

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.

bodies with the broad leaves of the fig-tree. All this clearly holds forth their sense, though it was no holy sense, of their shameful fall.

2. That action by which they fell, their sinning against God, ver. 6. viz. by eating the forbidden fruit. They broke God's express command, forbidding them, under pain of death, to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And immediately after this wicked deed they saw they were naked.

3. How they fell. They fell of their own free-will being left to their freedom, ver. 6. *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, &c.* There was no force or compulsion here; all proceeded from free choice. Their eyes saw the fruit, their hearts coveted it, their hands took it, and their mouths ate it.

The doctrinal truth deducible from the text is,

DOCT. 'Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the estate wherein they were created by sinning against God.'

Two things are here to be considered.

I. The fall of our first parents.

II. How or what way they fell.

I. Let us consider the fall of our first parents. And here I will shew,

1. That man is fallen.

2. Whereby he fell, or what cast him down.

3. What he fell from.

First, I am to shew that man is fallen, and that our first parents did not continue in the estate wherein they were created, but fell from it. This is clear,

1. From the express narrative of this fatal event given by Moses, Gen. iii. from which it appears, that the devil entering into a serpent, artfully tempted Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit, in direct opposition to the express command of God, prohibiting it under a dreadful penalty; that she prevailed upon Adam to follow her example; that they were both immediately stung with remorse and horror for what they had done; and perceiving themselves to be naked, they fell a-sewing fig-leaves together for a covering to their bodies; that hearing the voice of the Lord God in the garden, they did, as an evidence of their guilt, and of the privation of light in their minds, hide themselves from the presence of the Lord among the trees of the garden; that being called to account for their conduct, the woman threw the blame on the serpent, and the man on the woman; and that both received sentence from their offended Creator and Judge, expressive of their future misery; though at the same time God was pleased to give them a revelation of the method

of salvation by a Redeemer, in the promise respecting the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head. All this amounts to a plain proof that man has fallen from the holy and happy state he was placed in at his creation.

2. From the doleful experience of their posterity, Rom. v. 12. 'As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all man, for that all have sinned.' When we see the whole race of mankind born beggars, surely we may conclude that their father became bankrupt; for he once had a happy portion to transmit to his posterity, which he foolishly squandered away. And the misery attending upon us now, is, that we are pursued for our father's debt as well as our own, without having a farthing to pay.

Secondly, We may inquire, How did Adam fall, or what cast him down? It was his sinning against God. While our first parents held with God, they stood; but when they departed from him, they fell. What their sin was more particularly, will fall to be shewn afterwards. They thought to rise by their sin, affecting to be as gods, Gen. iii. 5, 6. but it was their ruin. Seeking more they lost what they had.

Thirdly, It may be asked, What did they fall from? The state wherein they were created. Now, this was a state of the greatest holiness and felicity. When they sinned,

1. They fell from a holy into a sinful state. They lost the image of God. Observe the opposition betwixt the image of God and that of Adam, Gen. v. 1, 3. There we are told, 'that God made man in his own likeness,' or image; and that Adam beget a son 'in his own likeness,' even Seth, from whom the whole human race is sprung. Sin was a turning from God as their chief end, and making themselves their chief end; whereby all their uprightness behoved to be lost. It broke the whole law of God at one touch, and violently struck against God and man's neighbour, that is, his posterity; and so could not but waste and defile the conscience. This was the sense of the threatening, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.' And in this unholy state are all born of the first man.

(1.) They lost their knowledge, and fell under horrible blindness. Witness their fig-leaf cover for shrouding their nakedness, and their hiding themselves from the presence of the Lord, Gen. iii. 7, 8. A plain indication of their falling into dreadful ignorance of the Divine Being, the opposite of that great knowledge they had of him in their primitive state of integrity.

(2.) They lost the righteousness of their will, Eccl. vii. 29. And

they fell under an aversion to God. Witness their running away from him, ver. 8. their excusing their sin, transferring the guilt every one off themselves, till it landed at length on God himself, ver. 12.

(3.) They lost the holiness of their affections, which immediately fell into confusion and disorder. Witness their covering their nakedness. While they were innocent, though naked, they were not ashamed; but that jewel being gone, the irregularity of their affections began to appear in discovering themselves to be naked, by the evil operation of concupiscence in their minds.

2. They fell from their happy state into a miserable one. O what a fearful overturn was made by their sin.

(1.) Horror of conscience seizes them, ver. 8. appearing in flying from the divine presence; which nothing but guilt, clasping as a serpent about them, could have induced them to do. Death was threatened in case of transgression, Gen. ii. 17. They both died spiritually, and were bound with the cords of temporal and eternal death.

(2.) They are driven out of paradise, excommunicated and declared incapable of communion with God in the tree of life in the garden, Gen. iii. 23. 'The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden,' as a divorced woman out of the house of her husband, as the word signifies. Nay, God drove out the man, expelling him from that pleasant and delightful place, which he had forfeited by his transgression, ver. 24.

(3.) The woman, the first transgressor, is condemned to sorrow and pain in breeding, bearing, and bringing forth children, ver. 16. which, as some observe, is greater in women than other creatures. And frequently women lose their lives in the case.

(4.) She is put under a yoke of subjection to her husband, ver. 16. Not but that the woman was subject to him before, but it was to a gentle and loving guide: but now all her desires are subjected to her husband, to grant them or deny them as he sees fit, because she ate of the forbidden fruit without asking his advice, which now, because of his and her corruption, becomes a heavy yoke.

(5.) The ground is cursed for man's sake; under the influence of which curse it is barren of wholesome fruits, which it does not yield without heavy labour and diligent cultivation, but fruitful in noxious plants, as thorns and thistles, ver. 17.

(6.) Man is condemned to singular anxiety, to weary, toilsome, and oftentimes fruitless labour, whether it be the labour of the hands or of the mind, ver. 17, 19.; for this last is to be taken into the account too, as appears from Eccl. i. 13, 18. 'I gave my heart (says the preacher), to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all

things that are done under heaven : this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. For in much wisdom is much grief : and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.'

II. Let us next consider, how or what way upright man fell. It was so that our first parents sinned, being left to the freedom of their own will. For understanding of this let us consider the following things.

1. That our first parents had a freedom of will. Freedom of will is a liberty in the will, whereby of its own accord, freely and spontaneously, without any force upon it, it chuses or refuses what is proposed to it by the understanding. And this freedom of will man hath in whatever state he be. But there is a great difference of the freedom of the will in the different states of man. In the natural corrupt state, man has a free will only to evil, Gen. vi. 5. 'Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually.' Eph. ii. 1. 'He is dead in trespasses and sins.' He freely chuseth evil without any force on his will ; and he cannot do otherwise, being under the bondage of sin. In the state of grace, man has a free-will, partly to good and partly to evil. Hence the apostle says, Rom. vii. 22, 24. 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.' In this state the will sometimes chuses that which is good, and sometimes that which is evil. This freedom of will is in all regenerate persons who have in some measure recovered the image of God. They chuse good freely by virtue of a principle of grace wrought in them by the sanctifying operations of the Divine Spirit ; yet through the remainders of corruption that abides in them, their wills are sometimes inclined to that which is evil. In the state of glory, man has a free will to good only. In this state the blessed chuse good freely ; and being confirmed in a holy state, they cannot sin.

The freedom of will that man had in the state of innocence was different from all these. In that state he had a freedom of will both to good and evil ; and so had a power wholly to chuse good, or wholly to chuse evil : which differences it from the freedom of will in the state of grace. He had a free will to good, yea, the natural set of his will was to good only, Eccl. vii. 29. being 'made upright ;' but it was liable to change through the power of temptation, and so free to evil also, as mournful experience has evidenced. Man was created holy and righteous, and received a power from God constantly to persevere in goodness, if he would ? yet the act of perseverance was left to the choice and liberty of his own will. To

illustrate this a little, we may observe some resemblance of it in nature. God creates the eye, says one, and puts into it the faculty of seeing, and withal he adds to the eye necessary helps by the light of the sun. As for the act of seeing, it is left to man's liberty; for he may see if he will, and if he will he may shut his eyes. The physician, again, by his art procures an appetite, and provides convenient food for the patient: but the act of eating is in the pleasure of the patient; for he may eat, or abstain from it if he will. Thus God gave Adam strength and power to persevere in righteousness, but the will he left to himself.

Let no man quarrel, that God made Adam liable to change in his goodness; for if he had been unchangeably holy, he behoved to be so either by nature or by free grace; if by nature, that were to make him God; if of free grace, then there was no wrong done him in with-holding what was not due. And he would have got the grace of confirmation, if he had stood the time of his trial.

Secondly, God left our first parents to the freedom of their own will; and was in no respect the cause of their falling.

1. The Lord did not withdraw any of that strength and ability which he had bestowed upon them in their creation. There was no subtraction of any grace that was requisite for their standing. God is not like man to give and recal again; for his gifts are without repentance. Adam left God before he was forsaken by him.

2. The Lord did not infuse any vicious inclinations into man. There was no internal impulsion from God, exciting him to eat the forbidden fruit. He neither moved him to sin, nor approved of it, but forbade it under the severest penalty. It is altogether inconsistent with the divine purity to incline the creature to sin. As God cannot be tempted to evil, neither tempteth he any man. It is extremely injurious to his infinite wisdom to think, that he would deface and spoil that admirable work which he had composed with so much design and counsel. And it is highly dishonourable to his immense goodness. He loved his creature, the master piece of his works; and love is an inclination to do good. It was impossible therefore, that God should induce man to sin, or withdraw that power from him which was necessary to resist the temptation, when the consequence must be his inevitable ruin.

But by their being left to the freedom of their own will, we are to understand God's with-holding of that further grace (which he was nowise bound to give them) that would have infallibly prevented their falling into sin. God only permitted this fall. No doubt he could have hindered either Satan to tempt, or man to have yielded; but in his holy wise providence, without which a sparrow cannot

fall, far less all mankind, he permitted Satan to tempt, that is, he did not hinder him, which he was not obliged to do. It was in man's power to continue in his obedience or not. God was not obliged to hinder his fall. As he brings light out of darkness, order out of confusion and life out of death, so he knew how to bring good out of evil, and glory to himself out of man's fall. Adam's fall was perfectly voluntary; his own will was the sole cause of it, as will plainly appear, if you consider.

(1.) That while he continued innocent, he had a sufficient power to persevere in his holy state. God created him with a perfection of grace. If he had pleased, he might have effectually resisted the temptation and continued stedfast in his duty to God; and God was under no obligation to give him that further actual grace which would have effectually kept him up. And this grace he was bound neither to give nor continue with him.

(2.) That the devil did only allure, he could not ravish his consent. Though his malice be infinite, yet his power is restrained and limited by the omnipotent hand of Jehovah, that he cannot fasten an immediate, much less an irresistible, impression on the will. He therefore made use of an external object to invite man to sin. Now, objects have no constraining force: they are but partial agents, and derive all their efficacy from the faculty unto which they are agreeable. And although now, in our fallen state, sin hath so disordered the flesh, that there is great difficulty in resisting those objects that pleasantly insinuate themselves; yet, in the state of innocence, there was such an universal rectitude in Adam, and so entire a subjection of the sensual appetite to the superior power of reason, that he might have obtained an easy conquest. A resolute negative had made him victorious; by a strong denial, he had baffled that proud spirit.

(3.) That Adam's disobedience was the effect of his own choice. For a specious object was conveyed through the unguarded sense to his fancy, and from that to his understanding, which, by a vicious careless neglecting to consider the danger, commended it to the will, and that resolved to embrace it. Now, it is plain and undeniable, that the action which resulted from the direction of the mind, and the choice of the will, was absolutely free. Besides, as the regret that is mixed with an action is a certain character that the person is under restraint; so the delight that attends it is a clear evidence that he is free. When the appetite is drawn by the lure of pleasure, the more violent, the more voluntary is its motion. Now, the representation of the forbidden fruit was under the notion of pleasure: *The woman saw that the fruit was good for food, (that*

is, pleasurable to the palate), *pleasant to the eye, and to be desired to make one wise*, that is, to increase knowledge, which is the pleasure of the mind; and these alleatives drew her into the snare. Man was under no necessity to sin. Force and co-action are inconsistent with the nature of the will, and entirely destroys it. Adam might have continued in his obedience if he had pleased. The devil had no power over him to disturb his felicity. He prevailed against him by simple suasion.

Thirdly, The devil tempted our first parents to sin. The devil in the serpent set on man while he stood. Where observe,

1. It was a true serpent which the devil appeared in. What sort of a serpent it was, is not determined: but it seems to have been a beautiful creature of a shining colour: for in Deut. viii. 15. there are serpents spoken of that are in the Hebrew called *Seraphim*, the very name given to angels, which were wont to appear in a splendid form, it may be like these seraphim; and so Eve might take the serpent for one of these good angels. But Moses' plain historical narrative leaves no room to doubt that it was a real serpent, representing it to be more subtile than any beast of the field, and as cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field, after the transgression, when it was condemned to go upon its belly, and to eat dust all the days of its life, Gen. iii. 1, 14. And it is known that the Egyptians, by the devil's instigation, worshipped serpents. And in the old Greek mysteries they used to carry about a serpent, and cry *Evah*: A sign of the extraordinary service it had done to the devil.

2. Though Moses makes no mention of the devil in this affair, yet surely he was the prime instrument in this fatal seduction. For seeing serpents cannot speak, and far less reason, we may easily conclude it was the devil, who therefore is called 'the old serpent, and a liar and murderer from the beginning,' John viii. 44. See Gen. iii. 15. Compare Heb. ii. 14. The devil then, one, perhaps the chief, of those rebellious spirits, who by a furious ambition had raised a war in heaven, and were fallen from their obedience and glorious state, designing to corrupt man, and make him a companion with them in their revolt, set about this work, urged by two strong and powerful passions, hatred and envy.

(1.) The devil was prompted to this action by an implacable hatred against God. For being fallen under a final and irrevocable doom, he looked upon God as an irreconcilable enemy; and not being able to injure his essence, he struck at his image; as the fury of some beast discharges itself at the picture of a man. He singled out Adam as the mark of his malice, that, by seducing him from his

duty, he might defeat God's design, which was to be honoured by man's free and cheerful obedience; and so to eclipse the lustre of his excellencies as though he had made man in vain.

(2.) He was solicited by envy, the first native of hell. For having lost the friendship and favour of God, and being cast out of heaven, the happy region of blessedness and joy, the sight of Adam's felicity highly exasperated and accented his grief, that man, who by the condition of his nature was inferior to him, should be prince of the world, and the special friend and favourite of heaven, whilst he himself was a miserable prisoner, under those fatal chains which restrained and tormented him, the power and the wrath of God. This made his state and condition more intolerable. His torment was incapable of any allay, but by rendering man as miserable as himself. And as hatred excited his envy, so envy inflamed his hatred, and both joined together in mischief. And being thus pushed on, his subtilty being equal to his malice, he contrives a temptation which might be most taking and dangerous to man in his raised and happy state. As soon as Adam was invested with all his glory, the devil, as it were, would dethrone him on the day of his coronation, and bring both him and all his posterity under a curse. Here I shall consider the temptation which was the occasion of man's fall, and the devil's subtilty in managing it.

1. As to the temptation itself, it was very suitable and promising. The devil attempted to seduce him by art, in his propounding the lure of knowledge and pleasure, to inveigle the spiritual and sensitive appetites at once. There were three things in which the desirableness of this fruit was represented, which sets forth the great art and sagacity of Satan.

(1.) Its agreeableness to the palate. It is said, *The woman saw the fruit that it was good for food.* Satan told her that it was of a most sweet and delicious taste, and would highly gratify her sensual appetite.

(2.) It was *pleasant to the eye*; a charming and beautiful fruit, which had an inviting aspect.

(3.) There was a desirableness in it to the rational appetite. It was *a tree to be desired to make one wise.* And the serpent told her, ver. 5. that, upon eating it, *their eyes should be opened, and they should be as gods, knowing good and evil.* He made Eve believe, that, upon her eating the fruit of that tree, she would be raised and elevated from the human to a kind of divine nature and condition. This was the temptation with which the devil assaulted our first parents in paradise, and prevailed against them.

2. I shall take notice of Satan's subtilty in managing this temp-

tation. We read of his wiles in scripture; and indeed they are worse than his darts.

(1.) That he might the better succeed in his hellish design, he addressed himself to the woman, the weakest person, and most liable to seduction. He reckoned, and that justly enough, that his attempt would be most successful here, and that she was less able to resist him. He broke over the hedge where it was weakest. He knew very well that he could more easily insinuate and wind himself into her by a temptation. An old experienced soldier, when he is to storm and enter a castle, observes carefully where there is a breach, or how he may enter with most facility: so did Satan here when he assaulted Eve, the weaker vessel. And he tempted the woman first, because he knew, if once he could prevail with her, she would easily entice and draw on her husband. Satan knew very well, that a temptation coming to Adam from Eve, his wife, in this the infancy of their married state, would be more prevailing and less suspected. Sometimes near relations prove strong temptations. A wife may be a snare, when she dissuades her husband from his duty, or entices him to sin. It is said of Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 25. that 'there was none like unto him, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.' She blew the coals, and made his sin flame out with the greater violence. Satan discovered his great subtilty in tempting Adam by his wife; for he with complacency received the temptation, and, by the enticement of this old serpent, committed adultery with the creature, from whence the cursed race of sin and all miseries proceed.

(2.) He assaulted her when alone, in the absence of her husband, and so did the more easily prevail. For 'two are better than one;' and, as Solomon observes, 'a threefold cord is not easily broken.' Had Adam been present at this fatal congress, it is like the attempt had not been so easily successful.

(3.) The devil's subtilty may be seen here in hiding himself in the body of a serpent, which, before sin entered into the world was not terrible to Eve. Satan crept into a serpent, and spake in it, as the angel did afterwards in Balaam's ass. She was not afraid of this apparition; for she knew no guilt, and therefore was not subject to any fear. She might look upon this as one of the angels or blessed spirits, which, as they used after this to appear in the shape of men, why might not one of them appear now, and converse with her in the shape of a beautiful serpent; why might not she freely discourse with this, which she reckoned one of those good angels, to whose care and tuition both she and her husband were committed?

For we may suppose the fall of the angels was not yet revealed to her, and she thought this to be a good spirit, otherwise she would certainly have declined all conversation with an apostate angel. Some have supposed, and that not very improbably, that more discourse passed between the serpent and Eve than is recorded, Gen. iii. and represent the matter thus: The serpent, catching the opportunity of the woman's being at a distance from her husband, makes his address to her with a short speech, saluting her as empress of the world, and giving her a great many encomiums and dignifying titles: She wonders, and inquires what this meant? and whether he was not a brute creature? and how he came to be endowed with understanding and speech? The serpent replies, that he was nobler than a brute, and did indeed once want both these gifts; but by eating a certain fruit in this garden, he had got both. She immediately asks what fruit and tree that was which had such a surprising influence and virtue. Which when he had shew'd her, she replied, This no doubt is an excellent fruit, but God hath strictly forbidden us the use of it. To which the serpent presently replies, as in the close of ver. 1. 'Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?' The way how these words are introduced plainly shews that something had passed previous thereto. And some suppose, that the serpent, to confirm the truth of his assertion, pulled off some of the fruits of the tree, ate one in her presence, and presented another to Eve, who, before eating it, had the discourse with the serpent recorded in the subsequent verses.

(4.) The devil's subtilty appears in accosting our first parents so early, before they were confirmed in their course of obedience. The holy angels in heaven are fully confirmed in righteousness and holiness; they are called *morning stars*; Job xxxviii. 7. and are all fixed, not wandering stars. But our first parents were not confirmed in their obedience, they were not yet fixed in their orb of holiness. Though they had a possibility of standing, yet they had not an impossibility of falling. They were holy but mutable. It was possible for them to change their state. Now, Satan's subtilty was eminently manifested here.

(5.) He first allures with the hope of impunity, and then he promises an universal knowledge of good and evil.

(1.) He persuades Eve, that though she did eat of the forbidden tree, yet she should not die, ver. 4. 'Ye shall not surely die.' 'God indeed did say so for your terror, to keep you in awe. But do not entertain such hard and unworthy thoughts of that God who is infinitely good and gracious. Do not think that, for such a trifle as the eating of a little fruit, he will undo you and all your posterity

for ever, and so suddenly destroy the most excellent piece of his own workmanship, wherein his image shines in a most resplendent manner.'

(2.) He promiseth them an universal knowledge, as the effect of eating this fruit, ver. 5. 'For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened: and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' 'God's design in that prohibition is only this: He knows that you shall be so far from dying, that thereby you shall certainly be entered into a new and more noble and excellent kind of life. The eyes of your understanding, which are now shut in a great measure as to the knowledge of many things, shall then be wide opened, and ye shall see more clearly and distinctly than now you do. You shall be as God, and shall attain to a kind of omniscience.'

(6.) Satan's subtilty was manifested here, in assaulting Eve's faith. He would persuade her, that God had not spoken truth in that threatening. He managed the whole business with a lie; yea, he adds one lie to another. 'Ye shall not surely die,' says he; and then he represents God as envying our first parents that great honour and happiness that was attainable by them, ver. 5. and himself as one that wished their happiness, and would tell her how to arrive at it; and alleges they might easily understand, by the very name of the tree, the truth of what he says to her. 'It is (says he) because God envies your felicity that he hath forbidden you the use of this tree. But know ye, if ye eat of it, ye shall be as gods.' Here was subtilty indeed. The devil was first a liar, and then a murderer. This was Satan's master-piece to weaken her faith; for when he had shaken that, and brought her once to distrust, then she was easily overcome: and presently put forth her hand to pluck the forbidden fruit. By these pretences he ruined innocence itself: for the woman being deceived by these alleatives, swallowed down the poison of the serpent; and having tasted death herself, she betook herself to her husband, and persuaded him by the same means to despise the law of their Creator.

Thus sin made its entrance into the world, and brought an universal confusion into it. For the moral harmony of the world consisting in the just subordination of the several ranks of beings to one another, and of all to God, when man, who was placed next to him, broke the union, his fall brought a desperate disorder into God's government. And though the matter of the offence may seem small, yet the disobedience was infinitely great; it being the transgression of that command which was given to be the real proof of man's subjection to God. The honour and majesty of the whole law

was violated in the breach of that symbolical precept. But this will fall to be more fully illustrated in a subsequent discourse.

Fourthly, Man being thus left to the freedom of his own will, abused his liberty in complying with the temptation, and freely apostatised from God. And so man himself, and he only, was the true and proper cause of his own sinning. Not God, for he is unchangeably holy; not the devil, for he could only tempt, not force: therefore man himself only is to blame, Eccl. vii. 29. 'God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.'

I shall conclude this subject with a few inferences.

1. Hence see the great weakness, yea the nothingness of the creature when left to itself. When Adam was in the state of integrity, he quickly made a defection from God, he soon lost the robe of his primitive innocence, and all the blessedness of paradise. If our nature was so weak when at the best, then how miserably weak is it now when it is at its worst? If Adam did not stand when he was perfectly holy and righteous, how unable are we to stand when sin has entirely disabled us? If purified nature could not resist the temptation, but was quite overturned at the first blast, how shall corrupt nature stand, when besieged and stormed with a long succession of strong and violent assaults? If Adam in a few hours sinned himself out of paradise, O how quickly would even those who are regenerated sin themselves into hell, if they were not preserved by a greater power than their own; nay 'kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation?' God left some of the angels to themselves, and they turned devils; and he left innocent Adam, and he fell into a gulf of misery. May we not then much more say, 'Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall;' especially seeing we have a violent bent and strong propensity of heart and will to go away from God, which Adam had not.

2. There is no reason to blame God for the misery of the fall. He gave man sufficient power and ability to stand if he would, promised a large reward to excite his obedience, and severely threatened disobedience: but man would needs try experiments to make his case better than God made it; and so fell by his own inventions. The fault then was his own, he alone was culpable, and he was the author of his own ruin.

3. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. You see that you have to do with an impudent devil, who is still going about seeking whom he may devour. No state, while ye are in this world, can secure you from his temptations. Though ye be in a state of reconciliation and friendship with God, ye are not secure from his assaults. No place, though it were a paradise, can protect you. He

has malice enough to push you on to the most atrocious sins; subtilty and experience, acquired by hellish art in the course of some thousand years, to suit his baits so as they may best take with you. Do not parley with the tempter: listening to him may bring on doubting, and doubting may bring on the denial of God's truths, and so end in full compliance with his horrid temptations, as it did with our first mother.

4. If Adam fell so soon after he was created, and could not be his own keeper, then certainly he can much less be his own saviour. If he could not preserve himself from falling into the gulf, much less can he pull himself out of it again. We are by nature without strength, and have no inclination to that which is good; and therefore God must work powerfully and efficaciously in us. We cannot break the chains and knock off the fetters of sin and Satan, by which we are held. We can make no reparation to the honour of God for the wrongs and indignities we have done him. To Christ alone we must be indebted for all this. We have destroyed ourselves, but in him is our help.

5. There is no justification by the works of the law. Adam broke the covenant of works, and so rendered it impracticable for him or his posterity to attain to life and happiness by it. For it is written, 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,' Gal. iii. 10. 'As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.' The law requires a perfect spotless righteousness, but the best righteousness of fallen man is but filthy rags. It is not only torn and ragged, but polluted and defiled. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God: and there is no possibility of obtaining justification by the works of the law now; 'for by the works of the law (says Paul) shall no flesh be justified.'

6. *Lastly*, See your absolute need of Christ; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby ye can be saved. Go not about to establish a righteousness of your own, or to seek to get to heaven by any works of your own. That is indeed still the thing man aims at. First he sins, and then, like Adam, sets to work to cover himself with a cover of his own making, to procure a title to eternal life by his own works. But is it easier to recover yourselves from the ruins of the fall, than to stand while yet in an innocent and upright state? Have ye gathered strength by sinning, and are ye able to walk to heaven on your own legs? Come then to Christ, who by his obedience and death hath procured a righteousness which alone can stand you in stead, and by which alone you can obtain a right to eternal life. You must then either come to Christ, or perish for ever.