom that ark represented ought to be to all his people.

Learn, moreover, how vastly interesting to have his presence brought home to the soul, that JESUS may be formed in the soul *the hope of glory*. But learn, moreover, with what reverence and godly fear the *LORD* is to be approached in holy seasons of ordinances. In the instance of *Uzzah* I would have my whole heart impressed with a deep sense that a trifling frame of mind, or an unbecoming confidence of spirit, is no part of the liberty belonging to the gospel of JESUS. Never, my soul, I charge thee, never dare go to any holy ordinances, as the unthinking horse rusheth to the battle. But *LORD*, grant me *that preparation of the heart, and that answer of the tongue, which are both of thine own giving.*

Learn, my soul, from the conduct of David on this occasion, how to be humbled under his Almighty hand, and never dare to be displeased with GOD, when at any time his providences seem to intimate his displeasure with thee. But let me love the hand that smites, from a conviction that it is from love his chastisements came. And chiefly, and above all, let me have grace to behold in the

blessing of Obed-edom's house for the ark of GOD'S sake, how highly interesting it must be to fetch home JESUS

from every ordinance, every event, every Providence, in his word, and by his grace, to my house, my family, my heart. There, blessed JESUS, do thou take the full, the entire possession. Drive out all other things, all the buyers and sellers out of thy temple, and reign there, and rule there, the lord and sovereign of every affection.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

We are here again introduced to the acquaintance between Hiram, king of Tyre, and David. We have also, an account of David's family and of his victories.

REFLECTIONS

READER! learn from the view given us of David in this chapter, that the highest state of earthly glory, is neither secure from corruptions within, nor from fightings without. Even David hath fleshly lusts which war against the soul. And even David's security under the blessing of the GOD of Israel, shall not exempt him from furious battles with the Philistines on every side. *They that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS shall suffer persecution.* Reader! if you be CHRIST'S, do not expect much ease, or uninterrupted enjoyment. But see to it, in all your conflicts, that you fight under the LORD'S banner. Remember what David saith, speaking of JESUS: *In thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness make their boast.* Go forth, therefore, as he did, *in the strength of the LORD, and make mention of his righteousness, even his righteousness only.* And Reader! suffer me to add one thought more. As David waned for the sound of a going in the mulberry trees: so let you and I watch that *still small voice*, of GOD the HOLY GHOST, which, like a voice from *behind* or *within*, saith, *This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right-hand, and when ye turn to the left,* And to what is this direction pointed, but unto thee, thou blessed JESUS, for the HOLY

GHOST is unceasingly glorifying thee, for thou art the way, and the truth, and the life. In thee and thy finished salvation, we shall overcome and be more than conquerors through thy love, wherewith thou hast loved us.

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

This chapter finisheth the subject of the bringing up the ark. It is performed successfully and with great joy. But Michal, his wife despiseth David for his dancing before the Ark.

REFLECTIONS

OBSERVE, Reader, how grace had wrought upon the mind of David since the breach of Uzzah. He no longer feels displeasure at GOD. His displeasure is at himself. He confesses our GOD made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after due order. He now sets himself to prepare a place for the ark of GOD, before he presumes to bring it home. My Brother! depend upon it grace will always induce such effects. To justify the LORD in all the LORD's appointments: Thou hast done right; and we have done foolishly. And not only to justify but to approve: It may be painful, it may be galling to flesh and blood: but it is the LORD that appoints, and therefore it must be right. And still more to cleave to GOD as a friend, though his frowns seem to look like an enemy: to kiss the hand that smites, and to believe and be perfectly satisfied, that while the LORD exercises the authority of a sovereign, he never loses sight of the FATHER and the friend: JESUS, the Son of his love, still lives, and his covenant righteousness still pleads. JESUS is, and will be, still JESUS; this is faith, for this gives glory to his holy name. And it was thus David prepared for the reception of the ark, and thus in faith and holy joy he brought it home, and the LORD blessed him and Israel in the service.

Reader! let us learn from hence the many sweet things it contains. Oh, JESUS! give us grace to prepare a place for thee, even

the best place in our affections, the chief and whole room in our heart. LORD JESUS, do thou occupy and fill all! Then under the influence of thy sweet SPIRIT, we shall go forth to meet thee, to receive thee, to embrace thee, and to bring thee home with holy transports of joy, though all the Michal's of the present hour despise: let them despise, so thou smile. Like the church, when I have once found him whom my soul loveth, *I will hold thee and not let thee go, until that I have brought thee into my father's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me; for there wilt thou show me thy loves.*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This chapter contains an account of the finishing work, in bringing up the Ark to the Holy City. David's gifts to the people in consequence thereof, and the Psalm of praise David delivered upon the occasion.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, my soul, over the perusal of this chapter, and behold the earnestness with which David entered upon the service of the sanctuary, when the *LORD* had blessed him and the people once more with the symbol of his divine presence. Observe with what holy joy he celebrates *GOD'S* praises. How often he repeats in song the glories of the *LORD*, and the wonders of his grace. And how earnest he is that all the people should partake in the mercies of *JEHOVAH*. And when thou hast paid all due attention to David, and the children of Israel, in their joy and thankfulness over the ark of the *LORD*, then, my soul, turn thyself to behold him whom that ark represented, and think, if it be possible, what a vast increase of mercy thou hast to bless the *LORD JEHOVAH* for, in that thou art called in happier times, than to the symbols of the *LORD'S* presence, for *JESUS* himself hath tabernacled among men in substance of the flesh, and hast wrought out and completed eternal redemption by his blood and

righteousness. Hail! thou holy, glorious, gracious, precious EMMANUEL! Oh let my soul be everlastingly rejoicing in thee, I would indeed sing unto thee; I would sing Psalms unto thee; I would for ever glory in thy holy name, and be talking for ever of thy wondrous works. And no less to thee, in my Redeemer's name and mediation, would I look up with thankfulness, O FATHER of mercies, and GOD of all comfort! Thy everlasting love, and grace, and mercy first raised up JESUS, and gave him for a covenant to the people. And it is the same unchanging love, and grace, and mercy which accepts poor sinners in him now, and makes them forever blessed. *Arise, O LORD, into thy rest, thou and the Ark of thy strength. Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout with joy. Oh! let thine HOLY SPIRIT so graciously take of the things of JESUS and show them unto us, that every knee may bow before thee, and every tongue confess, that JESUS CHRIST is LORD, to the glory of GOD the FATHER.*

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

This is a most interesting chapter, in that it brings before us a gracious interview between the LORD and his servant David, at throne of grace. David felt his heart prompted to build an house for GOD. He is forbidden to do it, but is told that his son shall. The chapter closes with his prayer and thanksgivings.

REFLECTIONS

READER! observe how truly lovely and graceful a devout heart appears in the highest of characters among the sons of men. How much greater doth David shine in this chapter, when going in before the LORD under such a self-abasement of soul, than the mightiest earthly monarch before his army. The way to true greatness is in the path of humility.

Observe how condescending the LORD is, for the comfort and encouragement of his servant. And depend upon it, such is, and such

will be the graciousness of the *LORD* to all his people. That sweet promise is a volume to this amount. *It shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer: and while they are speaking I will hear.*

But principally, and above all, Reader, do not fail to observe how much of JESUS and his finished salvation is in this passage. The LORD JEHOVAH then said to the patriarch; *I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an house. I will raise up thy seed, He shall build me an house. And I will establish his throne for ever.* And what is it now? Blessed be JEHOVAH; FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, the glorious Covenanters, the gracious Fulfillers. The Son of GOD is come. He hath tabernacled among us. He hath built his house. He hath *hewn out his seven pillars. He hath* (as the Wisdom, Image of the Invisible GOD) *killed his beasts, mingled his wine, and furnished his table.* And having obtained eternal redemption, by his blood and righteousness, he is now entered into the temple not made with hands, but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of GOD for us. Hail! thou JEHOVAH JESUS, LORD of all! All power is thine in heaven and on earth. In thee the souls of all thy redeemed ones rejoice. *And of the increase of thy government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this.*

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This Chapter relates the circumstances of David's war with the Philistines, and Moabites. He smiteth Hadarezer.

REFLECTIONS

READER! while reading the wars of David, do not overlook the spiritual wars in which David's *LORD* engaged for the salvation of his people. JESUS hath indeed spoiled principalities and powers, and

made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. And as the great Captain of our salvation hath gone before in the holy war, so his people follow him with conflict and in armour. Who shall say, what Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, and a troop of foes both within and without, are unceasingly making war with the people of GOD. Blessed JESUS! where is our strength but in thee? Where shall we find might, or power, or strength, against the host of our enemies, unless thou wilt fight our battles for us, and in us, that we may be more than conquerors through thy grace helping us? Oh! how precious the thought. The battle is not doubtful, nor the conflict uncertain. Thou hast conquered all our foes for us, and we overcome them also by the blood of the Lamb. LORD JESUS, in all my spiritual conflicts let me set thee continually before me; for thou art on my right hand, therefore shall I not be moved. *Behold, GOD is my salvation, I will not fear what men can do unto me.*

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

We are here told of David's friendly message to Hanun king of Ammon; and of the impolitic conduct of Hanun to David's messengers, whereby David is so angry that he opens a war against Hanun, and conquers him.

REFLECTIONS

IN the unprovoked ill treatment of David and his servants by the king of Ammon and his people, we may behold a picture of the ungodly world harassing and afflicting the people of GOD. When the LORD JESUS sent his servants the Prophets to prepare the way for his coming, what reception did they meet! When he came himself, with all that meekness and gentleness which distinguished his character, the rancor of the enemies to the cross became only inflamed the more. And when the whole of redemption was finished, and the Son of GOD was returned to glory, though he now sent graciously, from heaven by his HOLY SPIRIT, and by the ministry of his Apostles, to

tell even Jerusalem sinners, that the very blood they had shed was spilt for the redemption of many that had their hands in his crucifixion; yet who believed their report? Alas! what deadly blindness hath veiled the eye of man by nature! The Son of GOD foretold the event; and its correspondence exactly answered. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, much more will they call them of his household." Precious *LORD JESUS!* well may every heart exclaim, whom the *LORD* hath made willing in the day of his power; *How is it, LORD, that thou hast manifested thyself unto me, and not unto the world.*

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

This Chapter contains a further account of the wars of David. Rabbah is besieged and taken. The Philistines are again overthrown.

REFLECTIONS

BEHOLD, Reader! how the Ammonites were brought under with harrows of iron, and with axes. A lively representation how ill it will fare with the enemies of our spiritual David, when they shall be brought under his dominion. For the knee that will not bend to the sceptre of his grace, shall be broken under the iron rod of his justice. Oh! for grace to kiss the Son lest he be angry with unhumbled sinners, for their long standing out against the word of his gospel, and they perish from the right way. If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Let me contemplate, in the crown of Ammon put upon the head of David, with all the precious stones in it, the sure presage that our JESUS must be crowned even in the presence of his enemies. And they who would not have this glorious man CHRIST JESUS to reign over them, shall be brought before him for destruction. Yes! thou precious JESUS! thy people shall see thee as the beloved Apostle saw

thee, *on thine head many crowns*. The crown of thine eternal GODHEAD; the crown of thy Mediatorial kingdom. The crown of victory over all thine enemies. The crown of redemption for every poor sinner thou hast brought home to thy kingdom. And dearest LORD, amidst so many crowns shall not there be one more conspicuously great and illustrious as it will appear to *my* eye, and as it concerns *my* redemption, even the crown which I, a poor, ransomed, hell-deserving sinner, do now with joy unspeakable and full of delight, put upon thy sacred head, in ascribing the whole, and every part, from beginning to end, of my redemption from sin and Satan, my own dreadfully wicked heart, and a world of wickedness all around, to thee, my glorious, gracious, Almighty Redeemer, JESUS! *for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed me to GOD by thy blood*.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

This chapter represents David in a very different point of view from the former. There we beheld him most lovely in his humbleness before the LORD. In this, in a state of transgression, numbering his people. Here is an account also, of GOD'S visitation and David's punishment.

REFLECTIONS

READERS let us pause over this chapter to remark what a vast difference we behold in David, from what the former chapter represents him! Is this David, who so enjoyed the gracious manifestations of the LORD, and found his whole heart going forth in praise, and prayer, and faith, and love! And now through distrust numbering his men, as if he had no longer confidence in the LORD, and was looking to an arm of flesh! But, Reader! what is man, even the best of men, if but for a moment left to himself?

Precious JESUS! cause me to learn, from this renewed instance before my eyes, what a poor creature is man in his highest

attainments, and how needful thy blood and righteousness are, through the whole and every part of our pilgrimage, to cleanse the conscience and to justify the soul. Reader, learn from it your daily need of JESUS! See whether you are thus coming to CHRIST daily, hourly, to gather pardon, grace, and strength for every emergency. Depend upon it, if you have lost a sense of that powerful impression, which you felt when you first came to JESUS a poor, needy, helpless sinner, it is not because you have less need of him, but because you have relaxed in your attention to your own wants, and the Redeemer's fulness to supply. Oh, Sir! see that you make him what he really is, and must be, to his people, when rightly used and improved, as well the Finisher, as the Author of our faith; the End as well as the Beginning. Many set out upon a full conviction of their need of JESUS, but after awhile are turning in to somewhat of their own by way of confidence. Pray GOD, that you and I may not so learn CHRIST. But may the LORD give us grace to make him the whole of our hopes, for there is salvation in no other. As you have received CHRIST JESUS, the LORD, so walk you in him. Let every grace be acted upon him, and everything will then tend to show our increasing need of him, until we arrive to this blessed issue, to know him, to be *made of GOD to us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that he that glorieth may glory in the LORD.*

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

Though David had it in command, that he should not build the temple of the LORD, yet it was not commanded him that he should make no preparations for it. This chapter represents him busy in the design, and instructing his son, Solomon, who was appointed by the LORD to build it, how to proceed.

REFLECTIONS

*READER! while you and I pause over the account here given of David's zeal for the LORD'S house, and behold with what generosity and greatness of mind he prepared his silver and his gold, for the service of Him, from whom he received, and to whom he owed all he had: while we pay all suitable respect and praise to David, let us duly consider to what nobler services we are called under a gospel dispensation, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to GOD in JESUS CHRIST. Silver and gold, (may many a precious soul say, with the Apostle,) have I none, but such as I have, would I offer to the LORD. Oh! dearest JESUS! it is thou which hast made all thy followers kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER. By thee, therefore, would we offer the sacrifice of praise to GOD continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. And while contemplating the vast preparation of Solomon's temple, in the gold, and silver, and wood, and stones, think of the vast and long preparation from the foundation of the world, for the introduction of him whom that temple represented. Oh! thou blessed JESUS! give me continually to meditate with rapture and delight on that love of thine in which GOD our FATHER laid the foundation of our everlasting happiness, and formed the temple of thy body for the express purpose of salvation. Here was mercy indeed built up forever. Here was a temple indeed formed for eternity, in which all thine, being incorporated, should he kings and priests forever. And when the temple of thy body, by the sacrifice of thyself was destroyed, according to the determinate counsel and fore knowledge of GOD, thou didst by thine own power, agreeable to thine own prediction, raise it again the third day. Make us, blessed JESUS, even all that are thy people, make us, as thou hast promised, pillars in thy temple; that being *built upon the same foundation as the apostles and prophets, JESUS CHRIST himself being the chief corner stone; and in whom the whole building is fitly framed together!* we may grow up unto an holy temple in the LORD, for an habitation of GOD, through the SPIRIT.*

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

This Chapter relates to us the appointing of Solomon king, in the room of David his father. The Levites and officers of the temple are appointed also, and numbered.

REFLECTIONS

READER! I only detain you with the reflection of one interesting thought, which seems to arise out of the perusal of this chapter, concerning the Levites. You see how numerous they were in those early ages of the church; and you will, I am sure, think with me, that in the present hour faithful ministers can never be too numerous, in labouring in the word and doctrine. If JESUS, in the days of his flesh, commanded his disciples to pray the *LORD* of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest; well may we with earnestness beseech of him, now in compassion to the perishing state of thousands everywhere around, to send forth truly awakened servants of the sanctuary to his service. LORD JESUS, I would say, thou great Bishop of souls! graciously do thou ordain pastors after thine own heart, which shall feed thy people with understanding and knowledge. Let them be such, O LORD, as shall do the work of Evangelists, and make full proof of their ministry. Oh! for the dawn of that glorious day when the watchmen upon the walls of Zion shall see eye to eye! when the church of JESUS upon earth shall hear some resemblance to the church triumphant in glory. Surely, dearest JESUS, when that hour comes, so faithfully promised, and so devoutly prayed for by the faithful in all ages, under the quickening influences of the HOLY GHOST; that hour, that day, when Ethiopia, and Seba, and the multitude of the isles, shall stretch forth their hands unto GOD: surely, LORD, thou wilt be adored by the redeemed below, in congregations as numerous as the multitude which John saw in heaven, whom no man could number. LORD! hasten the hour in mercy to a lost world; cut short thy work in righteousness, thou that art mighty to save; and bring on the latter day glory, *when the*

kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our LORD and of his CHRIST, and he shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

Here is a continuation of the same subject concerning the Levites as the former. The several divisions in the different branches of the Levites are here made by lot.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a sweet thought ariseth out of the perusal of this chapter! we here behold Levites set apart by lot to stand *before* the LORD, according to the order of their course in their daily ministration. And no doubt, beheld with an eye to JESUS, as a figure for the time then present, the order was beautiful, their ministration lovely, and they were accepted before GOD in JESUS. But what a sweet thought ariseth out of this very contemplation, when we consider the whole of this service as shadows only of good things to come, the body of which was JESUS; and now behold the whole body of Levites, even all the mystical members of JESUS, as set apart to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable, before GOD in JESUS, as their reasonable service. The Levites ministered only in the order of their course. But JESUS's Priests continually. They, when they had fulfilled their monthly station, retired to make way for the ministration of others. But JESUS's Levites are supposed daily and hourly to draw nigh to a throne of grace, having boldness to enter into the holiest at all times, and upon all occasions, by the blood of JESUS. Think, then, ye of this royal priesthood, to what vast dignity ye are called! JESUS, your great high priest, hath brought you nigh. He hath opened this new and living way by his blood, and ever liveth to keep it open by his intercession! See, then, that ye live up to this high privilege. A throne of grace is always open, always accessible, and the promise calls us to approach. Sprinkled with the blood of JESUS, consecrated by the word and prayer, and receiving of

the fulness of the SPIRIT, let us draw near with true hearts, in full assurance of faith.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

As the preceding chapters related the regulation of the service of the Levites; this chapter is directed to inform the Reader of the appointment of the order of the singers in the temple service. They are also arranged by lot in the same number of four and twenty distinct orders.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! in beholding this goodly company of the singers in the temple, think of him whose praise they celebrated, and sing thy song of redemption also; for he hath called thee out of darkness into his marvellous light. The song they sung is the same as John heard the armies of Israel in heaven sing, and which, neither in heaven nor earth can any sing, but the redeemed. Reader! can you join the happy chorus? Are you of this temple service? Salvation is the joyful sound; and to the Lamb that was slain in the accomplishment of it is, the voice is directed in praise. Precious, precious LORD JESUS! let me daily, hourly, sing of thy love, shout loudly of thy mercy; and here, however faintly, poorly, and with a feeble voice, my notes express the unequalled blessing; still may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not thee and thy salvation above my chief joy. And wilt not thou, gracious Redeemer, since thou hast purchased me with a price so dear as thy blood, take me at length, when my song is ended upon earth, to sing it anew before thy throne of glory in heaven?

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

To the account given of the singers in the former chapter, is here subjoined the list of the porters, treasurers, and store-keepers, among the Levites; and of certain officers called to the administration of the affairs of GOD, and the king.

REFLECTIONS

FROM the perusal of this Chapter, the ministers of JESUS may derive, under his SPIRIT'S teaching, sweet instruction, to show with what vigilance they are expected to stand as porters in their station. Ye shall be named (saith the prophet) the priests of the LORD. Men shall call you the ministers of our GOD. Placed at the doors of the house of JESUS, what an eye of vigilance should be open to every one about to enter; to observe their walk, their life, their conversation, their object, their pursuit, their design. And how to look out and notice the approaches of the enemy, so as to defend the truth from error, and keep back the feet of those who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

From the character and officers represented here under the name of treasurers, how sweetly are the Scribes in the gospel, which are well instructed, taught the necessity of bringing out of the gospel treasury to the people, things new and old. Entrusted by JESUS with the charge of his holy word, his ordinances, and all his precious truths in a way of instrumentality; oh! how lovely is the office of those who, from their inexhaustible Storehouse, bring forth continually to the people the unsearchable riches of CHRIST. But on the contrary, what an awful abuse of their office do they make, who preach themselves, instead of CHRIST JESUS the LORD.

And let all officers, and judges, and magistrates, from this sweet chapter learn also that since the temple service with all its appendages were thus appointed, how needful it must be to manifest that they bear not the sword in vain, but by a wise and impartial administration, are counted worthy of double honor.

LORD JESUS! give to all thy servants grace in the several ordinations of thy service, that all, with a single eye to thy glory, may promote thy blessed cause, and set forward the salvation of thy people.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

The Chronicle of characters in the temple service is nearly finished. Here therefore in this chapter we have the list of the fathers, and chief captains, the princes of the several tribes, and the officers of the court.

REFLECTIONS

IT is hardly possible to read the order of things observed in the days of David, without having our minds led out to consider yet more, the beautiful disposition and order made in the house of our Almighty Spiritual David, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, after that he had taken to himself his great name, ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and sat down on the throne of his kingdom. The apostle beautifully describes it when he saith; And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of CHRIST; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST.

Reader! it is a blessed thing to belong to this holy army. Though door keepers only in his service, or merely hewers of wood, or drawers of water, yet to be brought into the family and household of faith, exceeds, in point of dignity and of happiness, the highest station, void of CHRIST, in earthly greatness. LORD JESUS, grant me to be among the number of thine! And whatever station in thy service thou wilt be pleased to appoint me, so that I but stand before thee, under thy eye, and the smiles of thy love, I shall feel the full

enjoyment of that felicity, which the Queen of the South described of Solomon's household: Happy are the men; happy are thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. And blessed forever, blessed be thou LORD JESUS, my GOD and Saviour!

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

Having finished the Chronicle of persons and things, as pertaining to the service both of the temple and the court; this chapter opens to us on interesting view of some of the concluding scenes of the life of David. He calls his people together; makes an affectionate address to them; delivers the pattern to Solomon of the temple, and earnestly exhorts both him and the people to the greatest care and diligence in the building of it.

REFLECTIONS

READER! behold what an interesting light the HOLY GHOST hath placed the departing patriarch David in, before the Church in this chapter. When we behold him going forth in the name of the *LORD* to the battles of the *LORD*, against Goliath and the many other such like blasphemers of GOD and his cause which followed, we could not but admire the stripling, and yet more be led to admire and adore the gracious hand which strengthened him for the war. But now arrived to the close of life, how interesting is it to see the old man ready to depart, and standing on the threshold of the eternal world, yet giving his last advice for the due glory of the GOD of his mercies. Reader! must it not be the best and sweetest of all deaths, as well as the most honourable, to be found in the exercise of faith, praying for the glory of GOD to be continued among his church and people here below, when the believer himself is going to be removed to the enjoyment of the church triumphant which is above? How would you wish to be found in the dying hour, but in the living experience of JESUS' faithfulness, and recommending him and his great salvation to all around you? It is true, indeed, few situations, like that of David,

open so large a sphere for an interference in the public government of JESUS'S church. The *LORD* calls, as in the instance of David and Solomon, whom he pleases to take interest in this important concern. And when princes are found, like David, heartily engaged in promoting GOD'S glory, happy is that nation and people so unitedly employed in raising the spiritual temple of GOD'S worship. But every individual who knows JESUS, and loves JESUS, cannot but take part in what concerns Jesus; and must, and will, serve and promote the growing interest of JESUS, with his prayers at least, when he hath nothing else to offer.

Dearest LORD! Do I behold David and his son, his court and people, all interested, all alive and animated in preparing, what after all was but a type of thy presence: and shall I, who know thee now in substance, as the Author and Finisher of salvation, shall I be cold and lifeless when thy glory is languishing all around, and all hands are faint, and hearts are dead, in thy service? Oh! come LORD JESUS with all thy quickening influence in the midst of thy churches; inflame the souls of princes, priests, and people; *let every one that nameth the name of CHRIST*, have his heart warmed with the love of CHRIST, that *the LORD may revive his work in the midst of the years*; and bring on that fullness of the Redeemer's glory in the earth, which the LORD hath promised, when, *from the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, his name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to his name, and a pure offering.* Amen, LORD JESUS. Amen.

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

This chapter is but a continuation of the former. David had not finished all he had to say, and here therefore we have the sequel of his address. He then makes his offering towards the building, and calls upon the people to follow his example. He closes in prayer and thanksgiving. Solomon commenceth his reign, and David dies. With these relations the first book of the Chronicles closeth.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us take one view more of the dying patriarch David as we read his history in this close of it, and gather from it those interesting lessons it so highly affords. What a life was it taken altogether, though so abundantly distinguished with divine favor. Might he not, like another patriarch of yet more ancient days, have taken up his language and said, *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been*. If we pursue the thread of his history from the sheepcote to the throne, and look at him in every point of view, and in every character, whether public or private, we trace a life of perpetual anxiety, trouble and sorrow. And had not an abundance of suited grace and strength been given him, the persecutors of Saul in his early days, and the heart-breaking sorrows induced by the conduct of his ungodly children in the after stages of his life, would have drank up his spirits. But Reader! amidst all these what a beautiful, what an interesting, and what an highly finished character, in the devotional part of David's life, doth the HOLY GHOST set forth to the church. And while the faithful record that is made of the patriarch's shameful fall, and the foul offences he committed, is brought forward without the least reserve, to show what man, even the best of men, is in himself; how illustrious an instance, in his recovering by almighty grace, is afforded to show what the same man is, when under the powerful work of salvation by GOD. Let the best of saints feel deeply humbled as they read the awful transgressions of David. Let the worst of sinners feel their souls lifted up with every encouraging hope as they behold his transgressions put away from the covenant redemption in JESUS. Oh! thou source, and fountain, and author, and finisher of all our joys, all our blessings, all our hopes, temporal, spiritual, and eternal: How shall we even hear of thy name, thou blessed, blessed JESUS, but with rapture! surely the everlasting fragrancy of it will be *as ointment poured forth*.

One thought more let both Writer and Reader indulge in, before they close this book of GOD. Let us pause over its sacred contents, and as we trace a Chronicle of so many generations, and of so many events, all brought within so little a compass, let us solemnly

consider the trifling nature of all things here below, and the total insignificancy of man upon earth. Here is the record indeed of many generations. But where are the generations themselves; to say nothing of the thousands of the great ones of the earth which kept the world in awe while living, whose very memorial is perished with them! Reader! let it be our wisdom, from the contemplation of such men and things, to turn to a brighter subject, which is neither liable to decay, nor to be forgotten. In JESUS we behold one who compriseth in himself, in his own person, and in the fulness of his office-work, as the Redeemer of his people, all that the most unbounded desires can need to constitute happiness in time, and to all eternity. It is thine, blessed JESUS, to live for ever amidst the dying circumstances of all things around; for thou art both the life and the light of all things; and as the FATHER hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, because thou art the Son of Man; because thou art the life of all thy people; and because thou livest, in thee they live also. Precious consideration under all our changes, in life and in death. Here, then, blessed LORD, let both Writer and Reader rest. The love, the praise, the service, the adoration of every creature, angels and men, are thine. To thee the whole of thy redeemed bow; nay, all power is thine in heaven and in earth. We hail thy name amidst the Chronicles of worlds, and the rise and fall of nations and of empires. Thou art worthy alone to possess universal dominion. To thee peculiarly it belongs as the infinitely wise, holy, glorious, eternal Son of GOD. And in thy glorious office-work as the Redeemer and Mediator of thy church, all the ransomed of thy blood adore thee, the LORD JEHOVAH, our righteousness for evermore. To thee, thou blessed JESUS, in union with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, as the one eternal GOD, and the joint-author of creation, redemption, sanctification, and glory, may both Writer and Reader, with the whole church above and below, bring their offerings of love and praise for evermore. Amen.

2nd CHRONICLES

General Observations

This *second* book of the Chronicles bears no proportion, in point of the time it records, to that of the former. For all the events registered in this volume, include the history of somewhat less than 500 years. It takes up the records of the church from about a thousand years before the coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the history is pursued through this book to the period of the Babylonish captivity.

The events recorded in this second book of the Chronicles, correspond, in point of history, to what is related in the first and second book of the Kings; but the Reader will do well to observe, what further accounts are given here, in addition to what were then recorded. The design of the HOLY GHOST, (if one may presume so to speak) in the compilation of these Chronicles, is to preserve the history of the church of GOD, and especially in a faithful record of the regular descent of the family of David. The dying patriarch, Jacob, under the influence of GOD the SPIRIT had prophesied, that *the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until the Shiloh should come*. These Chronicles, when traced in a regular succession, and compared with what follows in the other books of sacred inspiration, lead the Reader on to the discovery of the fulfillment of this prophecy. Through the several monarchies which succeeded the *Babylonian*, to the coming of CHRIST, we trace the lineal descent of David's royal house. And as, through all the tributary state in which the church was brought, under the *Persian*, the *Grecian*, and at last the *Roman* government, the Jews never lost sight of their own king, neither their own laws; so it is worthy the highest attention, that under the *latter* empire, during which time the LORD JESUS came, the Jews themselves

confessed, that *now they had no king but Cesar*. Now therefore *the Shiloh was come*. And the royal house of David, in the person of JESUS, emerged from the obscurity in which it had been so long hid, and brought forward again that kingdom, *of the increase and government of which there shall be no end*.

I shall detain the Reader no longer from entering on the perusal of this book of GOD, but only, as in every former instance, so in this, to beg his eye may be always on the look out for Him, on whose account, and for whose great work of redemption, not the Bible was written, but even creation itself, with all its magnificence, was appointed. It is offering no violence to truth, to believe that, as the LORD JEHOVAH from everlasting had determined the redemption of his people; when he went forth in acts of creation, these were preparatory to the more glorious deeds in redemption, which were to follow. And hence, every event from the creation of the world, to the coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, was designed as intermediate, and preparatory to the introduction of him, who though appearing in what is called *the fullness of time*, was in reality *set up from everlasting*. It is under the most perfect conviction of this, that I venture to beg again and again the Reader's most earnest enquiry through every page, for him to whom the whole ministers. And oh! thou HOLY SPIRIT of truth; thou Glorifier of the LORD JESUS! let it please thee to call up the diligence, and to reward the search both of Writer and Reader in their enquiries, like the Greeks which came up to the feast, when like them, as we explore this feast of divine records, we say also, *We would see JESUS*. Be pleased, LORD, to hang out his star in the firmament of thy word, and by a more luminous light of thy grace within our souls, lead us, and go before us, until it points to the place where the LORD JESUS is. One such view of thee, thou blessed JESUS! discovered in those Chronicles of thy church, in manifesting both thy love then and now, will give a *joy unspeakable, and full of glory*; and become a renewed evidence, to all the numbers we are continually receiving, that thou, art indeed JESUS CHRIST, *the same yesterday, and, today, and forever*.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY

This second book of Chronicles takes up the subject of history where the former left off. Solomon's entrance on his reign is here recorded: his solemn offering at Gibeon: his choice of wisdom: his strength, and riches.

REFLECTIONS

I PASS over every other consideration in this chapter, to have my soul unceasingly fixed on thee, thou glorious Solomon, and the peaceable, happy reign of righteousness, which by thy coming to the throne of David thy father, thou, even thou, O blessed JESUS, hast brought in to the redemption of mankind! I cannot look on any other. I dare not take off my thoughts from the contemplation of JESUS! Thy word tells me, that in thee are hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. And to what other source shall I go, who am so poor and ignorant in myself, and need supply so continually, when all riches and honour are with thee, and there is none else that can cause my soul to inherit substance. Like the Solomon of whom I read in this chapter, I would say, *Give me understanding and knowledge*, that I may have that *life eternal*, which consisteth in the light of *the knowledge of the glory of GOD in the face of JESUS CHRIST!* Hath not GOD thy FATHER constituted thee King in Zion? Hath he not given all things into thine hand? Is not grace, mercy, life, and peace, treasured up in thee? And are not all the blessings thy redeemed can possibly need, in time or in eternity, found in thee? not simply as plenteous as the stones in Jerusalem, but inexhaustible, incalculable, unsearchable? Oh! then for faith to believe *the record which GOD hath given of his dear Son!* I would come to thee, blessed JESUS, for all I need. And I would come as one sure to obtain. For though thou hast all the treasures of heaven, and art the Almighty Treasurer, yet is it not for thyself, but for thy people. It hath pleased the FATHER, that *in thee should all fulness dwell; that of thy fulness we might all receive, and grace for grace*. Who so ready to give as JESUS! Who so needy as I! Pour out then, LORD, of thy fullness. I ask not the riches,

the wealth, the honour of this vain world, but *the wisdom that maketh wise unto salvation*. I ask JESUS himself! Grant me thyself, O LORD, for in thee I have all things.

CHAPTER 2

SUMMARY

This Chapter represents Solomon as beginning the work of the temple. He numbers the men for the service: sends to Hiram for materials; Hiram's kind answer.

REFLECTIONS

IN the view here given of Solomon's temple, the workmen, and the materials taken and gathered from afar, I would contemplate how Solomon, my GOD and King, hath gathered the workmen and materials for his Temple, from all the varieties of the earth. *When the LORD gave the word, great was the company of the preachers.* Thou hast called patriarchs, prophets, and apostles: thou hast taken thy workmen from among the lowest, even the outcasts of the world. And now, *LORD*, when called, and gathered, and collected, and brought to thy Jerusalem to form thy church below; founded on thyself, thou Chief Corner Stone, how are they like polished stones of the temple, closely joined in JESUS, and formed for *an habitation of GOD, through the SPIRIT*. Are they not the household of faith? Are they not as a spiritual house to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to GOD by JESUS CHRIST! And when, by and by, thou shalt remove the whole building to constitute thy temple above, how will they all appear before thee in glory! Blessed *LORD*! give my soul to see in those outer things, the shadow of those good things which are yet to come. Make me, however low and humble the lot assigned may be, a builder in thine house. Cause me to rest wholly my salvation, and all my hopes upon that elect, precious Corner Stone, which GOD hath laid in Zion; that all my strength, faith, and gospel conversation may be *on JESUS, in JESUS, and of JESUS*: perfectly and unalterably convinced, that *other foundation can no man lay than*

that is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST. Here, LORD, would I rest, and here would I be found knowing that he that thus buildeth, and thus liveth, and thus dieth, shall never be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

CHAPTER 3

SUMMARY

The information in this Chapter, is in respect to the building of the temple. Here is an account of the spot, the time in which it was begun, the dimensions, extent, and ornaments of it.

REFLECTIONS

How is it possible, dearest JESUS, to behold the account of this temple; to behold the hallowed spot oh which it was built; to mark the dimensions; to observe the most holy place, and the vail, which at thy crucifixion was rent in twain, as a token that all separation between GOD and his people was forever done away; without having our very souls led out to thee, and to mark all the lovely features of thy Person and work, thus shadowed forth in the ancient building of Solomon's temple? Do I behold thee, thou dearest LORD, in substance of our flesh, entering into the temple! Do I see thee going on to Mount Calvary for a sacrifice! Do I hear thee say, *Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days!* Do I behold the vail of the temple rent at thy death and shall I not in all these, see that everything in Solomon's temple was intended to typify, and represent thy Person, and offices, and relations, and characters! Yes! blessed JESUS, this, with all its superb furniture and ornaments, was but the shadow; it is thou that art the substance, and in thee most plainly is set forth the whole to which these things ministered. Condescend, Holy Saviour! to bring my soul from the ministry of these things, to be more and more acquainted with thee. And as the mind of JEHOVAH was thus occupied in directing the structure of an earthly house, to represent thy glory, oh! that thou wouldest lead forth my soul to the beholding in it, what sets forth the heavenly

temple of thy body. *LORD* grant that I may be growing up to thee in all things. Be thou my *GOD*, my holy one, the foundation, the top stone, the all in all, of the spiritual building, that I may be found in thee, and united to thee for ever.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY

This chapter is but a continuation of the former. The subject is prosecuted concerning the work and materials of the temple; and here is described, the altar of brass, the molten sea, the lavers, candlesticks, and tables, together with the instruments of gold.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let us not dismiss this chapter, however short and imperfect our researches can go, in the discovery of spiritual blessings veiled under temporal ministrations, without first looking at the several things here consecrated to the service of the temple, with an eye to better things to come, and in reference to *JESUS*, and his church, and ministry. Was not the golden altar a beautiful emblem of the divinity of the *LORD JESUS*? It is the altar, we are told, which sanctifieth the gift: and surely it was the Deity of *JESUS* which gave dignity and efficacy to his complete redemption. Surely the altar represented *JESUS* in his person, blood, and sacrifice, as the incense ascending from it, became a lively emblem of the efficacy of his all-prevailing intercession; neither can we be at a loss to understand to what purpose the tables in the temple ministered, when we now behold the table of the *LORD*, with the standing ordinance of his holy supper, constantly presented to our view, as a memorial of his death, to be observed for ever in his church. And the molten sea, with all the washings both of priests and people, as sweetly set forth the ordinance of baptism in the church of *JESUS*, which forms an entrance into the pale of the covenant by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the *HOLY GHOST*, shed on the *LORD'S* people abundantly through *JESUS CHRIST* our Saviour.

Hail! thou all-blessed, all-precious EMMANUEL! thou art the one great ordinance of heaven! in thee and thy finished work of salvation we behold all the services, ordinances, sacrifices, and temple-worship of the old church dispensation centre. In thee, dearest *LORD*, they all had their accomplishment. They were the shadow of good things to come: and thou art the substance. To thee they all point. By thee their efficacy is forever done away. And in thee their services are rendered no longer necessary. Thou art the end of all for righteousness to every one that believeth; and in thy complete redemption-work we behold our souls justified before *GOD*. Everlasting praises be unto thee; O *LORD*, for all thou hast wrought and accomplished by thy blood!

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

The temple being finished, the vessels and dedicated treasures are brought into the temple, and the LORD giveth a token of his favour and acceptance.

REFLECTIONS

LORD! as I look on, and behold the riches and stores bringing into thy temple, what have I to offer or bring to the service of my *GOD*? Blessed *JESUS!* give me grace, like that poor widow, whose offering thou didst regard, to bring my two mites, even my soul and body, for all I have, and all I am, and ever shall be, is from thee, *LORD*, and of thy bounty, and of thine own would I give thee.

But oh, precious *JESUS!* did the Levites take up the ark unto its place, and did the whole nation of Israel celebrate the festivity with sacrifices, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude: and shall I not prize that one all-sufficient, all-glorious, and all-effectual sacrifice, to which they ministered, which is thyself, in all the fullness of thy love and redemption!

I bless thee, thou great High Priest of a better dispensation, established upon better promises; that now no cloud can intercept

the view of thee, when, in the glory of JEHOVAH, thou hast filled the house of our GOD. We can and do behold thee, by faith, in thy word, in thine ordinances, in thy visits of grace to our hearts. And we can and do behold thee, by faith, when we see thee entered into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of GOD for us, having obtained eternal redemption by thy blood. Hail! holy blessed LORD JESUS! be thou our hope, our joy, our salvation here below, as thou art, and wilt be our portion for evermore.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

This chapter is so closely connected with the former, that it may be considered but as a continuation of the same subject. The cloud which filled the house, as an intimation of the divine presence, gives occasion to Solomon to bless GOD for this grace manifested.

REFLECTIONS

Oh! most gracious, most holy, most blessed LORD GOD Almighty! what expressions of thankfulness can be found sufficient to speak thy love in the unequalled gift of thy dear Son! Was it not enough, O thou FATHER of mercies, and GOD of all comfort, that from thine own free grace thou didst set up thy dear Son from everlasting, as the constituted head of thy church and people; but through so many ages intermediate to his coming thou shouldst be pleased to keep up, by so many ways, and in such various representations, tokens, and symbols, and types to shadow forth the glories of his person, and the vast importance of his salvation? Oh! LORD! I would not only beseech thee, like Solomon, to bless me in all the circumstances in which I may be placed, and to pardon me in all the transgressions into which I may fall, for JESUS's sake; but I would pray also, Holy FATHER, that thou wouldest give me grace to appreciate and esteem this inestimable gift of thy dear Son in a manner suited to the vast importance with which thou hast been pleased to give him. I see, LORD, that thine infinite mind hath been

occupied in this grand concern, as it relates to the salvation of poor sinners, from everlasting. Thou hast called upon the world to behold him whom thy soul loveth. Thou hast manifested such a display of love and grace in this solemn transaction of redeeming thy church by the LORD JESUS, as challengeth the whole earth to contemplate the person of JESUS whom the FATHER so loveth. Now, *LORD*, hear me for one sweet mercy which in its bosom includes every other; cause me so to love the LORD JESUS as thou lovest him. Let JESUS be precious to my soul as he is to my GOD and FATHER. And while I pray thee to look upon the face of thine anointed, and accept my soul in him; oh! for grace in mine own soul to look unto JESUS with that fixedness of rapture and joy, until my whole heart be found going out after him in such earnestness of desire as can be satisfied with nothing beside. Hear me, LORD and FATHER, for this mercy! I am encouraged to ask it in faith, because JESUS himself encourageth me so to do. For he hath said, *In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the FATHER, in my name he will give it you. Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full.* Thus my joy will be full when my soul is full of JESUS! let this be the very language of my heart, *Whom have I in heaven but thee; and who is there upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee? My flesh and my heart faileth, but thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY

We have here the account of the LORD's gracious answer to Solomon's prayer. The effect it had upon the people. Beside these things, here is related the circumstance of the LORD's visit to Solomon by night.

REFLECTIONS

How encouraging is it to see the gracious answers of GOD to the cries and supplications of his people. Surely, as the prophet said

upon another occasion, the GOD that answereth by fire let him be GOD. But oh! how sure is it, that the LORD GOD that hath answered, and doth answer, by the acceptance of the sacrifice of JESUS, he must be GOD. Yes! blessed LORD! thou hast heard, and thou hast answered, in the rich redemption of thy dear Son, and manifested that in him *shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.*

LORD! I would look up to thee that as my eye and my soul desires to be everlastingly fixed on JESUS, thou wouldest grant me all that is needful for me in all my straitenings and difficulties. And if the heavens are shut up, or if sickness, pestilence, or evil, have their commission to devour; yet, LORD, look, we beseech thee, unto JESUS, and accept poor sinners in him. Pardon and forgive thy poor creatures, and let the blood and righteousness of JESUS plead when sin most cries out against the iniquities of thy people. Consider, LORD, that they are thy people, the work of thine hands, and whom thou hast taken into covenant with thyself. *Be very gracious, LORD, for thy name's sake, and let not iniquity be our ruin. See, we beseech thee, we are all thy people?*

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us a further account of Solomon's buildings. Having built the temple and his own house, he here is represented as building cities. The Gentiles are made tributaries. His yearly sacrifices.

REFLECTIONS

WHILE I behold Solomon engaged in building houses, and going as a merchantman to gather riches; LORD, I would say, make me a wise master-builder, and the true merchantman that seeketh goodly pearls, even *the pearl of good price.*

Upon thee, thou blessed JESUS, as the chief corner-stone GOD the FATHER hath laid in Zion, would I build both for my present, and for my eternal habitation. And LORD, do thou instruct me so to build that

when the winds, and storms, and rain shall descend, being founded upon thee the rock of ages, I shall never fall, but abide on thee, and in thee, forever.

And as a goodly merchantman may I seek thee, the precious treasure hid in the field; needing not to go to *Ezion-geber*, and to *Eloth*, but may find thee at the entering in of the gates, and at the coming in of the doors. Yes! blessed JESUS, thou standest, and criest, and holdest forth thy riches, yea durable riches and righteousness, without money and without price. Oh! then, thou dearest LORD! teach my soul this precious merchandise, how a poor sinner may be eternally rich in receiving out of a full Saviour, whom the more he gives out, the more he hath to bestow; and the more impoverished insolvent sinners he receives, the more glorious he himself becomes. Here, LORD, would I for once be truly covetous, and desire to make this the gainful business of all my life. For this would I rise early, late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness, that JESUS, with all his fullness, GOD with all his promises, and the HOLY SPIRIT with all his influences, I might bring home to my house, to my heart, to my soul; and live and feast upon them for ever and ever.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY

This chapter, which closes the history of Solomon's reign, gives the most brilliant account of his greatness. His fame brings to his court the Queen of Sheba. Here is the relation of the interview between them; Solomon's riches; his death.

REFLECTIONS

READER! it is truly interesting to behold the queen of the South coming from her own country, excited by the fame of Solomon to seek after his wisdom. But how much more truly interesting is it when we consider that the HOLY GHOST herein beautifully represents the coming of the whole gentile church to the light of JESUS, and *kings to the brightness of his rising.*

It forms a subject in which every intelligent Reader cannot but feel pleased to behold the friendship between Solomon and the queen of Sheba, when he imparted to her of all her heart desired, and she presented to him the treasures of gold of ophir, and precious stones, and algum trees. But how infinitely higher in delight doth the subject arise in our view, when we behold in this a lively representation of JESUS our Solomon receiving the poor gentile church, and every individual sinner among his redeemed ones, with his poor offerings, and bartering his grace, and wisdom, and love, with all the riches of his redemption in the wonderful exchange!

And Reader! while we look at Solomon in all the splendor in which he is here described, and before we take our farewell of him, shall we not be led from the view of him as far as the shadow goes, to the contemplation of JESUS the substance, of whom in many instances he was a lively type. Our CHRIST, as well as Solomon after the flesh, was the son of David; and sure I am, that as the LORD sent by Nathan to have Solomon named Jedidiah, beloved of the LORD, a voice from heaven proclaimed our JESUS under this glorious character, the beloved and only begotten Son of GOD, in whom JEHOVAH was well pleased. And who can read the account of the wisdom of Solomon, as wiser than all the men of the east, without having their thoughts directed to the contemplation of that Solomon *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge!* who can behold the extensiveness of Solomon's empire, of whom it is said that the LORD gave him a largeness of heart, even as the sand which is on the sea shore: without immediately being led to consider the kingdom of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, whose dominion *is an everlasting dominion and whose power ruleth over all.* Solomon was indeed the richest of all princes of the earth; for silver was as the stones of the street in Jerusalem. But what is this in comparison of the unsearchable riches of CHRIST! Solomon had a reign of peace during his life, and his subjects were happy under his government. But JESUS is himself, by way of emphasis called *the prince of peace;* for the sceptre of his kingdom is altogether *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.* And if Solomon built by divine appointment the temple of the LORD, did not our JESUS himself become both the builder and the temple; for all his people are built

on JESUS, the chief corner stone. He it is of whom alone it ever could be said, *He shall build the temple of the LORD, and he shall bear the glory!* Hail! holy, glorious, gracious, blessed JESUS! a greater indeed than Solomon is here. Thou art higher and more excellent than the kings of any land. Thou *art the man whose name is the BRANCH,* Under thee and thy government we shall be safe. *All power is thine in heaven and in earth. Thy name shall endure for ever. Thy name shall be continued as long as the sun. Men shall be blessed in thee. All nations shall call thee blessed. Blessed be thy glorious name for ever; let the whole earth be filled with thy glory. Amen, and amen.*

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY

We enter upon the history of Rehoboam in this chapter. He begins his reign with rejecting the counsel of the elders, and following youthful advice. Ten of the tribes of Israel revolt. He fleeth to Jerusalem.

REFLECTIONS

IF in perusing the page of Rehoboam's folly we stand amazed to see the blindness and infatuation of such conduct; how much more may we be astonished at the folly and infatuation of sinners in rejecting the counsel of GOD against their own souls, and preferring the pleasures of sin for a season. *Oh! ye simple ones* (is the language of wisdom in the streets of the city) *how long will ye love simplicity, and scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge!* Surely the sinner that slights JESUS and his salvation is simple to the utmost possibility of simplicity. He hath no true knowledge to guide him. He prefers the hollow and empty husks of the world to durable riches and righteousness. The sinful pleasures of the earth are to him preferable to JESUS and his grace and glory. Could a man make a mock at sin, if he were not a fool? Could he sport with that which must end in ruin if he were not blind, and ignorant, and senseless,

and stupid? Precious JESUS! thou that art wisdom itself. Oh! give us to see, to know, to appreciate rightly thy value, and to be thoroughly convinced of this, that *Happy is the man that findeth thee; for thy merchandise is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain of thee more than fine gold.*

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

This chapter is the continuation of the history of Rehoboam. He raiseth an army to subdue Israel. Is forbidden to go to war by Shemaiah. An account of his wives and children.

REFLECTIONS

WHAT a poor trifling character is this Rehoboam? Is this the son of Solomon? Alas! what a poor resemblance of wisdom to the Father. Reader! do remark that grace is not hereditary. As the father cannot bear the sins of the son, neither the son the sins of the father; so grace hath no connection in natural alliances.

Is not this Rehoboam a true picture of all carnal, slothful men! as he preferred the sluggish situation of the fleshly pursuits to those of promoting the glory of GOD, so we find all men under the reigning power of indwelling sin, desire only *to make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.* Oh! what multitudes are there of Rehoboams in the land, who know nothing, think of nothing, enjoy nothing but fleshly lusts; whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things. Precious JESUS! keep thy people from such things. Oh! give to them to have their conversation more and more in heaven, and from thence to be always looking for the Saviour, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who will change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to his mighty power whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.

CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

We have an awful sequel to the life of Rehoboam in this chapter. The lustful king forsaking GOD is left in the hand of the king of Egypt. His death.

REFLECTIONS

READER! what evidences do the whole earth afford of the reality of grace. We see men like Rehoboam, filling up a place in history, and the sum total of their lives is this, they lived, and eat, and drank, and then died. But is this the end of man's existence? Oh! for distinguishing grace to live all our days to the glory of GOD. To live *for* JESUS; and to live *to* JESUS. What can be sweeter than the precious testimony that *we have fellowship with the FATHER, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST. LORD!* grant that this may be my portion. Let nothing call off my attention from thee, the one grand object of all desire. In thee, LORD, I shall possess all things. And if thou art mine, I shall be truly happy in time, and happy to all eternity.

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY

This chapter relates to us the history of Abijah, the son of Rehoboam. And here we have the melancholy account of the wars between Judah and Israel. This brings us to the close of Abijah's history.

REFLECTIONS

IT is hardly possible to read the history of war and bloodshed without having our minds led out to the serious consequences of sin, which hath introduced death with all its trains of evil. Behold, Reader, in the example before us, how the descendants of Jacob, in

the different tribes and families, have lost sight of their original stock, and are employed in destroying one another. Oh! the wretched consequences of a fallen state! precious JESUS! here again, as in a thousand other instances, let me pause to praise thee for thy gracious interposition in the redemption of our fallen nature!

LORD! I beseech thee that in all the conflicts and warfares in which my soul may be engaged, give me to see, like *Abijah*, that the LORD is on my side, then need I not fear what men can do unto me. And oh, LORD! let my cause be on the same side as his was, with the house of David. JESUS is my lawful sovereign: by heirship; for the FATHER hath made him heir of all things; and by purchase and by conquest, for he hath purchased my redemption with his blood; and by the victory of his grace over my heart, he hath a rightful claim to my obedience and my love. LORD, grant that I may never be found lifting up the heel of disobedience against thee, lest like Jeroboam the LORD smite me, and I never after recover strength to lift up my head. But make me the willing subject of thy grace, that my knee may bow before thee, and with all the redeemed joyfully confess, that JESUS CHRIST is LORD to the glory of GOD the FATHER.—Amen.

CHAPTER 14

SUMMARY

The succession of the history is carried on in this chapter in the relation of the reign of Asa, the son of Abijah. His character and piety, and an account of his victories.

REFLECTIONS

It is hardly possible to read the character here given of *Asa*, and the blessed eventual consequences of his piety, as it concerned the people of Judah, without having our minds led out in delightful contemplation on the happiness of a church, and nation, and people, under the blessings of princes which set up true religion in the land, and adorn the gospel of JESUS, not only by precept, but example. The imagination can hardly calculate the extensiveness of such a

blessing, in the innumerable happy consequences, which spring out of it. Who shall indeed say to what auspicious blessings, even in generations yet to come, it may reach.

And while we exercise the mind in contemplating the mercy as it is found in a land at large, under the eye of a reforming prince, like Asa; if we carry the thought into the narrower circle of churches and private families, the blessing is immense, even here, in the eventual gracious effects which must follow. Let the Reader figure to himself a church, an house, a family, all living in the faith, and love, and fear of GOD. They are closely allied in the strictest and most durable of all bonds, of reverence and faith in JESUS to a covenant GOD in CHRIST, and in real amity and Christian union to one another. JESUS is their glorious head, and they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Let the enemies of their salvation, like the Ethiopians against Asa, come forth with an army of a thousand thousand, yet the battle is the LORD's, and he will eventually come forth to their deliverance. The graces of his SPIRIT will be their support, and confidence in the promises of redemption by JESUS their strong hold. They will be exercised indeed in resisting sin and Satan, but more is he that is with them than all that are against them. It is nothing to our GOD to help, whether with many or with few. They shall overcome, as the armies of heaven have done, by the blood of the Lamb, and be made more than conquerors through his grace helping them.

CHAPTER 15

SUMMARY

The history of Asa is continued through this chapter. Encouraged by Azariah, on whom the SPIRIT of GOD descended to teach the king, he entereth further in the reformation of Judah from the remains of idolatry. He removeth his mother from being queen in consequence of her idolatry.

REFLECTIONS

How beautiful upon the mountains (saith the prophet) are the feet of them that publish salvation. And a lively token of divine favor, in the person of Azariah, was given here in this embassy from GOD to his people. And was not the purport of his visit to the same effect? Did he not hold forth the presence, the favor, the love, the assurance of protection to the people, while adhering to their covenant engagements? And what were these things but shadows and types of JESUS?

And what is it now? Ambassadors are sent by the LORD JESUS to propose and negotiate with poor sinful men, an embasage of mercy, favor, and peace. On JESUS, our fullness, our security, our very being and safety depend. And if, while these glorious tidings of GOD's good-will to men are held forth to us like Asa and the people, our very souls go forth in praise, and love with thanksgiving, for the unspeakable gift of GOD in his dear Son: oh! how certain is it, that the LORD will give us rest on every side from all our enemies. The LORD will fight our battles for us, and we shall hold our peace, *When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

CHAPTER 16

SUMMARY

This chapter closeth the history of Asa. After a long reign, and long prosperity, in consequence of new troubles arising, Asa sends to the king of Syria for aid. Being reprov'd for it by the prophet, Asa manifests great displeasure. He is diseas'd; seeks not to GOD, but to the physicians, for help. He dies, and is buried with great pomp.

REFLECTIONS

IT is impossible to close our view of the life of Asa without having the mind exercised with solemn thoughts concerning an history so very mysterious and extraordinary. The HOLY GHOST hath

twice caused it to be recorded in his history, that *though the high places were not removed; nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days*. Though his latter end therefore differed so materially from the beginning, yet are we led to hope that a work of grace had passed upon his soul; and though for his rebellion and departure, like a stubborn child, under correction, he was put to bed in the dark; yet a child still, and mercifully considered so by his gracious GOD and FATHER in CHRIST.

But Reader! leaving the history of Asa, let you and I endeavour to make the suitable and becoming improvements from it, which a case so solemn and striking is highly calculated to propose. When we see as in his instance, and in the instance of others, such as the apostle Paul speaks of, in whose hearts a work of grace hath been manifested, that they still carry about with them a body of sin, oh! let it serve to teach us with what wariness and caution believers in JESUS should have their conversation in the world. If Paul himself groaned in consequence of this, and years after his regeneration declared that *he was carnal, sold under sin; that the good he would he did not; but that the evil which he would not that he did*. Oh! think, my brother, what a mass of sin this unrenewed part of our nature the body is, and with what holy jealousy should we watch over it, lest it drag clown the soul! How oft doth Satan, joining with the remaining corrupt lusts of our nature, intice us from JESUS; and in what numberless instances do we find our hearts wandering from all that is truly precious, from JESUS, from our happiness, from his word, from his people!

Oh! thou Holy One of Israel! the *LORD* our righteousness! how endeared art thou to my soul in this among a thousand other views in which I see and feel my daily need of thee. *Who shall deliver me from this body of death?* None but JESUS can accomplish this mighty work, for all the angels of heaven are incompetent to such a service. And blessed, forever blessed be thy dear name, thou art truly called JESUS, because thou wilt save thy people from their sins. Thou hast redeemed them by thy blood from all the powers of hell and darkness; and thou hast, and wilt save them from themselves and their own corrupt nature. *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, (saith GOD by his servant the prophet) or shall the lawful captive be*

delivered. And Reader! recollect every sinner is a *lawful* captive, who by sin hath given himself to the service of Satan. *But thus, saith the LORD, even the captives of the mighty, shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered. For I will contend with them that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.* Isaiah 49:24, 25. Oh! precious, precious promise of a covenant GOD in CHRIST, made to the person of our dear IMMANUEL; and in him confirmed sure to all his seed.

CHAPTER 17

SUMMARY

We arrive now in the history of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah to the record concerning Jehoshaphat the son of Asa. He hath a prosperous reign. He appointeth teachers in Judah. An account of his greatness.

REFLECTIONS

IT is highly gratifying in the perusal of the word of GOD, when we behold his servants zealous for his honor, and making his glory the first object of their concern. And however, in different ages of the church, and under the different dispensations of the Old Testament scripture or the New, we behold various characters, still it is precious to remark how the children of the *LORD* have all one family feature in their knowledge and love of him. Begotten by the same *FATHER*; purchased by the same Redeemer; and brought under the influence of the same *SPIRIT*; they are adopted into the same sonship, and are heirs of *GOD*, and joint heirs with *CHRIST*. The image of the *LORD* they are changed into by grace; they are impressed with it, for it is engraven on their foreheads, and the *SPIRIT* of the *LORD* is in their hearts. So that everything concerning them becomes precious and interesting. *GOD* their *FATHER* marked them for his own from everlasting; and in the person of his dear Son he chose them and loved them from all eternity. And in time he hath provided for all their wants, and watches over them with thoughts of

peace, and not of evil, to give them an expected end. GOD the Son received them from his FATHER as his gift, and by becoming their husband, head, and surety, made them the purchase of his blood, and became interested in all that concerned them, through time to all eternity. And GOD the SPIRIT graciously undertook in his blessed office-work to bring them savingly acquainted with the FATHER, and with CHRIST, and make them the willing subjects of his grace in the day of his power. So that from the united mercy, love, and blessing, of the sacred three in one, their minds, like Jehoshaphat's, are secretly inclined to the love, and reverence, and obedience, and faith of GOD in CHRIST. They desire to love what the LORD loves, and to hate what the LORD hates. They pray to be brought into an holy conformity to his will in all things. JESUS is precious, his word, his ordinances, his laws, his people. And while they take delight in whatever tends to the promotion of the Redeemer's glory, they feel distress in whatever brings dishonour to his most holy name or his word. Reader! are these, more or less, in all ages the real characters of GOD's people? let your heart and mine see to it then that we have such testimonies of our adoption and sonship.

CHAPTER 18

SUMMARY

This chapter informs us of the treaty Jehoshaphat made with Ahab, to go against Ramoth-gilead to battle; and the consequence of the war. Ahab is slain. Jehoshaphat is spared.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, Reader, over the perusal of this chapter, and passing by for the present other considerations, let your meditations with mine be deeply exercised in beholding the striking contrast between the false and lying prophets here represented, seducing Ahab to his ruin, and the faithful honest Micaiah, in foretelling to him what would take place.

Nothing in history, nothing in all the events of the world, nothing in the setting up, or putting down empires, bears the least proportion, in point of magnitude and importance, to that of men drawing the line of eternal distinction between true and false teachers, concerning the truths *as they are in JESUS*.

Who in the days of Ahab would have ventured to have called in question those four hundred prophets, who all with one voice concurred in sending Ahab to battle with full assurance of success; and who backed their commission in the name of the *LORD*? And who would have ventured to come forward, when the poor solitary prophet Micaiah, from the prison, foretold the awful event hanging ready to fall upon the head of the king, and to have justified his faithfulness? But the event manifested where the truth lay. It is not pomp, nor parade, though accompanied with pretended commissions from *JESUS*, can certify to truth. Men, destitute themselves of saving knowledge, can never be safely followed in what they deliver on divine things. And the *LORD JESUS* himself hath marked *hirelings* in such plain characters, as leave it no great matter of difficulty to discover the object of their ministry. They may, like the four hundred, be numerous, be of one mind, discourse with great confidence, and of certain success; but the apostle awfully speaks of the bringers in of heresies, *even denying the LORD that brought them, that they shall bring upon themselves swift destruction*.

The *Micaiahs* of the present day may be, as he was, exposed to much persecution. Like Paul and his few faithful followers, they may be held up as a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. And faithfulness will be sure, when exercised in the reproofing sinners, to bring upon them the obloquy, the scorn, the derision, to speak the best of it, of men; and to provoke the rage of devils. But if their ministry be directed to exalt the Saviour, and humble the sinner; if they preach *CHRIST*, and not themselves; set forth the wretchedness of man in his highest attainments, and insist upon the person, offices, blood, and righteousness of *JESUS*, as the whole of salvation; here we may safely join issue with what so fully corresponds to the counsel of *GOD* in the salvation of sinners. *CHRIST* is declared to be both the wisdom of *GOD* and the power of *GOD* for salvation, to every one that believeth. These are they *whose faith I*

pray you *to follow, considering the end of their conversation, JESUS CHRIST the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

CHAPTER 19

SUMMARY

We have related in this Chapter a further account of the reign of Jehoshaphat. He returns to his kingdom after the battle of Ramoth-gilead. He sets judges over the land.

REFLECTIONS

Reader! let us pause over the history here presented to us, and gather from the perusal some of those sweet and interesting instructions which are presented to our meditation.

In the peaceable and happy return of Jehoshaphat to his house after so merciful a deliverance, let us learn to estimate divine mercies, and rightly to receive them. Is not every return to our house, to our families, to our home, a token of divine favour? And are not those mercies heightened if, at any time, like Jehoshaphat, we have gone out without prayer, without seeking the divine blessing, without divine direction; nay, perhaps, like Jehoshaphat, in opposition to the divine will and pleasure. Nay, more than these; when, as in the instance before us, our return to our house in peace hath been distinguished from others who, like Ahab, went out in health as Jehoshaphat, but returned no more. What numberless examples of a similar kind are going on in the present hour in the world, in which we are called upon to mark the distinguishing mercy? And shall not our unthinking hearts sometimes pause, and behold the LORD'S hand in conducting out, and bringing home in peace and safety.

And if a real follower of the LORD JESUS be brought to such views of divine favor, will he not eye the tokens as tenfold brighter, and enjoy them with tenfold sweetness, when viewing them as covenant blessings, and accepting them as such from his interest in JESUS! Hath a GOD in CHRIST entailed blessings both on soul and

body; hath he promised, by virtue of covenant redemption in the blood and righteousness of his dear Son, to bless his people both in their basket and in their store; in their going out and their coming in; blessings in the city, and blessings in the field; blessings in time, and blessings to all eternity? and shall not every follower of the LORD JESUS find a relish and a sweetness of the richest kind from perceiving the covenant love with which every one of them is brought home to the heart, marked in the plainest characters of the FATHER's love, the Saviour's grace, and the SPIRIT's fellowship. Yes! thou dearest JESUS! when I see thy love in the mercy, and the precious fruits, of thy redemption in the favor, be it what it may; whether at going out, or returning home in peace, then will my joy be full. It is JESUS *in* the blessing, and the love of JESUS *with* the blessing, which gives the finishing relish to all, and furnishes *a joy unspeakable and full of glory*.

In the faithfulness of the prophet let us not only behold the loveliness of being always firm in the cause of the LORD, but pray for grace to follow so bright an example. An openness and integrity of conduct in speaking truths, however unpleasant, is not limited to the ministry; there are few characters in life but may find occasion for the exercise of it in numberless situations: a father to his child, or a servant to his master. And when GOD and our conscience demands such services there should be no hesitation.

Lastly. In the reformation set up by Jehoshaphat, we may gather a sweet and precious instruction, how grace operates, when the LORD awakens it in the mind. We hear no reproof, no expostulation, no anger, no excuse on the part of Jehoshaphat, towards the prophet. Grace was in the heart of Jehoshaphat, while the prophet was delivering his message from the LORD. And the blessed effects of both, in the word of the LORD from without, and the grace of the LORD within, wrought those sweet consequences in the mind of Jehoshaphat. Let us learn from hence how to estimate the work of grace. It is not he which merely confesseth sin, but the promise is, *he that confesseth and forsaketh it, shall, through JESUS and his complete salvation, find mercy*.

CHAPTER 20

SUMMARY

We have here Jehoshaphat in trouble. War is threatened him: he proclaimeth a fast: he offers up prayer: the LORD hears, and answers in mercy: his enemies are overthrown. The close of his reign.

REFLECTIONS

WHERE shall believing souls fly in their trouble, but to a covenant GOD in CHRIST! Like Jehoshaphat, we are told, and from the unquestionable authority of GOD'S word, that the children of *Ammon*, and the children of *Moab*, even the host of foes arising out of the world, from our own corrupt nature, and from the powers of darkness, all come forth against us, day by day, to battle. But if, like Jehoshaphat, instead of mustering human strength, and human skill, we take refuge in the GOD of our salvation; if we go forth, dearest JESUS, in thy name, and in thy righteousness make our boast, we shall be more than conquerors, through thy grace helping us. And we shall assuredly find the valley of *Berachah*: every place indeed will open room for blessing, for every event will furnish cause for it. But learn, my soul, in the midst of all the precious things which this chapter contains, of GOD'S covenant love and mercy to his people, what corruptions still remain in our old nature. Is it not now, as it was with Jehoshaphat and Judah, amidst all the reform set up? Are there not the sad effects still to be found, of what the human heart is with believers now, as with Judah then? It is said that *the high places were not taken away; for as yet the people had, not prepared their hearts*. Oh! precious JESUS! do I not know, do I not feel the daily workings of a corrupt nature? And though thou hast wrought out, thou blessed Finisher of salvation, a complete deliverance for me in thy blood and righteousness, yet, as if to keep me daily, hourly sensible that the work is all of grace; and what I once needed in bringing me out of nature's darkness, I daily need to keep me from falling back to it again; art thou not showing me that the high places of vanity, pride, self-righteousness, and the breakings out of sin, all

contradictory as they are to one another, yet annoy my poor soul, and manifest what a poor creature I am continually. *LORD!* overrule these things to thy glory! Give me to see thy preciousness! Enable me to improve mine interest in thee from day to day, that being stript of everything, I may lean wholly upon thee and seek comfort only in thy finished work. Oh! for grace thus to live a life of faith upon the Son of GOD, and to make mention of thy righteousness, even thine only.

CHAPTER 21

SUMMARY

This Chapter opens with the history of the commencement of the reign of Jehoram, who succeeded Jehoshaphat. A melancholy history it contains of his wicked reign. Here is recorded his awful disease, death, and burial.

REFLECTIONS

Who can contemplate the awful character of *Jehoram* without dismay! Who can read such a sad page of history in the life of man, without being struck at the sad degeneracy of human nature! And is this the real representation of all men by nature! Are all men liable to the same conduct, and, but for preventing and restraining grace, would invariably pursue the same steps, if similar circumstances of temptation surrounded them? I Pause, my soul, over such a view! Am I by nature a child of wrath, even as others? Did I bring with me into existence every seed of sin; equally prone to ignorance, blindness, hardness of heart, pride, worldly affections of every kind, envy, malice, hatred, covetousness, and all the deadly fruit of a deadly stock, deeply rooted in my nature! Is this the real state of my soul, and the soul of every son and daughter of Adam! Should I, but for grace, have been for ever ignorant of JESUS, unconscious of the glories of his person, unacquainted with the work of his redemption, totally regardless of his love, ignorant of the importance of his salvation, and not only averse to the desire of it, but even

unconscious that I needed it! Was this my case, dearest, blessed, compassionate JESUS, when thou first looked upon me, when thou didst pass by and saw me in my blood, and didst bid me live! Should I never, but for this grace of thine, have heard thy voice, seen thy face by happy faith, tasted of thy goodness, and my hands been made to handle of the word of life! Do I really now love thee, thou precious EMMANUEL, and was this the cause, because thou didst first love me! Oh! matchless goodness! oh! unequalled love! oh! precious, precious Redeemer, friend of poor sinners! LORD cause me to love thee, to live to thee, to hang upon thee, to cleave to thee more and more. Surely a whole eternity will be too short to speak thy praise! LORD take me, make me thine, poor and wretched as I am, for all I am, and all I have, soul and body, are all too little to offer, and too mean to testify thy praise, thou Almighty Saviour of our ruined and undone nature!

CHAPTER 22

SUMMARY

Ahaziah's history openeth at this Chapter. He succeedeth to the throne—makes a wicked reign, and is slain by Jehu. Athaliah destroyeth all the royal seed, except Joash.

REFLECTIONS

OBSERVE, my soul, in the history of this chapter, the awful consequences of sin! What a short triumph had Ahaziah. Life is but a year, and when that year is spent in sin and folly, what a wretched life is made of it? How awful are the consequences which arise out of improper and irreligious alliances! But what blessed effects have taken place in JESUS'S union with our nature, and his betrothing himself to his people! Our alliance with ungracious persons or in families, is sure to bring on numberless evils. But the LORD JESUS condescending to unite us to himself, hath introduced us into the happiest state, the wonder of angels, and the admiration of a

congregated world for ever more. Oh! dear *LORD*, break for ever, in my soul, all affinities and relations which may tend to interrupt my joy and happiness with thee, and do thou take the whole possession of my heart, and reign and rule there with unrivalled sway. *I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.*

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY

The history is pursued through this Chapter. Joash is made king. Athaliah is slain. Jehoiada restoreth the worship of GOD.

REFLECTIONS

I would pass over both the history itself, and all the circumstances connected with it, while I review the gracious events the *LORD'S* right hand here accomplished, to give my meditation wing in flying to the yet more precious subject of that revolution wrought by grace, when sin and rebellion, with all the usurpation of Satan, are put down in the heart of man. I desire to bless *GOD* for the mercies here wrought for his Judah, and that he raised up this *Jehoiada* for the deliverance of his people. But oh! my soul, think of that everlasting deliverance wrought for all his people, when *GOD* our *FATHER* brought forth his dear Son, his true *Jehoiada*, hid from ages and generations, and set him as his King in Zion, when declaring the decree of redemption in his name. Here was the everlasting overthrow of Satan's usurpation, tyranny, and power over our poor nature! Here was the final destruction of false gods, when the heathen oracles, by the coming of the *LORD JESUS*, were struck dumb for ever. And here was the introduction of that glorious kingdom of righteousness and peace, which shall flourish forever. Hail, thou glorious, thou almighty *JESUS*! I see thee and thy lovely form beautifully shadowed forth in the character of *Jehoiada*, who ministered in thy name! Thou hast made a covenant indeed in thy blood and righteousness: for thou thyself art the whole of it. And it is thou that hast both set up the reform, and art the wisdom,

righteousness, sanctification, and redemption of thy people. Oh! dearest JESUS! while the FATHER crowns thee King in Zion, and all the redeemed congratulate thee in thy coronation in the church of the first-born which are in heaven, do thou by the influences of thine HOLY SPIRIT enable my soul to put the crown of my own personal redemption on thy sacred head, that I may exult as the people here did in the view of their lawful sovereign, for thou art my lawful GOD and King for evermore. And oh! my gracious LORD, while thou art blessing me with the communications of thy love, and my soul truly enjoys the fullness of blessings under thy reign, let thy grace draw out my heart in thy service, that all the idols of creature affection may be destroyed, and JESUS alone govern my heart and affections forever.

CHAPTER 24

SUMMARY

We have in this chapter the history of the reign of Joash. The death of Jehoiada. Joash falleth into idolatry. He is slain.

REFLECTIONS

The improvements to be gathered from the perusal of this chapter seem very obvious, and as important as they are plain. In the conduct of Joash we see to what an extent men may go in carrying on the purposes of religion when outward circumstances correspond to make it their interest, while all the while rottenness at the core is in the heart. In all this outside reform how plain is it that there is no regeneration, no work of GOD the SPIRIT; no turning of the heart to GOD; no real regard for his honour and glory. Oh! thou blessed SPIRIT of truth, thou glorifier of JESUS, let thy work on my soul be manifest. Plead, I beseech thee, O Almighty LORD, *with* my soul, and *in* my soul, the cause of JESUS. By thy discoveries to my own view of sin, of unbelief, of lusts, and all the train of corrupt affections, oh! give me to see, to feel, and to be earnest in seeking after JESUS in all his fullness, suitableness, and grace, that my whole

soul may be truly brought over from dead works to serve the living and true GOD.

In the death of Zechariah let us behold the real, solid, and substantial worth of true faith. Oh! for grace to be *the followers of them who now through faith and patience inherit the promises!* See my soul, what a precious testimony the LORD JESUS in ages after gave to this his faithful servant's death. And thou, who livest in happier times, and art not called upon to resist unto blood, see that thou art always ready to bear testimony to *the truth as it is in JESUS. Be strong in the LORD, and in the power of his might.* Like Paul, count not thy life dear unto thyself, so that thou mayest finish thy course with joy, in fighting the good fight of faith, and laying hold of eternal life. Surrounded with such a cloud of witnesses, learn to run with patience the race that is set before thee, looking unto JESUS the author and finisher of faith. Precious LORD! in all things do thou have the pre-eminency.

CHAPTER 25

SUMMARY

This chapter records the reign of Amaziah: his wars, his idolatry, the LORD'S displeasure against him; his combat with Joash: his death.

REFLECTIONS

WE ought to pause over the view of such characters as Amaziah, and gather instruction from the very awful representation of the corrupt and fallen nature they afford. How in direct opposition to duty, to interest, to happiness, is all their conduct. Making a profession of godliness, but denying the power of it. At length breaking out in open rebellion, and closing life in all the bitterness of sorrow. How dreadfully painful are the embassies of faithful servants to such men; and how sure are their reproofs to bring upon them their hatred. But whether the *Amaziahs* of the present day will hear, or whether they will forbear, they must be found faithful. And

however slighted, or despised, or even brought into peril by their integrity, still they are to go on *through evil report and good report*. The injuries they sustain GOD will recompense. He that despiseth them despiseth him that sent them. And in the end GOD will judge their cause, and bring forth their integrity as the light. JESUS looks on, and knows all. *He will come with vengeance, even GOD will come with a recompense.*

CHAPTER 26

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the history of the reign of Uzziah. He invadeth the office of the priesthood, and is smitten with leprosy. He dieth, and is succeeded by Jotham.

REFLECTIONS

HERE would I meditate over the wretched, ruined, and undone state of *Uzziah*. A leper to his grave. Cast out and forsaken both of GOD and man. Loathsome in the sight of both; and living and dying universally unpitied, unhelped, and unreclaimed. And are there any *Uzziah's* of the present hour? Do any count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and do despite to the SPIRIT of grace! how desperately lost to a real sense of their own state by nature? How totally unconscious of the infinitely precious value of the blood of JESUS; how wretchedly mistaken as to their own filth, corruption, lusts, and universal depravity. What strangers to themselves, to JESUS, to the necessity of the work of GOD upon the soul, and the absolute expediency of being washed from the leprosy of sin in the blood of CHRIST! blessed, thrice blessed GOD, who in mercy led me to see the preciousness of salvation, and as graciously led me to seek it in the way the LORD himself appointed. Never, blessed JESUS, may my soul invade thy office, but rejoice to come under the censer of thy righteousness. Oh! give me to see that I am indeed sheltered from the wrath to come, from the leprosy of this life, and the miseries of another, being found in thee and under thy precious all-

atonement sacrifice, whereby thou hast for ever done away the sin and uncleanness of thy people.

CHAPTER 27

SUMMARY

The reign of Jotham is recorded in this chapter. He obtains a victory over the Ammonites. He is succeeded by Ahaz.

REFLECTIONS

IN the quick succession of kings which this part of the word of GOD brings forward to view, it is profitable to pause and consider, how transient those characters were in their power and influence, which during their government, no doubt, made a mighty bustle in life, and moved up and down as beings highly important. But alas! what is all human greatness but as a bubble on the mighty waters! precious JESUS! what would the whole earth, with all its greatest monarchies and men be, void of an interest in thee and thy great salvation! How bounded within a short space their lives! how insignificant their existence! how trifling and childish their pursuits! Without thee, thou dear Redeemer, no hopes beyond the grave, no prospect of immortality; no redemption from sin; no resource from the fears of death, nor from the alarms of conscience! wishing to live after death, and yet dreading the hereafter; hoping there might be a place of rest; but in the midst full of a thousand forebodings concerning it! Oh! thou glorious, gracious, precious JESUS! it is thou which hast *brought life and immortality to light by thy gospel*. And by thy great undertaking thou hast not only opened to thy people clear and distinct views of the everlasting mansions of the blessed, but by thy finished redemption hast purchased eternal happiness for them, and art gone before to take possession of it in their name. Now, *LORD*, we hail thy glorious person, and adore thee for thy finished work. All thy people are by thee made kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER. *We have received a kingdom by thee, and in thee, which cannot be moved*. Oh! for grace whereby we may serve

thee acceptably in this life *with reverence and godly fear*; until we come to reign with thee in the life that is to come in glory forever.

CHAPTER 28

SUMMARY

This chapter contains the history of the reign of Ahaz and a melancholy relation of his wicked reign it furnisheth. He is afflicted by the Syrians. His death, and successor in the kingdom, is also related.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE! my soul, over the perusal of this chapter, and in the conduct of Ahaz behold the lost, depraved, hardened, and wretched state of human nature. See, my soul, to what sin hath reduced every man? and remark also how deluded to his own ruin is the sinner, who, when the *LORD* is coming forth as his enemy, is vainly looking to an arm of flesh to become his friend; as if a man would set the briars and thorns against *JEHOVAH* in battle! But while contemplating man's worthlessness, oh for grace to admire and adore *GOD*'s faithfulness. Was it not enough, oh! thou most gracious *LORD*, that immediately upon the fall of man redemption was promised; and that from age to age thou shouldest send thy servants to keep alive the remembrance of this unspeakable mercy promised in the minds of thy people; but that, at a period when they were all sinning with an high hand, and living as if regardless of all thy love, that then thou shouldest magnify the exceeding riches of thy grace, and then commission thy servant the prophet to tell Ahaz that redemption was approaching, and *EMMANUEL* should appear as the son of the virgin. *LORD*! help me to adore, to magnify, to rightly understand and prize those depths, and heights, and breadths, and lengths, of such peerless, matchless love! And *LORD*, amidst all the unworthiness, and coldness, and deadness, and undeservings of my heart, let such views of thy grace comfort and refresh my soul. Yes! thou blessed *JESUS*, thou precious *EMMANUEL*, amidst all my sorrows let me

derive my highest consolation from any interest *in* thee, my relation *to* thee, my hopes and expectations *from* thee, and my whole salvation *of* thee, the LORD my righteousness. Thou art indeed *EMMANUEL*, GOD with us, GOD in us the hope of glory.

CHAPTER 29

SUMMARY

The subject of this chapter is the chronicle of the reign of Hezekiah. He restoreth the true worship of GOD, and cleanseth the LORD's house.

REFLECTIONS

How beautiful the face of things appears in Judah under the reign of Hezekiah, compared to the deplorable state in which we behold it under the reign of his father Ahaz. And oh! how much the conduct of men in power, and in exalted stations, operates upon all the inferior departments, both in church and state. But chiefly, my soul, let the improvements which arise out of this chapter tend to lead thee to the precious JESUS. And conceive how infinitely interesting and important must be that salvation of his, which was so uniformly made in all ages of the church the great means and end of purification, unto which, by faith, the people all directed their religious services. Oh! thou blessed reconciler, *who hast made our peace in the blood of thy cross!* by virtue of thy atoning blood and righteousness it is, that after all our unworthiness and the setting up of idols in our hearts, we are like the house of Judah under Hezekiah, again consecrated unto the *LORD* to approach in the name and the rich sacrifice of JESUS. Thou art the author and finisher, the means and the end, the sum and substance of all consolation to thy church, both militant and triumphant, by peace here and glory hereafter. Hail! blessed JESUS! *I will love thee, O LORD, my strength; thou art my song of rejoicing all the day, for thou art become my salvation.*

CHAPTER 30

SUMMARY

This chapter relates the continuance of Hezekiah's good reign. He proclaims a passover. The people are earnest in destroying the idols.

REFLECTIONS

READER! while we pay all due respect to this beautiful piece of history in the church, and find cause to bless GOD for raising up his servant Hezekiah in such a time for the recovery of the land from idols, let you and I have our thoughts exercised in the contemplation of the mercies we are called to in the free, and full, and seasonable enjoyment of our gospel ordinances under the rich profusion of the means of grace the *LORD* our GOD hath reserved to us. Are we as a nation, as a people, better than our fathers? Have we merited the blessings we possess in our hallowed things? Are we not gone away in a thousand instances from his sacred word, from the love of his truth, from the grand distinguishing doctrines of the gospel; from the love of ordinances and from a well-grounded confidence in him? And doth the *LORD* amidst all our provocations, still preserve to us those best of all privileges, our sacred things, our sabbaths; his holy word and ordinances. Oh then, let the example of Hezekiah and his people stir us up to an earnest, hearty, and sincere return to the *LORD*. Let us send out missionaries to the various kingdoms of the earth, as he did his posts to Israel, and invite all ranks and orders of people to come to JESUS. And oh! let our return to the *LORD* be with an eye to the person, blood, and righteousness of JESUS. He is our passover, he is our peace, our propitiation, our altar, our sacrifice, our righteousness, our all. Yes! blessed JESUS! thou art divinely prepared and graciously furnished by GOD our FATHER, a suited Saviour for fallen, sinful men. Sweetly and secretly in thy person are hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*: and in thy finished work the life, safety, present peace, and everlasting happiness of thy people is contained. *LORD!* to whom shall we go but unto thee, *thou hast the words of eternal life*. Thou art our passover sacrificed for us. In thee,

and on thee, we would keep an everlasting feast. And oh! do thou bless us as a High Priest of our calling, and may our GOD and FATHER answer it, and confirm it in heaven his dwelling place, the habitation of his holiness and his glory.

CHAPTER 31

SUMMARY

The prosecution of Hezekiah's history is carried on in this chapter. He puts down the remains of idolatry. The character of Hezekiah in his sincerity is briefly spoken of.

REFLECTIONS

I pass over several otherwise interesting reflections which this chapter ministereth unto in the zeal of Hezekiah and the people to put idolatry out of the land, in order to attend to what the HOLY GHOST hath here so largely dwelt upon, the liberality of the people providing for their clergy, and the faithfulness of the clergy in the moderate use of the good things of GOD'S providence, and their zeal and services in the LORD'S work among the people. In whatever character the ministers of JESUS are considered as servants and laborers, as watchmen or stewards, they are uniformly held forth as exercising a most solemn and awful office, for the faithful account of which they are responsible at the judgment-seat of GOD. *We watch* (saith one of them, well taught in divine things) *for your souls, as they that must give account, that we may do it with joy, and not with grief.* Called to the great work and labor of the ministry; solemnly engaged in it; intrusted by the LORD with the charge of his word, his people, his house, his ordinances, and family; the grand object should be how to promote his glory in the salvation of men; and by every means in their power to win souls unto CHRIST. Every faithful servant is bound to advance his LORD'S interests. How much more every faithful servant of JESUS, in that the salvation of the souls of poor perishing sinners is so intimately connected with the glory of his master. Oh! LORD JESUS! do thou in compassion to the

perishing state of sinners all around, call such to thy service whose hearts, like thine own, may be moved with compassion in the contemplation of a lost world. And to those whom thou hast called, or shalt call, be pleased to give the sweet communications of thy HOLY SPIRIT. Make them more anxious to win souls to JESUS than to win kingdoms to themselves. And let the same gracious frame of mind mark all thy sent servants, which the apostle, Paul felt when he could and did appeal to his people, and say, *I will not be burdensome to you, for I seek not yours, but you.* 2 Corinthians 12:14.

CHAPTER 32

SUMMARY

In this chapter we arrive in point of history to the close of Hezekiah's life and reign. He meets with a sharp trial in the approach of the Assyrian army. His sickness and death. Manasseh his son succeeds him in the throne.

REFLECTIONS

So royal a character as Hezekiah, and especially after the view we have had before of his father Ahaz, demands our thankfulness to the GOD of our mercies, who maketh one to differ from another, and by his grace forms all the difference between the precious, and the vile. And while we look at Hezekiah, let us not overlook all the offspring of JESUS, our almighty king. Is it not he who hath begotten us unto this royal state, and made all his children kings and priests to GOD and the FATHER! Think, believer, what an honored, what a royal state you are *new born* to in CHRIST JESUS! he hath made us (saith an apostle) *partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.* You are called to a princely service also; for his service is perfect freedom. And how noble is the clothing of the king's daughter, which is *all glorious within.* How royal their state; how truly kingly their dignity, *which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of*

man, but of GOD. Hail! thou holy, blessed, royal LORD JESUS! by whose complete salvation we are thus begotten to the privilege of children of GOD, heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with CHRIST. Oh! for grace to live up to our high and glorious privileges. Beloved! now are we the sons of GOD! and it doth not appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure. 1 John 3:1, 2.

CHAPTER 33

SUMMARY

We enter in this chapter upon the history of the reign of Manasseh; and a most wicked reign it proved. He is carried into Babylon. In prison his heart is changed. He is liberated from prison. At his death he is succeeded by Ammon his son. He dies also, and Josiah his son becomes his successor.

REFLECTIONS

MY soul! in the contemplation of such characters as are here represented, behold the awful situation of the wicked. How by sin they destroy themselves, ruin their friends, involve their dearest connections in evil, and beginning in sin, for the most part terminate their existence in vanity and vexation of spirit. But think, my soul, what a miracle of grace must it be, when any, like Manasseh are delivered out of the snare of the devil, *who were taken captive by him at his will*. Surely none will venture to dispute here the sovereignty of grace, or to put that down to man's free will which can belong to none but the undeserved; unsought for, unexpected, mercy of GOD in CHRIST. And hast thou, LORD, brought my soul out of the prison house, out of Satan's empire; and washed me from my sins in thy blood! Hast thou made me a rich partaker of the grace which is in CHRIST JESUS! Oh! blessed, forever blessed, be the means in affliction like Manasseh's, and yet more blessed be the GOD of the

means, who remembered me in my low estate, *for his mercy endureth for ever.*

CHAPTER 34

SUMMARY

This chapter brings us acquainted with the reign of Josiah. He destroyeth idolatry; repaireth the temple; the book of the law being found in the house of the LORD, Josiah causeth it to be read. The king reneweth the covenant.

REFLECTIONS

READER! let our improvement of this chapter, under the SPIRIT'S teaching, be to remark from the early call of Josiah to the knowledge of the LORD GOD of his fathers, the blessedness of those who are brought betimes to a saving view of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and redemption in his blood. It is an unspeakable mercy, no doubt, and a miracle of grace, at any period, and at any time, when souls are truly converted to JESUS. The laborers in the vineyard at the sixth, and ninth, and eleventh hour, which were called and equally recompensed in the close of the day, give us a rich representation of the free, sovereign grace of our most compassionate and gracious FATHER. Surely it is a very glorious proof of the sovereignty of GOD'S love and mercy, when we behold men in the meridian of life, and in the midst of all their pursuits of business, or of worldly pleasure, taken aside by the kind hand of the LORD, and brought to the knowledge and love of JESUS. And surely the grace of GOD is magnified in the conversion of old sinners, who are grown old in sin as well as years, And yet the long current and tide of their affections is made to turn at the command of his voice, who raiseth the dead in trespasses and sins. But we behold with peculiar loveliness the grace the LORD bestows on those whose tender years are seasoned with the love of JESUS. Reader! how doth your experience correspond with either? Hath JESUS, the morning star, risen upon *your* soul? Hath JESUS the day spring from on high visited *you*? Can you trace your

knowledge of this light and life of man, like Josiah, from your youth? Oh! the unspeakable felicity of knowing him from a child, and becoming acquainted with JESUS from our earliest years? What can equal that joy of the soul arising out of the LORD's manifestation, when speaking to a believer, as he did to Josiah; *Because thine heart was tender and thou didst humble thyself before me, I have heard thee also, saith the LORD.*

Blessed JESUS! let it please thee to make continued manifestations of thyself to all thy people. Visit our souls in thy word, in thine ordinances, in all thy means of grace, by providences, in blessings, in mercies, in all thy sovereign appointments. And as thou hast given us to see thy beauty, thy loveliness; thy grace, thy suitableness and all-sufficiency; and won our affections to thy love in the moment of conversion; so, LORD JESUS, let us day by day have renewed discoveries of thy love, until at length, after the various manifestations and the sweet visits which thou makest us, we are growing up into an increasing knowledge *of* thee, an increasing desire *after* thee, an increasing confidence *in* thee, and an increasing longing *for* thee and thy glory, thou wilt take us home to thyself to behold thy fair beauties, and to dwell with thee for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER 35

SUMMARY

This chapter concludes the history of Josiah. He keeps a solemn pass over. He goes to battle at Magiddo, and is slain. Is deeply lamented at his funeral by his people.

REFLECTIONS

READER! in the view of this passover, and the religious observance of it by the whole kingdom of Judah, let you and I learn to prize our gospel privileges. They had the shadow, we have the substance. They looked to good things to come; we celebrate mercies fulfilled. They looked through the passover to redemption by JESUS's blood; we commemorate in the Holy Supper that

redemption completed, and have our feast upon the sacrifice. Blessed JESUS! thou art the passover, the sacrifice, the altar, the ark, the whole of all the types under the law. For all pointed to thee, and in thee had their completion. Offered up upon the altar for our sins a sacrifice to satisfy the justice of GOD our FATHER, thou wert roasted in the flames of his just indignation against our sins; and thy person becomes the everlasting nourishment, the wholesome, saving, healthful food of our souls, the bread of GOD for poor sinners, on which they may feed, and feast, and live forever. Bread of GOD, I would call thee, that camest down from heaven, be thou my portion now, and to all eternity. On thee would I feed: to thee would I come, and make thee my passover, not only to preserve me from the destroying angel, and from the wrath to come, but to be my glorious entrance, and my everlasting security, joy, and happiness in the presence of GOD for evermore.

CHAPTER 36

SUMMARY

This chapter brings us to the conclusion of the Chronicles. Here is contained the history of Jehoahaz, and his being deposed by Pharaoh. Jerusalem taken. Jehoiachin made king. Zedekiah's short reign. The proclamation by Cyrus.

REFLECTIONS

PAUSE, Reader! and before you close the book of the Chronicles, which contains a faithful register of events both of men and things, think what desolation sin hath introduced into the circumstances of mankind; nay, even into the church of GOD! Who but must tremble in the relation of what is here recorded! and though here and there, in the character of some few gracious souls, we discover that the *LORD* hath not left himself without witness, which act as the salt of the earth to preserve the whole from universal putrefaction; yet *how* (as the prophet speaks) *is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!*

And Reader! when you have duly contemplated this faithful portrait of man by nature, turn your eyes and behold what that same nature is when recovered by almighty grace in the person, purchase, blood-cleansing, soul-justifying, and soul-adorning righteousness of GOD our Saviour. Yes, blessed JESUS! I would behold thy church, not as it is in itself, but as it is united to thee, and made all glorious within; and also comely without, from *thy comeliness which thou hast put upon it*. Didst thou not at infinite expense, from infinite love, and by infinite power, purchase her to thyself? And dost thou not now watch her, water her every moment, and keep her night and day, lest any hurt her. Hast thou not for her unfaithfulness and departures from thee suffered, in different ages, *the wild boar out of the wood to root her up?* But in the midst of all thou hast brought her again in, and planted her in thine holy mountain. There may be, and there will be, the desolations of threescore years and ten; shaking dispensations, trying afflictions, and much tribulation; but though thou wilt *sift thine Israel as corn is sifted, yet* (thou hast said,) *a grain shall not fall to the ground*. Oh! thou the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof! be thou the Refuge of all thy people in the day of their adversity. And when the wealthiest empires of the earth have had their day, which thou hast appointed; when thy church scattered as it now is, amidst the various monarchies of the world shall be gathered together, and the time of her dispersion is over: Then oh! blessed, mighty, glorious LORD JESUS, then let that auspicious promise be fulfilled and realized over the wide universe of GOD, in which it is said *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our LORD and of his CHRIST, and he shall reign for ever*. The peaceable kingdom of righteousness in JESUS, shall extend over all the habitable earth, and *all flesh shall see the salvation of GOD*. Amen.