

OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

GEN. ii. 16, 17.—*And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayst freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

HAVING already shown, that God from all eternity decreed whatever comes to pass; that he executes his decrees in the works of creation and providence; that he made all things of nothing by the word of his power; that he made man upright, adorned with his moral image, consisting in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; and that his providence, extends to all his creatures, and all their actions: that which now falls to be considered is the special act of providence which God exercised towards man, in the estate wherein he was created, namely, the covenant of works which God made with Adam. This covenant is sometimes called *the covenant of works*, because works, or obedience, was the condition of it; and sometimes *the covenant of life*, because life was promised therein as the reward of obedience.

In discoursing from this subject, I shall,

I. Shew that God made a covenant with Adam, when he created him in a state of innocency.

II. Explain the nature of this covenant.

III. Shew why God entered into this covenant with man.

IV. Make improvement.

I. That God made a covenant with Adam when he had created him in a state of innocency, appears from this text with the context. For here are the parties contracting, God and man.

1. Here is the duty which God requires of man, *not eating of the forbidden fruit*; which was no command of the natural law, but superadded thereto, and implied his obligation to observe that law much more.

2. A threatening in case man should break this positive law, *Thou shalt die*.

3. A promise of life in case of continued obedience. For the threatening manifestly implies another proposition, viz. 'If thou eat not of this tree thou shalt live.' Besides, the license the Lord gives him to eat of every other tree in the garden, and so of the tree of life, imports this promise.

4. Man's accepting of the terms. This is left to be gathered from the proposal of it by the Lord to innocent man, who would refuse

no terms that a bountiful God proposed. He objected not against the condition ; he betook himself to the privilege of the covenant, eating of the other trees of the garden. Eve owns it, Gen. iii. 3. ‘Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.’ And when they had eaten of this forbidden fruit, their consciences terrified them, ver. 8. ‘Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.’ No wonder that Moses with a running pen describes this transaction, which, as to its being the way of salvation then proposed, passed as a flying shadow. Thus this covenant appears from the text.

To confirm this, consider that the scripture speaks of two covenants, Gal. iv. 24. the one of grace, and therefore the other of works. See also Hos. vi. 7. ‘They like men have transgressed the covenant.’ The Hebrew bears, *as Adam*. It is the same word that occurs, Job xxxi. 33. ‘If I have covered my transgressions as Adam. This will further appear while we shew,

II. The nature of this covenant. Wherein consider,

First, The parties covenanting. On the one hand was God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, man Creator and Sovereign Lord, who is the great Lawgiver, and withal good, and communicative of his goodness to his creatures. On the other part was man, God’s creature ; Adam, representing all mankind, and covenanting with God, not only for himself, but for all his posterity, as the natural father of all, of whose one blood nations of men were to be made, Acts xvii. 26. and the appointed federal head ; which is clear from the imputation of his sin to all, Gen. ii. 17.’ ‘In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.’ Compare Rom. v. 12. ‘As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.’ There was no mediator in this covenant ; nor was there need of any : for man was as yet the holy friend of God, and his service while he stood was acceptable to God, as being fully conformable to his own law, in which he could not but delight, as in his own image.

Secondly, The condition of that covenant was perfect obedience, which God required of Adam, Gal. iii. 10, 12, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.—And the law is not of faith : but, The man that doth them shall live in them.’ The tenor of this covenant was, ‘Do this and live.’ Where three things are to be considered.

1. The law, which was to be the rule of that obedience ; which is twofold. (1.) The moral law, or the law of the ten commandments, as the apostle explains it, Gal. iii. 10. forecited. It is true, Adam

had not this law written on tables of stone, but it was written in his heart; the knowledge of it was concreated with him, so that he naturally knew it, being made upright; which he could not be without this, Eccl. vii. 29. Yea, this law is in part written on man's heart after the fall, as appears from Rom. ii. 15. Much more was it written on Adam's heart before the fall. This law is the perpetual rule of righteousness. (2.) There was the positive symbolical law, of not eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This law was revealed to Adam in the text, neither could he otherwise have known it; it being no part of the law of nature, but a thing in itself altogether indifferent, and depending merely on the will of God, who could have appointed otherwise. Only, as the natural or moral law obliged him to this, seeing it commands the creature to obey God's will in all things; so by this his respect to the moral law was manifested; for as in not eating he testified his supreme love and obedience to God, so in eating of it he rejected the sweet yoke of God, and took on that of the devil.

2. The nature of the obedience that was in the condition of this covenant. It behoved to be perfect.

(1.) In respect of the principle of it. So the law requires men to 'love the Lord with all the heart.' It required not only external obedience, refraining from the thing forbidden; but internal obedience, which behoved to proceed from a disposition of soul bent towards God, in which there was no blemish, and altogether free and unconstrained without any reluctancy from within. And this implies, that the glory of God behoved to be man's chief end in all his actions, without having the least squint look to any other as his chief end.

(2.) Perfect in parts extending to all the commands of God whatsoever that were given him, Gal. iii. 10. with respect to his thoughts, words, and actions. He was to do nothing that God prohibited, and to omit nothing that he commanded. He was to fulfil all righteousness, and his obedience was to be as broad as the law. Every commandment, without the least exception as to one tittle, was to be obeyed to the fullest extent.

(3.) Perfect in degrees. He was to 'love the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind,' Matt. xxii. 37. Every act of obedience behoved to be perfect in degrees, wanting nothing of that perfection which the law required. Every action performed by him behoved to be screwed up to the pitch determined in the law, without falling short of it in the least punctilio. All that was lower than that height required, was to be rejected as sinful; and the least flaw spoiled the whole.

(4.) Perfect in duration or continuance, without interruption, while God should have kept him in the state of trial, Gal. iii. 10. This state could not have been for ever, without rendering the promise of life fruitless; for to make a promise necessarily implies that a time is set for obtaining the reward promised to the obedience; and if Adam was to continue in a perpetual state of trial, he could never have obtained the reward of his obedience. The time of this probation is not mentioned in the Bible. Probably it was not to be very long. And perhaps the devil, knowing the benignity and goodness of the Creator to his upright creature man, that he would not keep him long in a state liable to mutability, was incited to attack him so very early as on the day of his creation, in order to prevent his confirmation in an upright estate.

This and no less was the condition of that covenant. On no other terms could he attain to eternal happiness by it, or be justified in respect of his state before the Lord, though he might in respect of particular actions.

Hence it appears, that sincere obedience could not have been accepted, if it was not altogether perfect; nothing could be accepted, but an obedience altogether without fault or blemish; and that there was no place for repentance under this covenant; no sorrow for transgressing in the least instance could be admitted: for the threatening was peremptory, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' Such a positive denunciation cut off all hope, and rendered repentance of no avail.

3. Adam's power to perform the obedience required. He was able to answer all the demands of that covenant, being *made upright*, Eccl. vii. 29. and in the image of God. There was light in his understanding, sanctity in his will, and rectitude in his affections; there was such an harmony among all his faculties, that his members yielded to his affections, his affections to his will, his will obeyed his reason, and his reason was subject to the law of God. Had he not then sufficient knowledge of his duty? and was he not invested with full power to perform the obedience required of him? Besides, it was not consistent with the justice and goodness of God to have required that of his creature, which he had not given him power to perform. The case is quite otherwise with respect to us in our lapsed state, for we have lost the power of yielding obedience to God's law in Adam. But let it be remembered, that though we are utterly unable to obey, yet God has not lost his right to demand obedience; which should induce us to betake ourselves to the second covenant, where every thing is freely given, and the will accepted for the deed.

Thirdly, The promise of the covenant was life, and therefore it is called *the covenant of life*. Now, a threefold life was promised.

1. Natural life, consisting in the union of the soul with the body, which should have been continued without death, if Adam had not sinned, Gen. iii. 19. Though man's body was made of dust, yet, by virtue of the covenant-promise, it would have been secured from mingling with its original materials. As it was created without any principle of death, so it was not susceptible of any hazard from that quarter, as long as the covenant should be observed. His natural life would have remained in constant vigour, without languishing or decay: And he would have enjoyed the comfort of this life pure and unmixed without any of those evils, miseries and inconveniencies, which now overspread the world.

2. Spiritual life, consisting in the union of the soul with God. Man's soul was, and is in its own nature, immaterial and immortal, not liable to dissolution. It was endued with spiritual life at its creation, living in union and communion with God, and adorned with his image, consisting in righteousness and holiness. This image of God would have been continued in him. His knowledge of God and his duty would not have failed; nor would the righteousness of his will, or the purity and regularity of his affections have decayed. He would still have been the friend of God, and the favourite of heaven; and would never have been without the most lively marks of the love and friendship of his covenant God. He would have had ready access to God, without any eclipse of the divine favour; and the utmost pleasure and satisfaction in doing his duty, which would have been a continual feast to him.

3. Eternal life, or the glorious happiness of heaven. He should have been confirmed in his holy and happy estate beyond the hazard or possibility of sinning, or forfeiting it.—Though he was created mutable, and mutability is woven into the very nature of the creature, yet having finished the time allotted for his probation, he would have been secured from actual liableness to change for ever. His body would have been absolutely and for ever secured against hazard of death, or hurt from external accidents or injuries. He would have been confirmed in the love and favour of God for ever, without any hazard of falling out of it. The sun of favour from God would have shone upon him, without ever setting. And after the time of his trial was over, he would have been transported, soul and body, into the heavenly paradise, there to abide for ever. He would not have always lived in the earthly paradise, where he was to eat, drink, and sleep, but have been carried to the celestial paradise, where the happy inhabitants live as the angels of

God. This is plain, if he consider that application of the covenant of works, Matth. xix. 16, 17.—‘If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.’ Here Christ holds forth eternal life as the promise of this covenant, to be had on the performance of the condition. The weakness of the law to give eternal life now, ariseth only from the flesh, that is, the corruption of nature, whereby we are unable to fulfil the condition of it, Rom. viii. 3. It was eternal life that Christ purchased for his people, and that as he was made under the law, by which he obtained that very life to them, which otherwise they should have had, if man had not sinned, Rom. viii. 3, 4. Gal. iv. 4, 5. Besides, eternal death was threatened; and the goodness of God uses not to propose greater punishments than rewards. And if it had not been so, man had nothing to expect more than he had when created, and set down in paradise.

Fourthly, The penalty of this covenant, in case of disobedience, was death; natural, consisting in the separation of the body from the soul; spiritual, in the separation of the soul from God, a death in trespasses and sins, Eph. ii. 1; and eternal, in the separation of both body and soul from God for ever in hell, Matt. xxv. 41. Man’s body had never died had he not sinned, for ‘the wages of sin is death,’ Rom. vi. ult. and far less his soul, which would have flourished in all the beauty of spiritual verdure and vigour for ever. But it may be asked, How was the threatening accomplished, when Adam lived so long after his fatal transgression? I answer, That day that he sinned he died spiritually. His soul was divested of the image of God that was stamped upon it at its creation; his understanding became dark, his will rebellious, and his affections impure and irregular. He lost the favour of his Maker, and he was exposed to the wrath of God, as a mark at which the arrows of the divine displeasure were to be levelled. That this spiritual death was inflicted upon man immediately after his foul transgression, is evident from those gripes and throws of conscience that seized him, which made him hide himself from God amidst the trees of the garden. And this of course would have actually terminated in eternal death in hell, had not a Mediator been provided, who found man bound with these cords of death as a malefactor bound to the execution. And as for his natural life, that day he sinned, he got his death’s wounds, of which he afterwards died; that day he became mortal, and his body liable to sickness, disease, pain, and every other harbinger of death. The crown of immortality, which he held of his Creator, by virtue of the covenant made with him, fell from off his head, and he became a subject of the king of terrors. He became liable to all those cords wherewith death binds his pri-

soners. So that he was as sure a dead man as if dead already, though the execution of the sentence was delayed, because of his posterity which were in his loins, and because another covenant was prepared, by which the life and happiness forfeited by the breach of the first covenant, was to be recovered, and that with great advantage.

Fifthly, We may consider how the covenant of works was confirmed. It hath pleased God to append seals to his covenants with men; and this covenant seems not to have wanted some things intended sacramentally to confirm it. Among which may be reckoned,

1. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Gen. ii. 17. What sort of a tree it was, the scripture does not determine. But whatever it was, it was not so called, as having any virtue or power to make men wise; that was the devil's divinity, Gen. iii. 5. who told Eve, that if they eat of it, *they should be as gods*; but he was a liar from the beginning, John viii. 44.: but it was called so, because by it they knew to their fatal experience the happy state they fell from, and the woful misery that fall plunged them into. It obtained that name, because it was a warning-sign to them to beware of the experimental knowledge of evil, as they knew good. They had special acquaintance with good in all its charming kinds; and this tree was set before them as a beacon to warn them from looking after the knowledge of evil, which, like a dangerous rock, would dash them to pieces, if they split upon it. And it served to confirm the covenant, and the happiness of their primitive state; inasmuch as in the threatening relative to this tree was included a promise, that as long as they kept from eating of its prohibited fruit, they should never die. And hence we may gather, which is no improbable opinion, that our first parents could fall by no other transgression than eating of this tree. And the devil that finished master of craft and subtility, attacked them in this quarter, as the only side on which he could promise himself success. And alas for poor man! Satan's stratagem succeeded, to the ruin of the whole human race.

2. The tree of life, Gen. ii. 9. Though we have ground to think that this tree might be an excellent means of preserving the vigour of bodily life, as other trees in the garden also were, yet it could have no virtue in itself of making man every way immortal. But it seems to have been called *the tree of life* by reason of its signification being appointed of God as a sacrament, by eating whereof he should have been confirmed in the belief of the promise of life natural being continued, of spiritual life perpetuated, and eternal life to be enjoyed in heaven; which was the main thing, and included

the other two, Gen. iii. 22. 'And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever,' he must be driven out; denoting, that man, by sin, having lost his right to eternal life signified by this tree, was driven out, Rev. ii. 7. that he might not profane the sacrament of it, to which he had now no more right. The words do not mean, that if Adam had eaten of the tree of life after his fall, he should retrieve his forfeited life; this being impossible, because the threatening was express, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*; and that the tree of life had no such virtue and efficacy in itself, and ceased to be a sacrament of the covenant of works the moment man sinned. It was intended to assure and persuade him of life upon performing the condition; but the covenant being broken that assurance and persuasion actually fell of course. The whole verse may be read thus, *Behold the man who was one of us, to know good and evil: and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, that he may live for ever*. Where three things are very plain. (2.) There is no irony or scoff here, as if God should say, Behold the man has attempted to become like one of us, to know good and evil; but how shamefully has he failed of his design! but, on the contrary, a most pathetic lamentation over fallen man. This sentence is evidently broken off abruptly, the words, *I will drive him out*, being suppressed; even as in the case of a father, who, with sighs and sobs, puts his offending child out of doors. (2.) It was God's design to prevent Adam's eating of the tree of life, as he had eaten of the forbidden tree; thereby mercifully taking care, that our fallen father, who had now got a revelation of the covenant of grace, might not, according to the corrupt natural inclination of men since the fall, run back to the covenant of works for life and salvation, by partaking of the tree of life, a sacrament of that covenant, and so reject the covenant of grace, by the eating of that tree now, as he had before broken the covenant of works, by the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (3.) At this time Adam imagined, that by the eating of the tree of life he might recover his forfeited life, and so live for ever.

III. I come now to shew why God entered into this covenant with man. I know no reason can be given for this, but what must be resolved into the glory of the grace and goodness of God. It was certainly an act of grace and admirable condescension in God, to enter into a covenant with his own creature. Man was not at his own but God's disposal; nor had he any thing to work with but what he had from God; so that there was no proportion betwixt the work enjoined and the reward promised. Man before that cove-

nant was bound, but God was free : for man was under the law of nature before he was under the covenant ; for the law was created with him, that is, he was no sooner a rational creature than he was under the law ; but this covenant was not made with him till after he was brought into the garden to dress it. Before that covenant God was free to dispose of man as he saw fit, however perfectly he kept the law ; but when in the covenant he made the promise of conferring life upon Adam in case of continued obedience, during the time set for his trial, then he was debtor to his own faithfulness, which is necessarily engaged to perform whatever he hath promised. Again, death was the natural wages of sin, though there had been no covenant, and that by the rule of justice, which plainly requires that man should be dealt with as he has done. But man having given consent, however tacit, and not expressed in so many words, which yet is equivalent to a formal consent to the covenant, implying the threatening, the Lord proceeds not by simple justice, but by express formal covenant, in punishing for the breach of it. But we may consider the reason of God the Almighty Creator and Lawgiver's entering into a covenant with man a little more particularly, and that to the end our hearts may be impressed with a just sense of the glorious perfections of the great God, and the great goodness shewn to man in that whole transaction. I say, then, that God was pleased to deal with man by way of covenant, for two very important ends, the manifestation of his own glory, and man's greater good.

1. For his own glory, which is the supreme end of all his actions. More particularly,

(1.) To display the lustre of his manifold or variegated wisdom, Eph. iii. 10. This way of dealing was the most effectual method for securing man's obedience : for the covenant being a mutual engagement between God and his creature, as it gave him infallible assurance to strengthen his faith, so it was the sweetest bond to preserve his felicity. Divine wisdom shines clearly, in suiting the method of dealing to the nature of the reasonable creature, which was to be led with its own consent. It is true the precept alone is binding upon man by virtue of the authority of the imposer ; but man's own consent increases the obligation, twisting the cords of the law and binding them more strongly to obedience. Thus Adam was God's servant by the condition of his nature, and also by his own choice, accepting the covenant, from which he could not recede, without the guilt and infamy of the worst perfidy. The terms of the covenant were such as became the parties concerned, God and man : it established an inseparable connection between duty and

happiness; as is plain from the sanction, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

(2.) To shew his wonderful moderation. For though he be Sovereign Monarch of the world, and has absolute power over all creatures to dispose of them as he pleases; yet, in covenanting with man, he sweetly tempered his supremacy and sovereign power, seeking as it were to reign with man's consent. And when, by virtue of his sovereign authority and absolute right, he might have enjoined harder terms to man, and those too altogether just and righteous, he chose to use so much moderation, that he would require nothing of man, but that which man himself should judge, and behoved in reason to be a just and easy yoke; and which, in accepting the terms, he acknowledged to be such.

(3.) For the praise of the glory of his grace. It was free condescension on God's part to make such a promise to man's obedience. He might have required obedience from him by virtue of his sovereignty, as his Lord and Maker, without binding himself by any promise to reward his service. All that he was capable to do was but mere duty to his Creator; and when he had done all that was commanded him, it was no more than what he was bound to do as God's creature. It was simply impossible for man to merit any thing at God's hand. It must be owned, there was much grace in this transaction, in that God entered into terms of agreement with man, not his equal, but his own creature, and the work of his hands; and in promising him a reward for his service, which was due to God by the law of creation previous to that federal deed, and so great a reward, even eternal life, between which and the work there was no proportion.

(4.) For venting his boundless love in the communications of his goodness to man. For God did not create man or angels because he needed them, but that there might be proper objects for receiving the displays of his goodness. Nor did he enter into a covenant with man from any natural necessity, but on design of communicating his bounty to him, Deut. vii. 7, 8. Ezek. xvi. 8. Though the Lord might have exacted all that obedience and service from man, which possibly he could yield, and reduced him into his first nothing by annihilation at last, or at least not have bestowed everlasting happiness upon him, not bound himself by covenant whereby he might expect it; yet, to shew the greatness of his goodness and love, he chose a way to reward that service in a most bountiful manner, which otherwise was due to him.

(5.) For the manifestation of his truth and faithfulness in keeping covenant with his creature, which could not otherwise have been

so gloriously discovered. God had made illustrious displays of his wisdom, power, and goodness, in the creation of all things, and in that excellent piece of workmanship, man, the chief of his works in this world; but his faithfulness and veracity could not have been known, at least in its effects, without some such transaction.

(6.) That he might be the more cleared and justified in resenting the injuries done him by the disobedience of his creature, with whom he had condescended to deal so graciously. For the more condescension and goodness there is on God's part, the greater ingratitude appears on man's part in trampling on the divine goodness. But,

2. God condescended to enter into covenant with man for man's greater good.

(1.) That thereby he might put the higher honour upon him. It was indeed a very distinguishing respect put upon man to be an ally of heaven, and the confederate friend of God. If it be an honour for a mean country peasant to be joined in a formal bond of friendship with a prince or potentate on earth, how much greater honour and dignity was it unto man to be joined in a bond of love and friendship with God, the Supreme Monarch of the whole world?

(2.) To bind him the faster to his duty. The Lord knew man's mutable state, and how slippery and inconstant the heart of man is, where confirming grace is not vouchsafed; therefore, to prevent this inconstancy incident to man, a finite creature, and to establish him in his obedience, he laid him under a covenant-obligation to his service. Man was bound to obey God by virtue of his creation; but his making a covenant with man which he willingly consented to, was a superadded tie to bind him the faster to his duty. By the covenant that was made with Adam, he had a kind of help to make him the more careful to observe the law which was written on his heart, and a prop to make him stand the more fixed and steady. For, on the one hand, he was warned of his danger in case of disobedience, that so he might beware of offending God; and, on the other he was encouraged to serve his Maker with the greater alacrity, from the greatness of the reward set before him, and the greatness of the punishment threatened in case he should disobey: both which tended notably to incline him to constancy in his duty.

(3.) That his obedience might be more cheerful, being that unto which he had willingly tied himself. God chose to rule man by his own consent, rather than by force. An absolute law might have extorted obedience from man, but a covenant made it appear more free and willing. It made man's obedience look as if it were the result of his own choice, rather than of any obligation lying upon

him. This tended much to the honour of God; for one volunteer that goeth to the war, doth honour the service more than ten soldiers pressed by force.

(4.) For his greater comfort and encouragement. By this he might clearly see what he might expect from God as a reward of his diligence and activity in his service.

(5.) That he might manifest himself to him, and deal with him the more familiarly. The dealing by way of covenant is the way of dealing betwixt man and man that hath least of distance in it, and most of familiarity, wherein parties come near to each other with greatest freedom. There is more nearness and familiarity in this than in any other way whereby God hath expressed his will. It is a more familiar way than that of commands and precepts, which imports nothing but authority and sovereignty. Yea, it is more familiar than the way of absolute promises, which might indeed set forth God's abundant goodness, but not so much God's familiar condescension, as the way of a covenant, when so great and so glorious a Majesty stoops to treat and deal by reciprocal engagements with so mean a creature as man, who is sprung of dust.

I come now to make some practical improvement of this subject.

1. See here the great and wonderful condescension of God, who was pleased to stoop so low as to enter into a covenant with his own creature. Though he is infinitely great and glorious in himself, the fountain of his own blessedness, the glass of his own beauty, and the throne of his own glory; yet he condescended to treat with mean man in a way of covenant. How astonishing is it that God should make a covenant with dust and ashes; and that he should bind himself to man, to give him life and happiness as the reward of his obedience, which he owed to God by the law of his creation?

2. See what a glorious condition man was in when God entered into a covenant with him. He was placed in a pleasant and delightful place, where he was furnished with every conveniency he could desire. He was conformed to God in holiness. Light sparkled in his understanding, sanctity shined in his will, and his affections were regular and pure. He had familiar intimacy and communion with his Maker, and conversed as freely with him as a favourite with his prince. As he enjoyed the light of the sun in paradise to cherish and refresh his body, so he had the light of God's countenance to solace and delight his soul. Thus happy was man: but, ah! he is now fallen like a star from heaven.

3. See that God is very just in all that comes on man. He set him up with a good stock, in a noble case, making him his covenant-party. He gave him the noblest undeserved encouragement to con-

tinue in his obedience, and told him his hazard if he should disobey. So that falling he is left without excuse, his misery being entirely owing to himself.

4. See the deplorable condition of all Adam's posterity by reason of the breach of this covenant. They are under the curse of the law, which is an universal curse, and discharges its thunder against every person who is naturally under that covenant, and has not changed his state.

5. This serves to humble all flesh, and beat down the pride of all created glory, under the serious consideration of the great loss we have sustained by Adam's fall, and the sad effects thereof upon us. We have lost all that is good and valuable, the image and favour of God, and have incurred the wrath and displeasure of a holy God.

6. See the unsearchable riches of divine grace, in providing a better covenant for the recovery and salvation of fallen man. The duty of the first covenant is now impossible, and the penalty of it intolerable. It admits of no repentance, nor accepts of any short endeavours; but leaves sinful man as a malefactor in the hands of the law. Blessed be God for the revelation of the covenant of grace, wherein life and salvation is freely provided and offered to fallen man through the obedience and satisfaction of the second Adam. Well may it be called a covenant of grace: for it came from the rich and free grace of God, as its true spring; it is all bespangled with gracious promises, as the heavens are with stars; and all the blessings contained in it are gratuitous and free, such as men cannot plead any right or title unto by any merit or works of their own. When the angels sinned, God expelled them from heaven, and left them to perish in their misery; but he was graciously pleased to enter into a covenant with his Son, as second Adam, for the recovery of fallen man, who by his obedience and death hath fulfilled the law, and suffered the penalty thereof, and thereby made ample provision for all the wants and miseries of poor sinners.

7. There is no wonder, that however little good is wrought in the world, yet working to win heaven is so frequent. We have sufficient evidence of the covenant of works being made with man as a public person, seeing it is yet natural to us to do that we may live, and to think that God will accept us for our works' sake.

8. See your misery, all ye that are out of Christ. This covenant is your way to heaven, which is now impossible. Tell not of your good meanings and desires, your repentance, and your obedience, such as it is; and think not to get life, salvation, and acceptance thereby. For the covenant ye are under admits of no repentance, no will for the deed. It requires nothing less than perfect obedience, which ye are incapable to give.

9. *Lastly*, Therefore give over this way of seeking life by the broken covenant of works, and come to the Lord Jesus Christ; lay hold on the better covenant, and come up to Christ's chariot, Cant. iii. 9, 10. which will drive you safely to eternal life and glory. That chariot which the first Adam drove, went not far till it was all shattered, and made unfit to carry any to heaven. It breaks with the weight of the least sin; and so ye can never think it will drive to heaven with you, Rom. viii. But come into the chariot of the covenant of grace, and ye will be safely carried in it to the land of eternal rest and glory*.

OF THE FALL OF OUR FIRST PARENTS.

GEN. III. 6, 7.—*And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*

GOD made man upright, but he sought out many inventions. Man being in honour, abode not. He soon fell from the happy and holy state in which he was created.

In the text we have three things to be considered.

1. The fall of our first parents from their state of primitive integrity; it was by their both eating of the forbidden fruit, and consequently sinning against God, ver. 6. And they were immediately sensible that they were fallen from that holy and happy state, ver. 7. This appears two ways. (1.) By their knowledge of their nakedness. Some suppose, that their bodies, before their fall, had a divine glory and lustre on them, which was immediately taken away when they sinned, and they saw that this beautiful covering was now gone. Most part of interpreters understand it of their seeing their nakedness with grief and shame, from a sense of their guilt contracted, and of that sinful concupiscence they found now working in them. Thus the eyes of their minds were opened, which Satan had blinded before. (2.) By their going about to cover their

* A more full and particular account of the covenant of works may be seen in the author's treatise on that subject, first published in 1772, being a work composed posterior to these catechetical discourses.