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SELECT  
PRACTICAL WRITINGS

OF

DAVID DICKSON.

VOL. I.

ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE OF  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND  
FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE WORKS OF  
SCOTTISH REFORMERS AND DIVINES.



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L I F E  
O F  
D A V I D D I C K S O N .

BY THE EDITOR.

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Mr DAVID DICKSON, or Dick, (for the family seems to have used either name indifferently,) was the son of Mr John Dick, merchant in Glasgow, a man of religious character, and possessed of considerable wealth. John, and his partner in life, had been several years married without having offspring, a circumstance that grieved them deeply; and they not only prayed themselves, but stirred up others to pray for them, that they might have a son—vowing, that if their petition was granted, they would devote him to the service of the Lord. Their prayers were heard, and David was given to them, like a second Samuel, to comfort them in their old age. The precise date of his birth cannot be ascertained, but it is supposed to have been in 1583. In proper time the boy was sent to school; but after he had learned some Latin, his parents forgot their vow, and sent him to sea in the capacity of a supercargo, intending thus to train him up to mer-

chandise. But several losses they sustained at sea after David had entered upon his charge, and subsequently, a severe sickness with which he was visited, admonished them sharply of their dereliction. They bewailed their forgetfulness, and sent him to the University of Glasgow, where his proficiency soon showed that he had at last got into his proper element.

To explain the high attainments in learning which Dickson and his illustrious cotemporaries possessed, it may be necessary to advert to the Scottish education of this period, more especially, as it is so frequently misunderstood, and so grossly misrepresented. Andrew Melville had returned from the Continent, not only richly furnished with all the learning of the age, but a complete acquaintanceship with the most effectual methods of imparting it; and such was the admirable system which he had organized for the Universities of St Andrews and Glasgow, that in literary reputation they were inferior to no Colleges in Europe. The *curriculum* of education for the ministry especially, was such, as might justly put to the blush the superficial acquirements of many of their modern representatives. The young pupil, at his admission, was expected to be a thorough proficient in Latin, otherwise he could not understand the prelections, which were generally delivered in that tongue. In addition to the higher Latin classics with which the course commenced, the students were initiated into the Greek grammar, and carried through the ample routine of the Greek poets and historians. To

these literary acquirements succeeded the study of rhetoric, logic, ethics, physics, geometry, and history; after which the *alumni* were introduced to their more important work of studying Theology as a science in all its departments, and the Eastern languages with which it is connected. This course continued for six years, and without those long vacations which have crept into modern education. This rigid training also by no means terminated with a six years' course in the case of the most eminent of our Scottish divines. Such as had most highly distinguished themselves by talents and acquirements during that period, were appointed professors, or regents as they were then called, and in this capacity they had ample opportunities of maturing what they had already learned, as well as enlarging the bounds of their knowledge;—and after regenting for eight years, they were then admitted into the ministry. It was in this way, that the illustrious champions of our church were trained for the conflict which they had to wage against Episcopacy. English doctors and right reverend bishops, who had been trained in the thought-inspiring stained-glass shades, and amidst the rich intellectual stores of the halls and libraries of Cambridge and Oxford, had been wont to look with solemn disdain upon the lank unendowed literature of Scotland; and when they advanced to establish the divine right of Prelacy, they hoped to bear down all presbyterian resistance, by recondite arguments drawn from antiquity, and by copious quotations from the Fathers. But they were

astounded to find a whole host emerging from the dingy class-rooms and rough-hewn benches of our Scottish colleges, as completely equipped for the combat as themselves—men every whit their equals in historical, classical, and patriotic learning, and withal, endowed with a strength and springiness of dialectic nerve, that made them more than a match for their less hardily trained antagonists. Such were the eminent divines of Scotland in the earlier part of the seventeenth century; and such was David Dickson, who was afterwards to bear so prominent a part in the list of our Scottish worthies.

After he had completed a six years' course, Dickson was found so well qualified for the duties of an instructor, that he was appointed Professor of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. In this important charge, he was eminently successful in training the youths not only in learning, but sound religious principles. Having continued in the professorship for eight years, he was appointed Minister of Irvine, in the year 1618, when he had reached the mature age of thirty-five.

It was only six months after the minister of Irvine had entered on his charge, that an event occurred, through which he was afterwards to suffer considerable molestation. In the preceding year, the prelates of Scotland had transmitted to the king such flattering accounts of their success in the advancement of Episcopacy, that James fully believed that a personal visit only was necessary to accomplish its permanent

establishment. Inspired, therefore, as he assured his good people of Scotland, by a "salmon-like affection" he revisited his native country; but there he found the tide of presbyterianism so strong and stormy, that he was glad to hasten back to the still waters of England, after having railed at the prelates for their overcharged statements, and called them "dolts and deceivers." Goaded by the spur of royal indignation, they strained every nerve to accomplish his favourite measure; and accordingly a General Assembly was convoked at Perth, on the 25th of August, 1618. Never had such a singular conclave represented the Church of Scotland! Bishops, doctors, and deans were the prime agents; courtiers and their led-gentlemen were the lay commissioners: those ministers who were tolerant of the claims of the bishops, were pressed into the service, while the most distinguished opponents to episcopacy were excluded. As if to show also to the eye, that presbyterian parity was a delusion, there was a long table, with forms, for the nobles, prelates, and their supporters, while the ministers were left to stand behind, like mere spectators. The voting which followed was a mockery, for Archbishop Spottiswood told the meeting roundly, that the articles should be passed, gainsay them who would; and when the names of the voters were called, whosoever demurred, had these menaces thundered in his ears, "Have the king in your mind!"—"Remember the king!"—"Look to the king." The articles, five in number, commonly called the Articles of Perth, were

accordingly driven through the Assembly as a matter of course. These were, 1. Kneeling at the Communion; 2. Observance of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension-day, and Pentecost; 3. Episcopal Confirmation; 4. Private Baptism; 5. Private Communion. In a few weeks they were ratified by the Privy Council, and in July 1621, they were confirmed by Parliament. A thundercloud that hung over the city and enveloped it as with a shroud, exploded over the parliament-house, just as the touch of the royal sceptre had established these articles, while such flashes of lightning continued, with deluges of rain and hail, that in this age, so observant of omens, the most stout-hearted trembled at their own work. But the deed was done—and they soon rallied to enforce obedience. | During the stir of these important events, Dickson was diligently labouring at his charge in Irvine; and probably it was owing to the closeness of attention which he bestowed upon his ministerial duties, that he had taken no share in the general resistance to these innovations. Indeed, it appears, that hitherto he had bestowed little or no study upon Episcopacy, although that was the all-absorbing topic of the day. But now, that the subject was brought home to his personal attention, he was compelled to investigate and decide. “I studied the matter,” he says, “as I should answer to God, yet for two years’ time I held myself quiet, till being overtaken with sickness, and dying in my own apprehension, I resolved to give my testimony to the truths which were oppressed. This

I did," he adds, "in as modest terms as I could, purely for my own exoneration." The result of this investigation, was a resolution to suffer, rather than comply with the articles of Perth. His refusal was noted, and the pains and penalties were to be enforced. Scarcely had he been four years a minister, when a summons was served upon him at the manse of Irvine, and on opening the missive, he found, that instead of commencing with the usual preamble of, "James, by the grace of God, King," &c., it began in the name of "John, by the mercy of God, Archbishop of St Andrews; and James, by the mercy of God, Archbishop of Glasgow,"—commanding him to compare at the Court of High Commission, to answer for his non-compliance. He resolved at once to decline the authority of the court, and endure its inflictions. At his entrance upon his pastoral charge, he had preached on the first part of 2 Cor. v. 11, "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men;" and now, with the prospect of suspension or deprivation before him, he preached on the Sabbath before his departure, on the latter part of the verse, in these words, "But we are made manifest to God." The discourse was delivered under all the solemn circumstances of a ministerial farewell, and it was attended with extraordinary power in the souls of his hearers. "During the whole time of the sermon," says Calderwood, "there was weeping and lamentation; scarce one within the doors could hold up his head. That whole day, the women were going up and down the kirk-yaird, and

under stairs, greeting,\* as if their husbands had been newly buried. The like weeping was upon the morn, when Mr David was leaping upon his horse." The provost, magistrates, and town council of Irvine, and the people at large, addressed an earnest petition to the High Commission, attesting the faithful labours and holy conversation of their minister, and showing the injury which his removal would occasion to God and their own souls; and eight or nine of his principal parishioners accompanied him to Edinburgh. The opposite party were now in a dilemma: they wished to procure his submission, and thus escape the odium of persecution, which they would incur by enforcing the articles;—even a partial submission would content them,—let him only *seem* to submit. When he had reached Linlithgow, a post came from Archbishop Spottiswood, offering to continue him in his charge, if he would only request continuance until he were better advised; threatening, that otherwise he (the Archbishop) would "put him an hundred miles from the doors." The answer of Dickson was brief and decisive: "Continuance with my flock I am not that man that will refuse, if either mine own, or the request of others may procure it; but to crave continuance for further advisement, I cannot, except I would dissemble, for I am fully resolved in that matter."

On appearing before the Court of High Commission, Spottiswood, still unwilling to precipitate matters,

\* Weeping.

had recourse to gentle language and flattery. He began to remind the minister of the literary distinction he had acquired when regent in the University of Glasgow; and of the high hopes that had been entertained of him; and protested his own personal satisfaction at the esteem in which he had been held ever since he had been settled in Irvine. After this soothing exordium, the examination commenced; but Dickson forthwith took the written declinature from his pocket, and laid it on the table. At this unwelcome movement, there was a bustle among the members, and the bishops gathering round him, whispered in his ear, as if in friendly solicitude, "Take it up! take it up!"—to which he calmly replied, "I laid it not down to that end, to take it up again." The clerk was then commanded to read the declinature, which was also signed by George Dunbar, a fellow-sufferer of Dickson, and expressed in the following terms:

"Forasmeikle as the assemblies of this kirk standing in force, are ratified by the laws of this kingdom; have respective and properly belonging to them, only lawful power and liberty to try, admit, and ordain qualified persons to the service of the ministry, and to suspend and remove therefrom such as shall be found faulty and insufficient; and to exerce the whole jurisdiction and discipline of the kirk, according to the order established: By virtue whereof, and by reason of the solemn oath of God astricting the whole kingdom, and specially the ministry thereinto, the

lawful General Assemblies, Provincials, and Presbyteries, have lawful power and liberty in matters of admission and deprivation to or from ecclesiastical functions: Nevertheless, we have received a copy of a libel, whereby we are summoned to answer at your instance, in the cause of deprivation, contrary to the privileges and liberties of the kirk, laws of the country, and commendable course and practice hitherto observed within this kirk and kingdom. Therefore, we most earnestly and humbly desire you, that ye would wisely consider, and cease to trouble us with such commandments as may intend prejudice, or prove hurtful to the kirk and kingdom of Christ within this realm. Otherwise, for the obliged respect and duty we carry to the kirk, and lawful assemblies thereof, we will be forced to decline you, as judges no ways competent in the cause libelled. Like as we, being most willing to eschew the meanest degree and imputation of contempt, have disposed ourselves to come in your presence, to declare unto you the necessity of our subjection to the judges and judicatories before specified; and in that respect do testify our declining from you, as incompetent judges in the cause libelled. And by these presents, we *simpliciter* decline you, offering ourselves most willingly to a lawful and ordinary judgment, appointed and established by the laws of our kingdom, concerning us and our affairs; and that for the reasons following, and others to be alleged in time and place:

“1. Because the right of our trial, cognition, and

giving of sentence in the cause expressed in the libel, stands in the power and privilege of the Assemblies lawful, respective above-written, which by no law nor canon of the kirk as yet extant are cancelled, annulled, or declared expired; much less translated or devolved in your persons, to try, cognosce, appoint punishments, and execute sentence at your pleasure.

“2. Because this form of judicatory is mixed of civil and ecclesiastical persons, for the inflicting of civil and ecclesiastical censures upon the parties convened before you, to the prejudice of that distinction which should be betwixt civil and ecclesiastical judicatories, according to the word of God, and established order of this kingdom; whereby it is out of all question, that no civil person can sit, or cognosce upon the deprivation of a minister; as also, that no minister or ecclesiastic person may inflict any civil punishment, nor yet any such ecclesiastic censures as belong to a whole Assembly; meikle less, in their own name libel edicts, summon parties, impose diets of comparence, lead process, give out sentences not only different, but in many respects contrary to the forms of proceeding received and practised in the kirk’s affairs, as the libel whereby we are summoned imports.”

The Archbishop, writhing under the sting of disappointment, threw off the mask of gentleness he had hitherto exhibited. Scarcely had four lines of the declinature been read, when he burst forth in a volley of “banning” and abuse. “These men,” he sneeringly said, eyeing Dickson askance, “will

speak of humility and meekness, and talk of the Spirit of God! The Spirit of God is the spirit of humility and meekness, but ye are led with the spirit of the devil. There is more pride in you, than in all the bishops of Scotland, I dare say. I hanged a Jesuit in Glasgow, for the like fault.”\* “I am not a rebel,” replied the other; “I stand here as the king’s subject. I offer myself, in my declinature, to the ordinary judicatory established already by the king’s laws. Grant me the benefit of the law, and of a subject; I crave no more.” The Archbishop, instead of answering this appeal, continued to rail. On Dickson being removed, his brother-in-law, and several of those who had accompanied him from Irvine, were sent to persuade him to take up his declinature; but they knew his mind too well to make the attempt. On being again called in, the Archbishop addressed him in a style of eloquence worthy of King James himself. “Thou art a rebel,” he said, “a breaker of

\* This was scarcely an exploit for Spottiswood to boast of. The Jesuit Ogilvie was apprehended in Glasgow, in October 1614; and when the Archbishop examined him he was so incensed at his answers, that he pummelled the poor prisoner with his fists. The unfortunate wretch was also fearfully tortured, by being kept from sleep for several days and nights together, until he was driven frantic, in the hope of making him name the persons who had sheltered and protected him. His chief crime was a declinature of the authority of the king and council in things ecclesiastical; and for this he was hanged at Glasgow, on February 28. 1615. It was suspected, that this execution was merely intended as a warning to those faithful ministers of the Scottish Church, who might adopt a similar course in opposing the tyranny of the bishops,—a suspicion, which Spottiswood’s threat on Dickson’s trial goes far to confirm.

the fifth command; disobedient to the king, and us, who may be your fathers both one way and other. Ye shall ride with a thicker back, before ye ding\* the king's crown off his head." "Far may such a thought be from me," replied Dickson modestly; "I am so far from that, that by God's grace, there shall not a stroke come from the king's hands, that shall divert my affection from him." "It is puritan tail!" cried the Archbishop; "ye call the king, *your* king, but he must be ruled by you." The Bishop of Aberdeen then put to Dickson the question, "Will you obey the king, or not?" The other answered, "I will obey him in all things in the Lord." The Bishop then proceeded to another query, which was rather a startling one: "May not the king give this authority that we have, to as many souters or tailors of Edinburgh, to sit and see whether ye be doing your duty or not?" "My declinature answers that," said Dickson. Spottiswood again broke forth in a tempest of abuse, calling him "knave," "swinger," "young lad," and declaring that he ought still to be teaching bairns in the school; and observing that he withheld from him, that title so rich, from its novelty, to the ears of these Scottish bishops, and only called him "Sir," the Archbishop gnashed his teeth, and exclaimed, "Ye might have called me, My Lord, Sir. Langsyne, when I was in Glasgow, ye called me, My Lord; but I cannot tell how, you are become a Puritan now." Dickson silently lifted up his eyes to heaven, but this,

\* Drive.

the Archbishop called a proud look. At length the former said, "I have been eight years a regent in the College of Glasgow, and four years a minister: those amongst whom I have lived, know I am not the man ye call me. Say to my person what ye please; by God's grace, it shall not touch me." After a few more sneers and misrepresentations from the primate, the sentence of the court was announced in these words, "We deprive you of your ministry at Irvine, and ordain you to enter in Turref, in the north, within twenty days." To this, Dickson submissively replied, "The will of the Lord be done. Though ye cast me off, yet the Lord will take me up. Send me where ye please, I hope my Master will go with me; and as he hath been with me heretofore, he shall be with me still, as with his own weak servant." "Swith, away!" cried Spottiswood, as if he had been hooting a cur out of the council-chamber,—“pack, you swinger!” and turning to the door-keeper, he added, “Shoot\* him out!” As they were about to depart, the town-clerk of Irvine exclaimed in a tone of deep sorrow, “Is that doleful sentence of divorcement pronounced? As for you, Mr David, the Lord strengthen you to suffer; but as for you, Sirs, (speaking to the council), God turn all your hearts.” “Who is that?” shouted the Archbishop,—“I shall take order with you, Sir!” Thus ended this singular travesty of an ecclesiastical court. The absence of all decent and established forms in its proceedings, was as remarkable as the

\* Thrust, shove.

lack of common equity and legal justice. The meeting neither began nor ended with prayer; no formal process had been used against the pannel, for the Procurator at whose instance he was summoned, did not appear; and so far from being formally accused and convicted, Dickson was not even asked, whether he would yield obedience to the articles of Perth or not. And yet, he was sentenced to deprivation and banishment! After the trial, the bishops began to bethink themselves wherefore they had condemned him, since no cause had been assigned. But the solution of this difficulty brought them to a dead pause. They carefully scanned and weighed his words, but were obliged to confess, that he had said nothing offensive. At last, they fastened upon his answer to the first question proposed by the Bishop of Aberdeen, in which he declared, that he would obey the king in all things, "in the Lord." From this they absurdly deduced Dickson's meaning to be,—that the king did *not* command in the fear of the Lord!

On his return to Irvine, the denounced minister continued to preach until the twenty days had expired; and because he had merely declined the authority of the bishops, and not that of the king, he took instruments to this effect, and of his willingness to obey the king in temporalities. This he did, to refute an allegation becoming stale even at that early period,—that Presbyterian ministers claimed an authority paramount to that of the king and civil courts, and exemption from their jurisdiction,—that in fact, they

wished, like the Romish priests of old, to establish over all things the tribunal of an infallible Church, from which there should be no appeal. When the time had expired, he went to the residence of the Earl of Eglinton, where he preached weekly in the great hall, and sometimes in the open air. But this permission, which the Earl had obtained for him, was soon thought too much by the Prelatic party, in consequence of the crowds that repaired to these ministrations, from Irvine and the neighbouring parishes; and although they had pledged themselves to that nobleman, and forty ministers who had joined in the petition, that Dickson should remain unmolested at Eglinton, they ordered him to his place of banishment;—and as if this punishment had not been enough, they aggravated it by several restrictions that were not contained in the original sentence. And still he obeyed, that he might shew his submission in matters purely civil.

On arriving at Turref, a desolate and secluded parish in the north, which was thenceforth, as it appeared, to be his place of residence, Dickson obtained permission from the minister of the parish to preach to the people. And truly, this labour of love which he undertook was no easy task. His course had hitherto been a smooth one, in consequence of the high standard of religious character that prevailed in Ayrshire; but now, he found a people so ignorant and degraded, that he was obliged to adopt a new style of ministration. To him, the preaching of a sermon

was nothing, unless it was fitted for the hearts and consciences of those who heard it; and therefore, he had to subject himself to a laborious course of preparation, that he might *come down* to his hearers, in order to draw them upward. On this account he was afterwards wont to observe, that the devils in the north were much worse than the devils in the west; for studying one day would have served him at Irvine, but it required two days of study for preaching at Turref.

While Dickson was thus employed in the service of his Master, the affectionate friends whom he had left behind, were incessant for his recal; and in consequence of petitions from the Earl of Eglinton and the town of Irvine, the High Commission gave him liberty to repair to Glasgow within three months, and there, either to satisfy the Archbishop, or return to his place of ward. And this satisfaction was to be an easy matter—it was nothing more than to clear himself from the charge of having declined the king's authority. He accordingly repaired to Glasgow, but on his arrival, he found that something more was expected and required. It was not enough that he wrote a gentle apology for his declinature, in which every offensive word was softened—he must take up his declinature! Nobles, gentlemen, clergymen of his own party, his personal friends, all urged him to this step, with every form of argument and entreaty; and to make the act as trivial as possible, it was arranged, that he should merely repair, with any friend he

pleased, to the Archbishop's residence, and without seeing the Prelate at all, should just lift up the paper, which would be lying ready upon the hall table, or cause his friend to take it in his stead. But to this contemptible legerdemain he would not listen for a moment. That paper contained the transcript of his devout convictions; it was copied in the records of his conscience—and there let it lie in the sight of earth and heaven! Although his own Irvine was so nigh, toward which his heart yearned with paternal fondness, he called for his horse, and rode away towards his desolate Patmos. Twenty days had the well-meant but harassing solicitations of his friends continued, and during all this time, he declared, that he went in spiritual bonds, and could not get access to God in prayer as formerly: all which remained, was the light of the word and Spirit, that commanded him not to forsake his testimony—and that however they urged, he used to keep all day by that light he had got by prayer in the morning, till he took it and their reasoning before God at night. He added, that he had hardly rode a mile out of Glasgow, on his return to Turref, when his soul was filled with such joy, and approbation from God on account of his faithfulness, that he scarcely ever felt the like before. He returned to his place of exile, but his trial had expired. God who had a great work reserved for him, so controlled the hearts of his persecutors, that the solicitations of his friends were at last effective, and he was permitted to return to his charge, with the promise,

that he should not be molested unless the king interfered. This event occurred about the end of July 1623.

And now, he was replaced in his beloved duties, and among his own people. On returning to Irvine, Dickson resumed his pastoral labours with fresh ardour—and well was he rewarded as a minister, for having been a confessor of Christ and his cause. From his previous trial, he was a distinguished mark which the eyes of men were compelled to behold; and now, that he had returned without a jot of compromisement, he was a recognised and proven ambassador of his glorious Master. The crowds that repaired to his ministry increased; they came not only from the adjacent parishes, but from the more remote districts of Scotland, and even from England; and many families settled themselves in Irvine, that they might enjoy the benefits of his regular ministry. And in addition to his Sabbath sermons, he also preached on the Mondays, which were then held as market-days in Irvine, so timing however the hour of meeting, that the sermon ended before the market commenced. This was a change in the established usage of parish preaching—the little change of a country minister—an assembling of a rural population together upon a week day, to hear the word of God. And yet, here was the commencement of an important era in the church of Christ. We allude to what is commonly termed the Stewarton Revival, which lasted from 1625 to 1630. At this time, the parish of Stewarton was under the

pastoral care of Mr Castlelaw, a man who appears to have been in earnest about the spiritual welfare of his people, and he encouraged them to attend those heart-stirring discourses that were delivered every Monday in Irvine. They did so, and the result that followed was wonderful : like an electric flash, the spirit of religion went from heart to heart, breaking, softening, vivifying with an irresistible power ; and for many miles on both sides of the Water of Stewarton, the influence went onward. Scarcely did a Sabbath pass, without proof of some being converted, or brought evidently under the power of the word ; many were so thrilled or paralysed with convictions of sin, with terror and remorse, that they fell down, and had to be carried out of the church. Crowds of inquirers also, after the lecture had ended, were wont to repair to the manse, anxious about the state of their souls, or to join in the devotional exercises that were continued there, after public worship had ended. A stupendous change was visible upon a whole people, and the event had many excited on-lookers ; but while the thoughtful were awe-struck and silent at the spectacle, and devout hearts kindled into praise and gratitude, there were many who sneered and derided. They called it the “ Stewarton sickness,” and spoke in contemptuous terms of the “ daft folks of Stewarton.” Unfortunately, too, it happened, as in similar cases, that there were sometimes extravagances exhibited both at church and private meetings, that were calculated to throw discredit upon the cause. But here, the

sound practical judgment and experience of Dickson and his coadjutors were employed successfully, in restraining these overflows of feeling, and giving them their proper direction; and happily, these cases were comparatively few. In by far the majority of instances, the result evinced, that the work was no delusion; and it not only pervaded a whole district for the time, but impressed a permanence of character, by which future generations were made wiser and better. It is gratifying to read the attestations that were given to this effect, by men of different minds and habits, but each in his own sphere well qualified to judge correctly. At this time, Robert Blair was a regent in the University of Glasgow; and as he sometimes preached at Stewarton, he had opportunities of much private intercourse with the people; on which occasions, he declared, that he had profited more by them, than they did by him. Boyd of Trochrig also was there, regarding these wonderful events with his calm, thoughtful, inquiring eyes, and cool sagacious intellect; and after much conversation both with men and women, he blessed God for the grace that was vouchsafed to them. And the Earl of Eglinton, whom his lady had induced to forego his field-sports for a season, and converse with these poor people, was compelled to wonder at the wisdom they manifested in their speech. It is gratifying also to find, that although he had been made the honoured instrument of such signal success, the heart of Dickson showed no worldly elation, but referred all the glory to its proper source, and acknowledged his

own inferiority; so that even in the full spring-tide of his usefulness he was wont to declare, that the vintage of Irvine was not equal to the gleanings, and not once to be compared to the harvest at Ayr, in the time of Mr John Welch.

It was not always however, and upon every occasion, that this highly-favoured divine found such enlargement in preaching; and an event befel him, to hinder him, it may be, from being exalted above measure. He had always been reluctant to preach in the metropolis, and on this account he stedfastly refused every invitation to officiate in an Edinburgh pulpit. But at last, during his absence, he was appointed to preach before the General Assembly. The fame of the wonderful effects that had attended his ministry at Irvine had spread over Scotland, so that at the time appointed, the church was not only filled, but the doors, and even the street, were thronged with expecting multitudes. He went to the pulpit in his usual state of preparation, commenced the public services, and afterwards announced his text. But as soon as he endeavoured to open upon it, he became dumb—the whole subject had departed from him, so that he could not remember a single thought. At last, in faltering and humble accents he thus addressed his wonder-stricken audience: “I see God will not suffer any mean clay instrument to be put in his room—he will not give his glory to another—there is too much looking to man, and too little to God.” After a few more broken sentences to the same purpose, he prayed,

and dismissed the congregation. A minister like this so suddenly struck dumb and helpless—what a sermon was that! And how impressively did it rebuke the carnality of those who feverishly hunt after mere talent and excitement, and who are more anxious to be regaled with an eloquent sermon, than to be enlightened by the simple oracles of God!

But it was in the calm seclusion of Irvine, and among the heart-awakened, sincere, inquiring rustics by whom he was surrounded, that the pulpit talents of David Dickson, and their effectiveness, were the most powerfully and genuinely elicited. Above all, he was distinguished by the happy skill with which he appealed to dead or half-wakened consciences, and the tact which he displayed in solving their difficulties, soothing their terrors, and directing them upon the way of life—and hence the eagerness with which, as in the case of the Stewarton Revival, inquiring multitudes repaired to the manse, to consult him, after the services were over. When he was transferred to higher spheres in the church, we learn accordingly without much surprise, that the same amount of pulpit reputation did not follow him. He was indeed the same profound reasoner, the same earnest eloquent speaker as before—but he had no longer those crowds of expressive countenances before him, those eager questioning eyes fixed upon him, from which the speaker catches such fervour and strength; nor the incessant many-voiced question that followed, “What shall I do to be saved?” Instead of these,

he had a congregation of quiet formal citizens,—and a cathedral. On being questioned as to the causes of this apparent inferiority, after he had been removed successively to the Divinity Chairs of Glasgow and Edinburgh, he answered, that he *wanted his books*. He meant the inquirers—those living volumes in which he had perused and studied the best of all theology—and the fervent prayers they were wont to offer in his behalf. Sir Hugh Campbell of Cessnock gave the following quaint account of the several stages of Dickson's pulpit excellence: "The professor of Divinity at Edinburgh is truly a great man; the professor of Divinity at Glasgow was a still greater man; but the minister of Irvine was the greatest man of all."

As an illustration of his distinctive style of preaching, compared with that of his illustrious cotemporaries, the following anecdote may be interesting to the reader. A London merchant, a native of England, having come down to Scotland, in the course of business, repaired to St Andrews, where he heard Robert Blair preach. He afterwards heard Samuel Rutherford. On the Sabbath following, he went to Irvine, where he heard David Dickson. When he returned to London, his friends asked him, What news from Scotland? to whom he replied, that he had great and good news to tell them. They little suspected what these tidings might be, as hitherto he had been careless about religion. He told them, that at St Andrews he had heard one Mr Blair preach—and after describing his features and stature, he added, "That man

showed me the majesty of God. I afterwards heard," continued he, "a little fair man preach (Mr Rutherford), and that man showed me the loveliness of Christ. Then I came, and heard at Irvine a well-favoured proper old man with a long beard, and that man *showed me all my heart.*"

Several short but interesting accounts of Dickson's preaching can be gathered from the declarations of those who enjoyed his personal acquaintanceship. He always endeavoured, we are told, to lead people to throw all their trust and dependence upon Christ's imputed righteousness, and not to rest upon any thing of their own. In preaching, unlike those who were in the habit of exhausting a text and their hearers by a series of twenty or thirty discourses, he generally took three or four verses for a single discourse, observing, that "God's bairns should get a good blaud\* of his own bread." On another occasion, he declared, that a man's addressing himself to study a text, was like his coming to a tree: he shook the tree, and the fruit that was ripest fell, while the green remained: thus, a man should not take from a text all it contained at once. The arrangement of his ideas and style of preaching were also so winning upon the hearts of his hearers, and drew them along by such pleasing imperceptible steps, that a minister declared, he never read these words "I caught you with guile," but he remembered David Dickson. Indeed, one of Dickson's own sayings upon this subject was, "We

\* A large slice.

that are ministers should make the door as wide and broad as we can, to get poor sinners once gained and brought in to Christ ; and when they are in, to close the door, and lay on them as good a load of duties as we can : for ‘ if I be a father, where is my honour ? if I be a master, where is my fear ? ’ ”

An apostolic brevity and simplicity in preaching was what this good man not only cultivated in himself, but cordially recommended to others, and that, too, in a style which they were not likely to forget. That parade of extensive reading, therefore, which indulges itself in showing all the different meanings of the text before coming to the true one, he justly condemned. This, he said, was just like a cook bringing up a piece of meat to the table, and saying, “ This is a good piece of meat, but you must not taste it ; ” and then, he brings another, and says the same. “ The cook,” he added, “ should bring them no meat, but what they are to eat.” In the same strain of honest-hearted humour, he condemned the use of Latin sentences and scholastic phraseology, before a simple auditory. “ It is,” he said, “ as if a cook should bring up the spit and raxes to the table : these are fit to be kept in the kitchen, to make ready the meat, but they are not to be brought to the table.”

One amiable trait in his character, was the paternal interest which he felt for young students who were in training for the ministry, and the anxiety with which he laboured, not only to further their literary, but their spiritual improvement. While he was

minister of Irvine, he understood that a young lad, named John Stirling, then attending the parish school, was under deep religious impressions, and on whom, therefore, he bestowed much attention. The poor youth, who intended to study for the Church, found an insuperable difficulty, as he thought, at the outset,—he felt as if the necessary study of Latin was not only a too arduous task, but that it marred his religious exercises, and therefore must be abandoned. The minister dealt with this over-tender conscience in the language of affectionate simplicity: “Do you think, John, that there is religion and serving of God in nothing but prayer, reading, meditation, and hearing of sermons? Do you not think, that when a webster is sitting on his loom, and working busily at his trade, he may be serving God as well as when praying and reading?” This argument the stripling could not gainsay: but still the temptation continued, and at last became so intolerable, that he resolved to abandon the school, and return home. He accordingly stole away from Irvine, but had not got far from the town, when he saw the minister, who had been visiting in that part of the parish, and was returning by the same path. He tried to hide himself; but Dickson detected the fugitive, and made him come forth and answer. The old excuse was still urged; to which the other replied with that passage of Scripture, “No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven;” and then added, “John, if you can answer

that, you may go your way where you please ;” and immediately left him. John was so moved with this conclusive appeal, that he instantly returned to school, where, in course of time, he surmounted all his difficulties ; after which, he went to college and laured, and Dickson obtained for him a chaplaincy. When Stirling had passed the usual trials, and been ordained to the ministry, his judicious monitor gave him many excellent advices, among which were these : that he should remain unmarried four years, in order to give himself wholly to his new work ; and that in prayer and preaching, he should be as succinct as possible, so as not to weary his hearers. He then ended all with that simple but impressive admonition so necessary for every minister, “ Oh, study God well, and your own heart !”

The following adventure possesses not only a lively dramatic interest, but shows, how unexpectedly a word fitly spoken may be attended with a blessing. One day, Dickson was travelling in company with a young man, whom he little suspected to be a robber, until the stranger turned upon him at a convenient part of the road, and demanded his purse. Dickson complied, but said to him, “ This is a very bad way of living you are now following. Take my advice ; if you will needs take my money from me, go and trade with it. Follow some lawful trade of merchandizing, and leave off this woful course of yours.” The young desperado took the purse and departed ; years elapsed, and the event was forgot. After Dickson had been appointed

Professor of Theology at Edinburgh, there was brought one day a hogshead of wine to his house in the college, at which he and his family were surprised ; but thinking that there must be some mistake in the delivery, they allowed it to remain, till the rightful owner should appear. Some hours after, a gentleman called ; and as he was a stranger, the Professor received him with his wonted courtesy, and treated him to a glass of his best ale. The visitor praised the liquor, but asked if there was any wine in the house. Dickson replied, that a hogshead had come that day, but it must have been sent by mistake, as he had not ordered it, and knew nothing about it. "It was I who sent it," replied the gentleman. He then reminded the wondering Professor of the circumstances under which he had been robbed of a purse containing four or five hundred merks, and confessed, that it was himself who had done the deed. The advices delivered on that occasion had sunk so deeply into his mind, that he abandoned all his evil courses, and betook himself to business ; and Providence so prospered his repentance and reformation, that he had grown rich, so that now he was come to refund the sum, both principal and interest.

It will be recollected, that when Dickson was replaced in his charge in 1623, it was with certain restrictions, that made him liable every moment to a fresh ejection. With most persons, this would have proved a strong motive for avoiding any overt act of resistance, except in the case of some very urgent

emergency, and when it could not be avoided. But such calculations of selfish prudence were not congenial to a heart like his, and he resolved to do his duty, be the consequences what they might. An opportunity soon occurred that tested his sincerity. When the Scottish ministers who were settled about the Six-mile Water in the north of Ireland, were silenced and ejected by the Irish prelates, at the instigation of their Scottish brethren, they returned to their native country; upon which occasion, the minister of Irvine employed three of the most eminent of their number, Blair, Livingston, and Cunningham, to assist at his communion. The Archbishop of Glasgow was indignant at this act, while the friends of Dickson trembled. But the storm was already gathering to a head, before which the crazy fabric of Scottish prelacy was dashed in pieces; and the Archbishop who now feared for his own safety, was no longer able to persecute.

And now came on a memorable year in the history of the Church of Scotland—that of 1638—when the force of public events drew the country minister from his retirement, and precipitated him into the struggle of a great national revolution. Concussed by the pestilent counsels of Laud, and his own egotistic obstinacy, Charles I. resolved to inflict the Service-book upon Scotland, at whatever hazard. The experiment had been tried—the stool of Janet Geddes had taken wing, and like a thrown-up truncheon, had given signal of onset—when Dickson proposed to the Pres-

bytery of Irvine, that they should be up and doing. They were allowed by proclamation a certain day, beyond which their refusal would not be tolerated; but he advised them not to wait silent until that day, lest they might be condemned for what would seem a criminal indifference. His advice was unanimously adopted; and a petition was drawn up by the Presbytery, addressed to the Privy Council, in which a suspension of proceedings in the matter of the Liturgy was craved, with a plain statement of the consequences of refusal. Other Presbyteries followed the example; and it was noticed as a token of encouragement, that when the Irvine petition was carried to the door of the Council-house, three others arrived at the same moment, from different quarters. Such was the commencement of that universal remonstrance which ended in the downfall of the Liturgy. His pen was now in active requisition for the service of the Church, and accordingly we find him, soon after (September 20), employed with Henderson and Ker, in drawing up an overture for a public fast, and stating the grounds on which it should be observed. And subsequently, when a formal complaint and petition to the king, against the bishops, as the authors of all the disturbances in Scotland was to be written, two draughts were to be penned on the occasion, the best of which was to be selected as the model. For the one, Alexander Henderson and Lord Balmerino were chosen; for the other, David Dickson and the Earl of Loudon; and the sketch of the latter was adopted, as the one

most fitly expressing the sentiments of the Church and nation.

It was not, however, by petitions that Charles and Laud were to be influenced, and after a scornful refusal, events hurried onward to the crisis. The four Tables were formed in Edinburgh; and when the ancient national covenant was to be renewed, the nobles called Dickson, along with Henderson, to assist them. The solemn events attending the signature of that holy bond, and the importance attached to it, are sufficiently known, we trust, to every reader. Upon this momentous occasion, it was perceived with regret, that no commissioners had been sent from the burgh of Aberdeen, and therefore Dickson, Henderson, and Cant were sent, to remonstrate with the people, and induce them to join their countrymen. Such, however, was the obstinacy of this town, that the deputation were excluded from the pulpits, and obliged to preach in the hall of Marischal College, or in the close, as the weather permitted. But, although they reasoned with the learned doctors of Aberdeen, and refuted all their arguments and cavils, their labours were without avail. Unfortunately for themselves, the people of Aberdeen continued obstinate—and the curse of Meroz followed their refusal.

The voice of the nation was now too loud and ominous to be disregarded, and a “Free General Assembly” was summoned by royal authority to meet at Glasgow, November 21, 1638. The proclamation gave full authority to this Assembly to inquire into

the prevailing evils and redress them; and as if such had been verily intended, the bishops were ordered to submit to its censures. But nothing of the kind was meant. Instead of this, the king secretly instructed the Marquis of Hamilton, who was royal Commissioner, to divide the Assembly, to stir up jealousy and division between the clerical and lay members, and on no account to allow the bishops to be censured; and if all this failed, to protest against all their proceedings. An explosion was inevitable from such left-handed policy. The bishops, knowing they would be protected, refused to appear or to submit; and on the Assembly proclaiming themselves competent judges of the recusants, Hamilton, who had fought for the bishops step by step, at last declared, that he must dissolve the meeting and retire. Amidst the entreaties and deprecating tears of the members he put his threat into execution, in the hope that he had involved them in an inextricable difficulty. If they continued to sit and act, they might be accused as rebels to the king—but they also felt, that if they retired, they would be traitors to their God. They sate in their places like immoveable rocks, and the Moderator, after a short speech, desired the minister of Irvine, there present as a member, to address the Assembly.

The behaviour of Dickson on this occasion was admirable. After a few preliminary remarks, he said, “We thought the matter desperate, when we were charged to buy the Service-book and Book of Ca-

nons, under the pain of horning ; yet we gave in supplications to the Council, desiring them to hear us speak against such proceedings. And when we knew not what to do next, God led us on step by step, and hath kept us still within the compass of his word and the laws of this kingdom, for aught we know ; for we have only followed our cause with humble supplications to our king, and protestations against what we could not obey ; and it is evident, that God hath accepted our testimony, for his hands are about us still." He then with admirable tact deduced an argument for the Assembly's continuance, from the example of the Marquis himself. " God is now to crave," he said, " a solemn testimony of the Church of Scotland ; and we have clearly represented to us an example of fidelity to our Lord and Master, by my Lord Commissioner. He hath stood punctually to the least jot of his commission ; and it becometh *us* to be as zealous and loyal towards our God." Afterwards he proceeded, with a bold and manly logic, to justify the position in which they now stood : " Seeing this court is granted to us of God under our king, and with his allowance, and a parliament indicted to warrant all the conclusions of it, let us go on as we may answer to both ; and though his majesty hath withdrawn his granted warrant, shall we, for this, be disloyal to our God, and let go that power which he hath granted ? If we go not on, we shall prove traitors both to God and to our king ; or if we be silent, and pass from this Assembly, how shall the will of God be

demonstrated to our king in things controverted? There is not a mean to inform his majesty fully and clearly, but the determinations of this Assembly; therefore we must now proceed, and so proceed, as all our actings may answer for themselves, and it may be seen, that our behaviour is as becometh good subjects to God and the king." He then shewed that all means of retreat were cut off, and that their only prudence was to go boldly forward. "We must either go on," he said, "or take upon us all the imputations of scandalous and turbulent persons, and grant that there have been as many wrongs, as there have been false imputations laid out against us; and this were to sin more deeply, and to quit those glorious privileges which Christ hath granted to us, above all our sister churches. Seeing then that there is not a mean left whereby to clear ourselves before the Christian world but this, let us go on in putting over the matter upon our Lord and Master; and he shall answer for us at the court of heaven, and justify us in the eyes of all that are wise."

This admirable speech, which was long remembered, and often adverted to, sounded the key-note to the Assembly's proceedings: they sat and acted as a court having independent power to legislate for the church of Christ. During thirty days of stern deliberation and decision, they pronounced the six Assemblies invalid which had been held since James's accession to the English throne, including those from 1606 to 1618, at all of which the innovations upon

our church had been gradually introduced—censured fourteen Prelates, of whom, two Archbishops and six Bishops were excommunicated, four deposed, and two suspended—condemned the Service-book, the Canons, the High Commission, and the Five Articles—and declared Prelacy to be abjured by the National Covenant, and contrary to the principles of the Church of Scotland. In this manner, and in so short a period, the work of thirty years, during which James I. and his unhappy successor had toiled so painfully and sinned so deeply, was thrown down, and nothing remained of it but an unshapely ruin, or rather a confused heap of rubbish, to proclaim the completeness of the overthrow.

These bold decisions required to be corroborated by deeds as bold, for in a short time “Canterbury’s Knight,” as Charles was derisively called, had raised an army, and commenced a crusade against Scotland, for the restoration of his beloved Episcopacy. But in every district there was such arming and mustering, that the hearts of the royalists waxed cold. It was evident, that a people so zealous for their spiritual rights, might be crushed but not conquered. Each parish sent forth its hardy peasantry fully accoutred for battle, officered by their lairds and nobles, and accompanied by their ministers as chaplains; and on this occasion, twelve hundred horse and foot, who came out of Ayrshire under the command of the Earl of Loudon, had Dickson for their chaplain. At this period also, he must have seen some service, as the

division to which he belonged, took in rapid succession the castles of Strathaven, Douglas, and Tantallan, which were strongholds of the royalist nobles, before they joined the encampment at Dunse-law. The hollow truce which afterwards took place released the ministers from such unprofessional scenes, and Dickson returned home.

On the 12th of August in the following year (1639) a General Assembly was held, of which Dickson was chosen Moderator; and in the trying difficulties of the period by which he was surrounded, he conducted himself with such prudence, firmness, and suavity, as met with universal approbation. A portion of his closing address to the Assembly, is so happily illustrative of his own character and conduct as a minister, that we cannot refrain from quoting it: "To you of the ministry I would say, let us be faithful to our Master, and love one another fervently. Strive not one with another, neither insult those who have been of a different judgment about ceremonies, and the government of the church; but let us make a perpetual act of oblivion of such things in all our memories, and lay aside all disputes, that have taken up much time which might have been better spent. And if ministers will do thus, I will adventure to prophesy unto you, it shall come to pass, that if you will keep yourselves at your book and your closet, and study to be spiritual in doctrine, and diligent in your calling, ye shall have more credit, than if ye ran to court ten thousand times; and your parish-

ioners, who it may be opposed you formerly, shall then travel cheerfully on your errand."

Among other measures discussed at this Assembly, it was proposed to transport the Moderator from Irvine to Glasgow, in consequence of a call from the inhabitants of that city; but such was the reluctance of Dickson to leave his flock, and so urgent were the disclamations of his people and the Earl of Eglinton, that the purpose was abandoned. But in 1642, the troubles and divisions of Glasgow were so numerous, owing to the predominance of the royalists in that quarter, that it was thought necessary to place a man of eminence there, in the hope of allaying the ferment. The situation chosen for him was one of the highest importance,—that of the Theological chair of the University,—and Baillie was joined with him as Professor of Oriental Languages. On entering upon his charge, Dickson was so involved and justled amidst the brawl of civic politics on the one hand, and college envy and jealousy on the other, that his peace-loving heart often sighed when he remembered the "sandy hillocks of Irvine." These minute circumstances that look so trivial in a biography, are yet the briers and thorns of man's pilgrimage that afflict the most; and though they cannot kill, they continually tear and irritate. But he conducted himself through these annoyances with his wonted prudence and gentleness, and had influence to obtain that Patrick Gillespie should be settled as one of the additional ministers of Glasgow. Although now a

professor, and therefore discharged from clerical duties, yet such was the affection he bore to them, and his desire to do good, that he preached every Sabbath forenoon in the High Church of Glasgow. On the following year, he was chosen commissioner to the General Assembly, notwithstanding the opposition of Principal Spang, who alleged, that the College Faculty alone had the right to elect him a member. This matter was laid to rest by an enactment, that Professors of Divinity being ministers, might be chosen either from the Presbytery or University. At this Assembly, Dickson, in conjunction with the celebrated Calderwood and Henderson, was appointed to prepare a new Directory for Public Worship. This was urgently required, from the want of uniformity which then prevailed in church-service, and from the contentions about repeating the Doxology and *Gloria.Patri*, and kneeling at prayer.

While Dickson was employed in his arduous duties at Glasgow, the plague, then a frequent visitor of our Scotch towns, broke out, on which occasion, he prevailed upon the masters and students to retire with him to Irvine, till the visitation had abated. In this comfortable country retirement the lectures and studies were continued; and it was here also that one of his young students was licensed, afterwards well known as the accomplished and pious Durham. The teacher and pupil became so endeared to each other, and so thoroughly of one mind, that they afterwards produced in conjunction that admirable work

entitled the "Sum of Saving Knowledge," which has been so often printed with the Confession of Faith. The circumstances under which this treatise was composed, are worthy of notice. The old experienced Professor and the young highly-talented minister used to walk and converse together upon the different compartments of the subjects ; after which, the result was dictated to a clerical friend in the year 1650. Their place of stroll on these occasions, was the height that overlooks the cathedral, now well known to the lovers of the solemn and the picturesque as the Glasgow Necropolis.

After having been Professor of Theology in Glasgow for about nine years, Dickson was translated to the same charge in the College of Edinburgh. It was about the same period (1650-1) that we find him drawn into that unfortunate controversy which rent the Church of Scotland into two parties, under the titles of Resolutioners and Protesters. A very short explanation only of this matter can be given here. Charles II. had subscribed the Covenant, and been crowned King of Scotland ; and as oaths and promises cost him nothing, he managed to persuade the wisest of his sincerity, so that the best blood of the land flowed cheerfully for his cause. But after the fatal defeat of the Scottish army at Dunbar, and while Cromwell was pressing forward with lion-like steps to the full conquest of Scotland, the alarm occasioned by his progress was so great, that a desperate remedy was proposed. This was, to rescind the Act of Classes,

by which royalists and malignants who had been excommunicated by the church, were rendered unfit by act of parliament to serve in any public capacity whatever. By restoring these men to the army, it was hoped that the fearful gaps in the ranks would be filled up, and a more formidable front than ever presented to the English sectaries. The parliament assented to this measure; but as the excommunication was an ecclesiastical penalty, the concurrence of the church had to be obtained also. And this was procured by a most unfair manœuvre. A scanty meeting was packed of those of the Commission of Assembly who were favourable to the measure; the more scrupulous were excluded; and having met at Perth, they passed through it that act of absolution, by which men guilty of all excesses, and whose hands had been most heavy against the church, were converted into hollow friends and treacherous auxiliaries. The Resolutioners, who were the prevailing party, had Dickson for their principal leader; while the Protesters were headed by Patrick Gillespie, his former colleague in the High Church of Glasgow, Guthrie of Stirling, and James Simson of Airth. Thus were friendships hallowed by the spirit of piety rent asunder, and men banded in hostile array against each other, who were all equally ready to die in behalf of the truth. It was one of those painful spectacles, in which we behold Religion, like Rachel, "weeping for her children." Upon this mournful occasion, as might be expected, hostile pamphlets and

manifestoes were in plentiful circulation, and most of those on the side of the Resolutioners were from the pen of David Dickson.

To us of the present day, who can look back with a dispassionate eye upon the events of that age, and detect the blunders of which the several actors were guilty, it seems marvellous, that men so heavenly-minded, and withal so shrewd and experienced, should have admitted such instruments into so holy a cause. The majority of the Resolutioners were certainly not the persons who would do evil that good might come; or so weak or wicked, as to believe, that the end sanctifies the means. We are rather to judge, that it arose from an excess of charity, or hope fostered into undue growth from the circumstances of the period—or from weariness of strife and bloodshed, and impatience to bring them to a close. It is melancholy also to observe, that the mere fact of Charles having subscribed the Covenant, was the main argument of their hope: upon that wretched reed or bulrush they leaned, as if it had been the oak or the rock. An instance of this credulity occurs in the life of Dickson. On one occasion, he was answering the objections of the Protesters in the General Assembly, when he told a story to the following effect:—A stranger, who was a thief, came to the house of a simple muirland farmer, whilst the goodwife was from home, and asked the loan of a large iron pot. The farmer demurred, but the other removed his scruples, by pledging as surety, the “Bor-

row of God"—a pledge equal to the most solemn oath—tha the would make honest restitution. When the goodwife came home, she was angry with her husband; but he assured her that the vessel would come safely back, because he had the Borrow of God to that effect. And truly it came back—for the man after trudging over the muir for a whole day in a deep fog, and being unable to find the highway, at last returned at evening unwittingly to the farmer's door, exhausted, foot-sore, and penitent, with the iron pot upon his head. "Thus," said Dickson, "the king has taken the Covenant, and so, has given us a good and sufficient cautioner." But he lived to exclaim, "Alas! he took away a great pot indeed—the glorious covenanted work of Reformation—but he did not bring it back!"

Notwithstanding the diversities of opinion between the two parties, there was one subject upon which they cordially agreed; this was, the restoration of Charles to the throne of his ancestors, an event for which they prayed and laboured, although their loyal services were afterwards so shamefully requited. Accordingly, when Monk prepared for his march into England, Dickson, in conjunction with Robert Douglas, appears to have had frequent conferences with him on the subject of the king's restoration. And when the general was in England, they wrote to him a letter, dated January 10, 1660, in which they signified their entire confidence in him as to the affairs of Scotland, and requested a pass

for their brother, James Sharpe, to repair to him, for the purpose of reminding him of what was necessary to be done, and to inform them from time to time of the state of proceedings. Monk, who probably knew the man better than they did, and recognised in him a convenient tool, had already invited Sharpe to England, and transmitted the necessary pass. He also wrote to the two anxious divines, assuring them, that the welfare of the Scottish church should be the chief object of his care.

Mournful days were now at hand, and the grey hairs of this venerable servant of God were to descend in sorrow to the grave. Charles II. was restored, and this event was followed by every treacherous and despotic measure that might tend to the re-establishment of Episcopacy in Scotland. And first, our national parliament was packed with the underlings of royalty, men who, even in that sycophant age, were marvelled at for their lack of conscience, and their crawling servility; and then followed the Act of Supremacy, by which the king was declared supreme judge in Church and State—and the Oath of Allegiance, which compelled every subject to acknowledge the king as such, and declared a refusal, high treason—and finally, weary of condemning former acts of parliament *seriatim*, the members passed a sweeping vote, by which they condemned parliaments themselves, declaring all those that had been held from 1638 to 1650, to be unlawful and rebellious, while the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 was denounced as a seditious meet-

ing. Even Charles himself was astonished at this rabid, anti-presbyterian, and ultra-loyalist zeal; and he declared, that their proceedings were either those of madmen, or men who were drunk. But he continued them in office, and became partaker in their guilt. The Act of Supremacy un-chaired the venerable Professor; and he retired into solitude, mourning over the downfall of his hopes, and the dark deepening prospects of rapidly advancing calamities. And even then, his enemies would not let him rest, for while he wept and prayed for Scotland and the Church, he might hear in the streets, or under his chamber-window, a scoffing ballad, which they caused to be cried or carolled through the city, of which the burden was,

“The work goes bonnily on :

Good morrow to you, greybeard !”

In December 1662, only seven months after the retirement of Dickson into private life, he was attacked with his last illness. Other noble hearts had been already broken by the coming of the evil day, and had descended to that dwelling where the weary are at rest; and now, it was his turn to swell the list of victims. His last hours were embittered by the recollection of his short-sightedness in adopting the views of the Resolutioners; and to a lady who visited him, he said, “Madam, I must confess, the Protesters have been truer prophets than we were.”

A beloved friend of his, Mr Livingstone, with whom he had been on terms of affectionate intimacy nearly

forty years, was at this time under sentence of banishment, and was allowed only two days to remain in Edinburgh : but still, he found time to visit his dying fellow-sufferer. Livingstone asked him, what he thought of the present state of affairs ? Dickson's answer was, that he was sure Jesus Christ would not tolerate the indignities inflicted upon His work and people. "As for myself," he added, "I have taken all my good deeds, and all my bad deeds, and have cast them together in a heap before the Lord ; and have fled from both to Jesus Christ, and in him I have sweet peace."

A few moments before he died, he called his family together, and after having affectionately addressed himself to each, he pronounced over them, with great solemnity, the apostolic benediction, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." He then closed his eyelids with his own hand, and expired in the arms of one of his sons, without a struggle, and apparently without pain.

In presenting a volume of Dickson's writings to the public, we are happy to state, that the whole, with the exception of the small portion of the *Therapeutica Sacra*, is from a manuscript never before published, in the possession of the Rev. Dr Traill of Panbride. The MS. in question consists of a small volume written in remarkably beautiful characters, and bears date 1635—having been probably written during that year by some devoted hearer of Dickson, who excelled

in calligraphy; and we are happy to state, that the respected owner of this choice antiquarian gem, placed it at the disposal of the Publication Committee, in the same spirit of frank, generous kindness with which he formerly transmitted to them the remains of his eminent ancestor, Robert Traill of London. We find, that Dickson had preached repeatedly on the book of Job—perhaps had expounded the whole, or at least the greater part of it,—and that his discourses were so much admired, that one of his people, on hearing another distinguished divine preaching on the same portion of Scripture, observed, that he had heard a sermon on Job, but not the Job of Irvine. In giving also a specimen of Dickson's sermons, we feel peculiar pleasure in having been able to present some of his sacramental ones; for these were usually in such request, that during the period of communion, his parish was thronged from every quarter, so that an "Irvine sacrament crowd" became a proverbial expression. In perusing these discourses, the reader cannot fail to be struck with the combined simplicity and earnestness with which they are pervaded. Were discourses such as these the means of producing such wonderful effects,—such a powerful revival? They were even so. The humble instrument was content to be nothing, that his Master might be everything: instead of preaching himself, he preached "Christ crucified;" and though so accomplished a scholar, and possessed of the power of eloquence, yet he allowed the word to go forth in its own simplicity, for the ac-

complishment of its own work. Happy would it be for the Church of our land, if the same simplicity and self-denial were cultivated! We should then hear of fewer schisms, and more revivals.

The republication of the *Therapeutica Sacra* has also been deemed advisable, not only on account of its scarceness, but its intrinsic value. As will be seen by the preface written by his son, it was the work of Dickson's old age, and written originally in Latin, but afterwards translated by himself into English, for general use. Of his skill in dealing with diseases of the conscience, we have sufficiently spoken in the preceding pages. The rest of this valuable work will be presented to our readers at a future period.

Besides those works which we have already mentioned, Dickson was author of the following:—

1. A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews.
2. .... on the Gospel of Matthew.
3. .... on the Psalms.
4. .... on the Epistles, in Latin and English.
5. Truth's Victory over Error.
6. A Treatise on the Promises.
7. True Christian Love, a Poem; and the Christian Sacrifice, also in Verse.

# WRITINGS OF DAVID DICKSON.

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## EXPOSITION OF THE TENTH CHAPTER OF JOB.

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### TEXT.

- Verse 1. " My soul is weary of my life ; I will leave my complaint upon myself ; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me ; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.
  3. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked ?"

*Verse 1.* " My soul is weary of my life." Job even now resolved to keep silence, yet incontinent he breaks forth into complaint in this chapter : as David ; while the fire burned, he brake forth. Ye will say, How doth this agree with Job's resolution ? Certainly it shews, that a poor afflicted man is not master of his own resolution, passion, or affections, but when he has resolved to be silent and patient, he breaks out, being borne down ; when he resolves silence, he is forced to scream.

Therefore learn to construe aright your own, or other folks' out-breakings, whereunto ye are driven, and know, that albeit faith would close your mouth from expressing of your grief, yet force of tentation,

and weight of sorrow and grief, will press out cries when ye purpose no such thing. In such a case, comfort yourselves with this, that the saints have done so before you, and stouter than ye have been forced to express their grief: not that I justify such things, but to furnish a salve for such a sore, that pardoned saints have done so before you.

2. "My soul is weary of my life." We see, albeit Job resolved silence, yet he seeks ease, by uttering of his grief by way of complaint unto God. It lets us see, that the only ease of a troubled and bursten soul, is to pour out complaints unto God. It will be ease to the mind, to open up the grief to any, but far more to open it up to God; for complaints are a kind of ease to a distressed soul.

3. What is Job's complaint here?—Nothing else, but the laying forth of his present burden; what he felt and what he feared; even the wrestling of his faith and sense brought forth before God, in such words, as he feels the battle within. It lets us see, that the complaints of the godly are only the explanations of their battle before God—the battle betwixt sense and reason or suggestion on the one hand, faith and God's Spirit on the other hand. The wrestling of these two makes up a complaint. This laid for a ground, Job's mind shall be easily portrayed by his words, and they shall paint him out as on a board.

4. Now let us follow out this battle of sense, faith, and reason, and see who are the parties:—

1. "My soul is weary of my life,"—this is sense's part: it says, that it is best to be dead, and out of pain; whilk lets us see that in the day of sore trouble and grief, sense will cry out, "God if I were dead!"

But this is the voice of nature, and of Satan tempting, and not God's voice. Ken whose voice it is when ye are tempted; and when ye are tempted to wish to be out of the world, know, that that voice is from the flesh and Satan, who would have you going from under God's trial. It is as if gold should essay to loup\* out of the melting cruise into the fire, and not stay till it be melted.

2. "I will leave my complaint upon myself,"—here is faith's part. It forbids him to complain, but to leave it on himself; that is, take his venture of his present skaith, and all the consequents of it. Faith bids be lowne† and quiet; nature says, I must lay it out ere I burst; come of it what will, out must it go! Faith says, Be quiet, and only lay it out before God, whatever sense says for its own discharge,—and so, lets out the complaint in such terms as it trows shall not offend God. Thus Job draws the conclusion, and gives vent to his bursting mind before God.

3. "I will speak in the bitterness of my soul,"—here again sense says that his present case is bitter; and faith lays out this bitter case before God. And here also, beside the voice of sense and faith, infirmity kythes,‡ and utters a voice; so that in all these speeches, a good God and a merciful is seen, and a weak man under a heavy burden. That Job's infirmity kythes here, we see, that in the day of battle and tentation infirmity will kythe. Thus we would have thought him a sinless man, because of the great commendation God gives him, and of that exceeding great holiness in him spoken of in chapter 30. But here, in a tentation, his infirmity and sinfulness kythe and break out, as fire from flint by a hard match;

\* Leap.

† Tranquil.

‡ Appears.

for in the bitterness of his soul he desires death. Therefore, in the day of tentation, gather up these sparks whilk fly out in the conflict, and they shall shew you faults, infirmities, and blindness of mind, and let the sight of this humble you, and make you ken what rottenness is in you.

*Verse 2.* "I will say unto God." Faith takes him up again, and bids him speak of his complaint to God; complain *to* him, and not *of* him. This avowing of his liberty to complain, and taking his venture in it, in the former verse, and speaking here to God, lets us see that complaining to God, and pouring out of his grief into His bosom, is not in itself disallowable: in straits we may complain to God, but not of God. Therefore, say not to others, God hath dealt thus and thus with me; but go to himself, for thou wilt be warmliest heard of himself: when thou art to complain of thy Father, vent all in his own bosom. If any bring an evil tale to thee of thy friend, if thou should tell it to another, thou doest him wrong, for thou shouldst first have told it to thy friend. So, if Satan or thy misbelieving heart make lies of God, thou should come and tell Him, so shall he count thee his friend. Here is a way to vent all tentations: go to God himself, and vent them: say to him, There is something in me whilk would make me trow that thou hatest me, and that thou wilt not hear my prayer. And be sure this shall both give ease, and make God to say, that he is thy salvation; that he will neither leave thee, nor forsake thee; and bid thee call on him in the day of thy trouble, and he shall hear thee.

2. "Do not condemn me." Here again the voice of sense: for in the day of sore affliction, sense will say, that a man is condemned and hated of God,

especially when suggestion is joined with it. What Job's friends said, sense and the devil say the same, that God is executing his wrath. But here also the voice of faith, "Do not condemn me." The voice of sense and suggestion is, that I am condemned; but faith says, Lord, thou wilt not condemn me, but absolve me; which also shews, that faith do<sup>w</sup>\* not abide to be condemned, or separated from God. Finding in thyself in the day of trial the voice of condemnation, take it for the voice of sense, and turn in to God, and say, Lord, there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ; for so says faith, Come to God in Christ, and be absolved. Thus sense says one thing, and faith another: sense, his friends and Satan cry, He is condemned! and faith says, God will pardon and have mercy; and God comes and reds† the plea.

3. "Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me." Sense says, God is his adversary entered in a plea with him, and purposed to overthrow him; but faith says, he kens no cause why, because his sins are daily repented of, and sins repented of are forgiven, and forgiven sins are not brought to account again; and if sin be forgiven, God cannot be his foe: therefore faith may speir‡ why God contends with him. We see, albeit sense and Satan by suggestion would say that God contends, and that God is turned an enemy, yet faith will not admit it: as before, faith would not admit condemnation, so here it will not admit a judicial process: albeit sense say, that God has put the man on the pannel, and is entered in a contest, and will condemn us, yet faith says, that he is neither condemned,

\* Can.

† Settles.

‡ Question.

nor yet entered in a process to condemn, because he kens no cause why, being a daily penitent.

4. That he speirs a cause why God contends, it lets us see, that in the time of strait and trouble, it is very possible that the godly ken not the cause why they are afflicted; that it may be to them a trial; for they having daily repented their sins, and finding God come on with his rods, as if they had not repented, kenning no sin unconfessed, and having walked as circumspectly as a poor sinful man can do, in which walking there must also be allowance of mercy, when he finds hard straits, he may speir, How stands this with mercy, seeing I am penitent? Thus the cause of affliction being hid, confusion and indigest challenges follow upon it. Let this of Job's furnish you with light in the like challenge.

“Shew me.”—We see, albeit faith cannot see a reason why it is thus handled, yet it will not yield to sense, carnal reason, nor suggestion, nor to men's words, nor to appearances of God's anger: albeit it cannot particularly refute all challenges, yet it yields not, but speirs at God, how it can be? and rests not, till it finds satisfaction. When thou findest not the cause of wrath, being a penitent, God allows that thou should not yield, albeit thou cannot particularly clear thyself. Such a case as this, is not weill kened in the day of prosperity; but when sin, Satan, affliction, death, set on, ye will ken better what was Job's disposition: that ye may the better ken it then, look upon it now.

*Verse 3*, “Is it good to thee that thou shouldest oppress me?” The battle holds on yet betwixt sense and faith, and still grows thicker: sense speaks hard things against God, and calls all his proceedings in

question; it calls his nature, his providence, and manner of dealing in question, and vents thoughts of atheism;—which shews the malice of the devil, who casts in bitter thoughts about God and his providence in the minds of the godly, in the day of their affliction, and will make them vent hard speeches of God, and many discern it not: as these here, What means the Lord to oppress or despise the work of his own hand? Will he not be pacified? Thus was it suggested to Job, that God, for all his righteousness, would throw him over the brae,\* and whatever pains he had taken before to make him holy, he would undo all.

2. Job says, Can this be? which shews, that he was set on and tempted to think so. Bitterest thoughts, which are not to be made words of, will be suggested; yea, blasphemous thoughts against the God of heaven will be whispered in the ear by Satan: for what gars† many a one despair, but the believing of Satan's voice? He gars them trow, that God is angry at them, that their prayers fash‡ him, and that he will not hear them. But learn ye not to believe such hard speeches of God; whether he speak smoothly or in loud speeches, believe him not. Rather follow Job's example. Go to God, and tell him all: say to him, Thinkest thou it good to oppress me? or art thou like a man who this day makes a fast covenant, and will change or disannul the morn?§ whilk shews that faith will not conceal any thing from God that is suggested, but goes to God, and tells him. So let us do when Satan suggests any evil of God. Go speir at God if it be true, and he will send us back to his word, to see if it speaks so of him. And because the

\* Hill.

† Causes.

‡ Trouble.

§ To-morrow.

suggestion is not concealed, the Lord will ease and uphold, till dispute and trial be at an end.

3. Sense says to Job, that for all his righteousness, God will cast him off, oppress and despise him; that it is but bootless to reckon rights or wrongs with God, for he is risen in anger against him. But the voice of faith says, God will not oppress, despise, or cast off; for his interrogation proves it: his speiring if it can be, imports a denial that it can be. It lets us see, whatever sense say against God, faith says the clean contrair. If sense say that God will not hear prayer, faith says the contrair. If sense say, Shall God be cumbered with thee? he will shute\* thee away; faith will say, He who has begun the good work of grace in me, will perfect it. When Satan borrows sense to speak one thing, let faith borrow scripture to speak the contrair: when he borrows sense, to say, God will despise the work of his hand, let faith borrow scripture, to say, he will not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax; he will not despise the smallest beginning; for he says by Zechariah, "Who is he that despises the day of small things?" Know, therefore, albeit that little whilk thou hast seem to die out, yet God will not put it out.

4. "Or shine upon the counsel of the wicked."—Sense says, that the wicked who serve not God, are in better case than Job: for they are in health and wealth, thou art sick, and sore, and miserable; they are blythe and cheerful, thou, in grief and woe; therefore better be wicked than godly. The same said sense unto David (Psalm lxxiii.) when he was heart-broken, and chastised every morning: "The wicked's eyes stand out with fatness." They had the world at

\* Thrust.

their will; but when he went to the sanctuary, he saw they were set in sliddery\* places, and couped† over the brae into the pit. So is it yet; for sense and Satan would gar men trow, that God countenances wicked men and their ways, when his curse is on them: yet it is not so; but when they have abused his patience, he will cut off in the end. But faith says, albeit God seem to countenance the wicked, by giving them prosperity, yet he doeth it not; but by the contrair, will shine on the godly and countenance them, and gloom or frown on the wicked.

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TEXT.

- Verse 4. "Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?  
 5. Are thy days as the days of a man? are thy years as a man's days?  
 6. That thou inquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?  
 7. Thou knowest that I am not wicked; and there is none that can deliver out of thy hand."

There is here a strong battle in Job's breast: the pain of his body was great with burning boils, but the dolours of his heart are far greater: the dolours of death were dealing with him, and the sorrow of hell gripped him, while his friends and Satan were about to gar him despair. Sense said one thing to him, suggestion and his friends said the same, and he had only the grip of faith to stick by. And now, here he sticks by faith, and will not quit his grips; and therefore he speaks thus: "Hast thou eyes of flesh, or seest thou as man?" As if he said, Good Lord, countest thou of me as my friends? kens thou

\* Slippery.

† Tumbled.

me no better than they? They only see my outside, but thou seest my inside: thou needest not put me on the rack-stock, as men put a malefactor, to extort a confession of my faults, for thou kens me well enough; therefore I need not to trust what sense, friends, or suggestion say. Thy years and days are not like man's, but thou art from eternity, and kens me well enough before-hand, yea, the case of every soul. Thus he appeals to God, as one who kens that he is not wicked.

*Verse 4.* "Hast thou eyes of flesh?"—Sense and suggestion seem to say to Job, that God miskens man's endeavours, and looks only to his deeds whilk he attains to; as if sense had said, All that thou art won to, a wicked man may win as far; thy friends have seen thy outside, and God judges of thee as thy friends; there is nothing seen in thee, but as much may be seen in the wicked. And so it is indeed, if the outer man be looked to. There is nothing in the godly, but the same may appear to be in a hypocrite—courtesy, meekness, lowliness, pity, humanity, liberality, chastity, temperance; so that the hypocrite will be excellent in his naturals, and in his outward carriage as tight as any—even in Pagans, admirable virtues to look upon, if a Pagan's outward life be well lusted;\* much more where a man's mind and understanding are lightened by the word of God, and the outward part of religion is attained unto; as the Pharisees, who walked blamelessly, and were so devout according to their rules, that none could spy a fault in them—such as Paul was, being a Pharisee—and yet were not hypocrites of intention, but in substance (for there are many hypocrites who mind not

\* Surveyed.

so to be). Only he is sound, who labours to reform his heart; but the hypocrite takes no pains on the heart, if so be he can get his outward carriage lustred. Upon which grounds, Job's friends, sense, suggestion, and misbelief in him do build. But Job's faith will hearken to none of these, and therefore he turns him to God, and says, "Hast thou eyes of flesh?" that is, Lord, I ken thou lookest not as man, but to the inward part. It lets us see, albeit sense say, that God looks not to man's endeavours but deeds; yet faith says, he looks to the heart and affections; to man's endeavours, and that whilk he aims at.

Therefore, look thou what are thy aims and designs, if thou would know God's censure of thy estate. What pains takest thou to find out thy sin and misery? What pains about sound repentance, and to have thy heart made conform to that image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, whilk thou hast lost; to have the graces of the Spirit planted in thee, faith, repentance, love, fear of God, care of well-doing? If thy aim and endeavour to have these be nought, thy religion is nought. If thou be not aiming at an inward reformation, thou art but a painted sepulchre and rotten tomb, stinking before God, and stinking in thy own nose, when God shall disclose thy estate. Labour then to be Christians in spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is of God and not of men; and this shall ye be, if your endeavours be to approve your hearts to God, as Job here: "Hast thou eyes of flesh?" that is, I know thou sees and kens my heart, and therefore I need no more to defend myself against my friends, senses, and suggestion, but appeal to thy knowledge of my heart.

*Verses 5, 6.* "Are thy days as the days of man?"—

Sense and suggestion seem to say to Job, Seeing God is begun to try him, he will gar him take better with his wickedness, before he win out of his hand; and the same said his friends before. Sense says, God's wrath in him shall extort that whilk he denies; the sins whilk he hoards and hides, God shall bring to light. Therefore in thir words, Job says, Needs God a rack-stock to force me to confess my faults? Kens he not my faults, except he extort them, as man must do to bring out his wickedness? Is God ignorant of what I have done, that he needs to hold me in pain, till I confess my faults? No, surely, but he kenned me long since: his days are not like man's days; he knew me long syne.

1. We see here, that when God is about to try a man, sense and suggestion will say, that God doeth as man, who takes all the help he can, to search out faults whilk otherwise he would not ken; and uses sore rods and tortures, to gar a sinner tak with\* his faults.

2. But faith says, that God is not like man, to live so short a while in the world as a man, that he has need of engines and tortures to search out a man's faults. Job's interrogation here has the force of a denial, that it can be as sense and suggestion would say; and it lets us see, that God needs not trouble himself to use means to bring hid things to a trial, because he is eternal, and kens all things beforehand. His days and years are not like man's, that he needs to inquire after iniquity, or search man's sin; for he kens the follies of a man's bairn-age, youth, middle-age; what vanities his mind has been hunting after, what wickedness and mischief he plots upon his bed,

\* Be conscious of.

and will remember a man of time, place, and person, with whom he sinned, even that whilk none knew. If not in this life, yet on death-bed, or at the day of iudgment, when all registers shall be cast open, and the secrets of all hearts disclosed, then shall it be kenned that He marked all that is both said, and done, and thought. Know then that God is upon all your secrets. He kens what ye are plotting and devising; and if ye see it, and say, This is folly and vanity that I am plotting, he will pass it; but if ye follow out your own vain mind and wicked conceits, he will mark them, and count you for sinners. Here is the odds betwixt the godly and the wicked: both their minds are after mischief; but the godly censures before it come to consent or action, and strikes the wicked desire dead there; but the wicked hatches, vents, and practises the devices of his mind. But let the eyes of God be considered, kenning that he marks all secrets, that so ye may make conscience of all ye are plotting and thinking; and where ye are overtane, ask mercy, and seek reformation.

3. Out of this questioning, we learn, that the man who has learned God's nature and properties, will be better furnished with matter of dispute in his temptation about God's providence; for all this dispute and questioning whilk Job has, is grounded upon his knowledge of God. For if he had not known God and his nature, he had been overcome in the dispute; but he had learned God's attributes so tightly, as from them he could dispute his matter accurately, and from these affirm that it could not be as his friends alleged. Job has been a tight divine; for compare his light with the light of the gospel; there can be nothing liker, and we cannot win by him a jot, but the

same whilk is now said, was said by him. Albeit he lived when the Bible was not written, yet he has so studied the means whilk then were, even the word whilk was conveyed from hand to hand, and had so deeply drunken in the grounds of religion about God's attributes, that here he makes notable use of his knowledge. It lets us see, that the man who has not provided for weapons before-hand in the day of battle, will not ken what to do or say. Therefore, provide yourselves in time with the knowledge of God, that in the day of trial ye may make use of it. If one day ye must come to judgment, remember your Creator in the days of your youth; set yourself to ken him now, who one day will gar you ken him. Ken his properties to make use of them, both for faith and repentance, that ye may stand in awe to sin, and may not be drawn from use-making of his mercy. When ye would seek unto Him, ye shall find no such profit by any labour or study, as the study of the knowledge of God and his scriptures; for ye shall be made to understand his ways, and how to find help in deepest straits.

4. This communing of Job's with God, and his standing by him when he is tempted to go away, tells that he had good skill in the covenant of grace; and of the difference betwixt the man in whom sin is, and the man who is wicked. And therefore, to deal with God, we must know the covenant of grace well, and reason with him from the grounds of it; for if a man only ken the first covenant, he will be dung all in sticks\* when he comes to deal with God; he cannot deal with Him in terms of mercy, but only in terms of justice. But the man who knows the cove-

\* Knocked all to pieces—utterly discomfited.

nant of grace made in the Mediator, as Job, who hereafter called the Mediator his kinsman, will reason with God according to the grounds of it ; yea, all from Adam to this day, are saved by the covenant of grace, for there is one way of salvation unto all. Therefore, study diligently the covenant of grace made betwixt God and us in the Mediator, for that only will bear us out in the dispute, in the time of tentation. Albeit we be sinful, yet it will furnish an answer ; it will give ease, vent, relenting, and a refuge to the soul to fly, as it were, into Abraham's bosom.

“That thou inquirest after mine iniquity.”—Job speirs at God, if he needs to put him on a rack-stock, or torture him, to find out his faults which He kens not ; for sense, suggestion, and his friends said this, but his faith denied it : for God puts not man on a rack-stock, to gar him tell what he kens not ; but God sends affliction, that a man may try and examine himself, and may understand of himself what he kened not before. Job is put to a torture, not that God may ken, but that himself may ken, that if there be any wickedness in him, it may be found out. But after search, he cannot find that he has been a hater of God, or a follower of his own ways, but rather, a studier to serve God in that whilk was right.

1. It lets us see, that albeit God kens our sins well enough, yet we ourselves oftentimes are ignorant of them ; for the heart of man is deceitful above all things. Who can know it ? Only the Lord searches the heart, and tries the reins. If none but God kens the wickedness of our hearts, let us suspect ourselves, and watch over our foolish minds and hearts, and try them narrowly ; for albeit God put not a torture, that

himself may ken, yet, that we may search and try our own sins.

2. We see, to help us to try. God sends afflictions, that we may both come to the knowledge of ourselves, and may acknowledge, whilk otherwise we would not; for man in trouble, will find himself either better or worse than he thought he had been: both grace and infirmity will kythe better. When God lays his hand upon you, look and discern what stuff ye are; for the end of exercise is, to acquaint you with yourself. Examine yourself when affliction comes, yea, before affliction come, so shall ye prevent the rod; and if the rod find you in the way of righteousness, the greater is your comfort under it. Commune with your own hearts, upon your own bed, (Psalm iv. 4). Search yourself, O nation not worthy to be beloved! If ye find not your own faults, God shall extort them by rods; and thou who hast found out thy evils, thou hast no more ado, but solidly acknowledge them before God, and ask mercy, and be sure to find it. But thou who art careless to search, God shall reckon with thee. It were better that thou should judge thyself, than that God should judge thee. Therefore thou who art young in health, strength, and peace, put thyself now to pains to search thy sins, that thou may be saved from greater pains hereafter. Examine thy heart and ways; try if thou be reconciled to God; what way thy endeavours, show, aim, and purpose are. Try if thou hast repented indeed or not, or whether thou hast faith, or fearest God indeed; or if thou hast only yet a love to the world, thy own credit, lusts, or pleasures; and if thou find that after trial, matters are far wrong, judge thyself in time, and thou shalt not be judged.

For what fairer quarters would thou have, than to put thy own hand to thy own bosom, and bring out thy sins, and give out sentence against them, and thou shalt be free? What malefactor would crave more, than to say to him, Confess, and go free? Put thyself on the pannel, and say as thou should, and be sure to be set free. But if thou will not take with thy faults, be sure there are rack-stocks and tortures even in God's house, to force you to confess. David says, while he hid his sins, his bones consumed, and that he roared all the day: then he said, "I will confess my sins, and thou put my sins out of thy sight." God pressed him sore, till his bones were burnt as in a kiln, and forced him to confess. So must ye have a hot fever, some one heavy plague or other, to confess your faults. It were better ye should be wise in time, and do it with less pains to yourselves: if not, be sure ye shall be forced to do it.

*Verse 7.* "Thou knowest that I am not wicked." Before, he said, that God had not eyes of flesh, to see as man sees. Now, here again, he appeals to God's own knowledge, if he be the wicked man that sense, suggestion, and his friends call him. As if he said, Lord, Satan, sense, and my friends are against me, and call me wicked; but I fly to thee, Searcher of hearts: judge thou if I be wicked. I know and confess that I am sinful; I deny not sin; yet I deny that I am wicked, that is, that I am set to do evil. Albeit I was wicked by nature, yet thou hast made a change, so that now I am not what I was by nature, but now am set to love and practise righteousness, albeit I cannot win to the perfection. Thou knowest I am not wicked. I put the matter upon thy knowledge (so imports the word in the original);

I put thy tongue, thy decision or determination. I am content thou give out sentence whether I be wicked or not. Likewise thou knowest, that I acknowledge thy sovereignty, that none is able to deliver out of thy hand.

1. When sense, suggestion, and his friends call him wicked, he appeals to God, affirming that he is not wicked. We see it is no wisdom to take with a fault we are not guilty of. There are many who, in the confession of sins, use complimenting words with God: "I am the most wretched sinner, unworthy whom the earth should bear, or the heavens cover," and confess more than their conscience will subscribe; and yet, when they have advised a little, when they fall in comparison with others, they will find twenty worse than themselves. Thus they justify themselves at the one word, and condemn themselves at the next word: but God loves no iniquity, that a man should call himself either better or worse than he is. That modest confession of the publican, who said, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" is far better than the toom\* swelling words of many. To say, Surely there is much sin in me, is better than large words of confession. Others again, who are meek in the exercise of faith, when Satan says to them that they never had grace, were never renewed, but are yet in their hypocrisy; they are ready to grant that it is so, and so would begin of new to seek reconciliation with God. Let such know, that they will never win to peace that way; for God will not have his begun work in them miscalled nor denied; he will not allow that any should make a lie of themselves, albeit it were by way of humiliation; he will have

\* Empty.

none to bear false witness against themselves. Therefore, when Satan would make you trow, that God has never begun to work any sound work in you, appeal to God, who is more righteous than he, or the world, or thy own deluded conscience. If thy face be turned in any other airt\* than before, and thy endeavour be to do that which may please God, nature has never wrought that change. Therefore stand out against all who would slander the work of God in thee, and yield not in the dispute. Acknowledge things that are true indeed, and say neither less nor more than thy conscience, being well informed, will subscribe to; and if thou be humble and true, thou shalt get a true meeting.

2. We see, albeit sin be in the regenerate, yet neither are they wicked, nor so to be accounted of.

3. We see, a renewed man may know a change in himself, the begun work of God in himself, albeit it be not clear at all times, but will oftentimes be overclouded with tentations, and be so put in the mist, as he wots not what to say; but when he gets liberty to look about him, he may pronounce of God's work in him, and (as Job here) appeal to God, and say that he is not wicked.

Seeing the renewed work of God may be discerned and known, take notice of it, and strengthen the little that it die not. But herein there is a mistaking in many; for many men trow they be renewed, when they are not. For let a man be brought in to the school of Gamaliel, to be made a Pharisee, he shall see a change wrought; or let a vicious man be brought in to Socrates' school, a change will be seen. For Socrates will teach him temperance, modesty, chas-

\* Direction.

tity, liberality, magnanimity, and to contemn the worthless estimation of the world ; and for this cause, the first course he took with his scholars, he caused them walk through the streets with a piece of bacon on their shoulder, thereby to train them up to despise all that could be said or thought of them, and if they misregarded not scorn and contempt, they could not be his disciples. Thus a change is wrought in the scholars both of Gamaliel and Socrates. Gamaliel teaches, that the law be fulfilled, and that a man may walk blamelessly, and an acceptation that may please God. And this Paul said of himself, while he was a Pharisee, that concerning the law, he was blameless before he was converted ; but he did not admit concupiscence to be a fault, nor malcontentment, nor unquietness for his lot. But when he was converted, and his eyes were opened to see the spiritual meaning of the law taught in Christ's school, he saw, that concupiscence was a cause of condemnation ; then sin revived in him, and he died. Before, he thought sin had been dead, for he served God in all good conscience ; but when Christ's light came in, he is forced to think far otherwise ; that in his natural estate he was altogether loathsome and abominable ; that out of the unclean fountain of his heart, nothing could be brought out that was clean ; and that the law was spiritual, and he was carnal, sold under sin ; that in his flesh there dwelt no good thing ; and that there was a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, bringing him captive to the law of sin, so that he is forced to cry out, " O miserable man ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " Thus, he saw in Christ's school, what he could not see in Gamaliel's or Socrates' school ; for they

only taught him to reform the outward man, and not that revenge or hatred inward was a fault. But he never knew the depth of sin, till he came to Christ's school; but then the Spirit's light dang\* him down in the dust, so that he walked humbly before the Lord his God, and was forced to cry out, that he had no power to do good; and that to will was present with him, but how to perform that which was good he knew not; and in this conflict with sin in him, he found no ease, till he came to this, "I thank God through Jesus Christ." This only gave him ease,—that albeit he saw sin so strong in him, yet there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ.

For this cause, I would have you all to try, of what sort your change is; for a change from filthiness and lasciviousness, to modesty and temperance, may be in Socrates' scholar; and a prodigal may turn niggard, and thrifty to the world, a vain light person may turn sage and solid. Therefore this change may not content you; yea, albeit ye were come on as far as a Pharisee, that is, to have a love to God's law, and a study to keep it; a care to get light in thy mind, and in thy heart to love virtue, and to win to an outwardly tight life; all this change is nought, while as yet thou hast a pair of dry eyes that cannot shed a tear for sin, and wantest a bruised and grieved heart for sin, and art not yet won in to know the mystery of thy natural misery and iniquity; which thou wilt never win to, till the Spirit of God come. Therefore, see if such a change be wrought, as makes thee cry, Alas for my ignorance and want of light in the spiritual meaning of the word! oh, how blind am I!—then, having gotten some light, mayest be

\* Threw.

driven to say with thyself, Either must I have a Mediator to deal with me, or I am lost. If such a change as this be wrought, that thou art fled in to Christ, a mournful sinner disclaiming thy own wit, will, and strength, and resolvest to live by a new dependance upon Christ, so that, with Paul, thou can say with him also, "When I am weakest, then I am strongest," because Christ keeps the box of thy furniture and strength; and can say, "It is not in him that wills or runs, but in God who shews mercy;" and that God "gives both to will and to do of his own good will and pleasure;" and dost indeed acknowledge, that not only he is the beginner of the work, but has his hand at every act of thy will, and draws it to the extent to be what it is,—I say, if thou find this change, that thou art become vile and loathsome in thy own eyes, and seeking the covenant of Christ's righteousness; if poor and empty in thyself, and hungering for Christ; stand to this change, and quit it not. But if this change be not, thou art yet short, and not come to the right length: thou art but like Paul, who while he was a Pharisee, had a whole head, till the spiritual light of the law came; but when that came, he desired to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is by the law, but that which is by faith in Christ. As Paul had no will of his own righteousness, but of a righteousness imputed or put on him, so must it be with thee; for when all thy best things are to thee as a filthy clout, then indeed a change is wrought, and God has looked on thee, and given thee spiritual light. When thou findest such a change, quit it not, but stand to it, as Job doth here: and if thou findest not thus far, but only a loathing, or thinking worse of thyself, and

a love to Christ, quit not this ; albeit thy reformation be only in a wish or hearty desire, yet quit it not, for it is dear-bought by Christ, therefore stand to it. Because Christ will not quench the smoking flax, put not thou it out, but rather tender it, as he doth ; so shall thy little spunk\* be augmented, and grow to a flame or lowe† at last, to the glory of God, and thy salvation in Christ.

## TEXT.

- Verse 3. “ Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about, yet thou dost destroy me.
9. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay ; and wilt thou bring me into dust again ?
10. Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and turned me to curds like cheese ?
11. Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.”

Here is no small battle ; a pressed heart uttering pithy and pregnant words. Satan, suggestion, Job's friends, sore strokes, and his own unbelief cry against him, Thou art wicked, and hated of God. But faith, against them all, takes God to witness that he is not wicked : “ Thou knowest I am not wicked ;” that is, I grant there is sin in me ; but I am not wicked, or set to commit sin, but set to seek and serve thee : my sinning is of frailty, and against my will. I am set against sin, and will be against it. I appeal to thy knowledge if it be not so, yea, it lieth upon thy knowledge.

1. We see here, that uprightness and a good con-

\* Spark.

† Blaze.

science have boldness with God, and will get leave with confidence to lift up the face before him, and get his testimony and approbation. An honest sincere man will be bold with God. An honest man is not a sinless man; but one who, as he shall answer to God, strives against all known sin in private and in public; and when he is overcome in sin, is never at rest, till he be sure that God is pacified, and has assurance of a remission granted. He tells God whatever he feels or fears, puts God on all his counsels, goes to him in all his distresses; counts God so merciful and good, that he will go to him; so constant, that he will not, nor cannot change; and still justifies God, to be what he has spoken of himself in his word. Such a man will get liberty to tell all his mind to God, and God will not mistake him, or captiously snack\* at his words, but expone them favourably. As he construes God according to His mind, so God construes him according to his aim and desire. Therefore, be honest before God, for there is no beguiling of him. Those who promise to repent the morn,† beguile themselves, and not Him. It were better that such persons should timcously take with their faults, and seek into his mercy then when He seemed angriest, yea, count him their best friend; or when he curbs them most; for there are not passions in God. When any come into Him, and make supplication to him, he can neither loosen his love from them, nor yet strike them in anger. Therefore study plain dealing with God. If there be great wickedness in your heart, tell Him of it. Tell Him, that it is stiff, stubborn, and backward; or that it is borne down with naughty

\* Check, snap.

† To-morrow.

burdens, and will not take on a better burden. Let God be thy secretary\* in all, and whatever thou would have close kept, commit that to Him.

2. "And there is none that can deliver out of thy hand:"—that is, I am not miskenning thy sovereignty, for I see thou art dealing with me, searching me, causing me to examine myself. I acknowledge my sin, but I do not confess that I am a hater of thee, or a worker of iniquity. I see thou would have me to acknowledge thy sovereignty, and I am doing it; for I know none can rid me out of thy hand, therefore I yield to thee as most mighty. We see that the end of God's rods and afflictions is, to make men know themselves, and their own perverseness and his sovereignty; for these two ordinarily does the impenitent misken, he miskens both God and himself. And the secure godly man, albeit he have the habit of repentance, being fallen off the act of it, he is turned into the way of sinners, and miskens God; therefore rods are sent, to make him know himself, and acknowledge God his judge.

When the hand of God is on thee, know that it is to make thee know thy sin; to make thee more humble, and to acknowledge God in his sovereignty to be exalted; for when God is put high enough, and thou low enough, the correction has gotten the end wherefore it came. But in some, the one work is done, and not the other; for some will acknowledge their own baseness, and yet run away from God. But submitters turn in to him, acknowledging that they are dust and ashes: these give answer to God's messenger. Take with your faults then; hasten to know God; humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and

\* Confidant.

he shall lift you up: be not paughty,\* for God fights against none but rebellers, and it is his pleasure to pity all prostrate souls. If they be low, whence shall they fall? If they humble themselves to hell, what lower can God put them? If they have pronounced the sentence of justice, what shall God do?

Oh that men were thus canny to deal with God, and prevenc† the sentence of judgment! Glad would God be, to see his deputy in man do justice, that he may shew mercy: but when the conscience, which is his deputy, doth not the duty, he must execute judgment himself. Be wise, then, and seek unto God, for he is the most favourable party. Blessed are they who know his nature, and turn unto him; who acknowledge that the Most High bears rule in heaven; for albeit a man were high as Nebuchadnezzar, He shall force him to acknowledge his sovereignty, for all knees shall bow to him. The most stubborn shall be forced to receive their condemnation upon their knees, when no mediator or supplication will be heard, but the voice of judgment. Only “consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and none be able to deliver out of his hand.” While his hand is stretched out, make peace with him.

3. In Job’s acknowledgment of his own sinfulness and God’s sovereignty, when the rod is on him, we see that God, by affliction, will enforce a man to acknowledge both what God, and what himself is.

4. Upon this acknowledgment, Job concludes with himself that all shall go right. “Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and none can deliver out of thy hand.” As if he said, Lord, I yield to thee; I will strive no more what thou art seeking: I grant

\* Haughty.

† Anticipate.

unto thee thou challengest me for sin, and I take with it: my friends challenge me of wickedness, but I deny that. Thou tellest me that I am feeble, and I grant it; that thou art Omnipotent, and I acknowledge it. Therefore now thou must shew me favour, yea, I cannot want it; for seeing I have acknowledged what I am, and what thou art, it is impossible that thou can keep wrath any more. It lets us see, how a man, albeit forced to acknowledge God and himself, he may plead for mercy. Here a notable vantage whilk thrawn crops\* have, when they are dung with judgments, albeit they stood long out pingling† with God, and now are forced to take with their faults when they cannot mend themselves. If their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, God will remember his covenant, and have mercy. Being sore chastened of God, thou mayest come to God, and say, Lord, thou hast overcome me, prevailed over me; thou are higher than I. Behold, I yield to thee, and now, I treat for mercy; let me have it, albeit I have neglected it before.

And ye who have not yielded to God's correcting hand, be wise at last; and ye who trow ye shall not be accepted, albeit ye would yield, but fear that God is seeking to destroy you, hearken not to the suggestion, but rather believe the word of God, who has said, If yet thy uncircumcised heart be humbled, God will look upon a stubborn worm, because of Christ. Therefore, take with your faults, and make peace with God, else, be sure his fury shall break out on all those who come in to him. Come to Him, and be sure to get a kingdom, and your bodies shall be made glorious as the stars of heaven. Who would

\* Stubborn stomachs.

† Contending.

lose such a fair venture offered, when it might be had ?

“Remember that thou hast made me ?”—Now Job begins to plea God with reasons and arguments ; and as his first, he takes hold of God by the far end of the band of creation, and by that, draws strength to himself, and confidence to look for mercy. He lays out before the Lord his own work, his laidly\* legs and arms covered with sores, and says, These are the arms and legs which sometimes thou formed, as a pretty piece of clay, albeit now they seem turned to destruction. The force of this reasoning is thus : Good God, who sometimes made and fashioned me in comeliness, wilt thou let me rot above the earth ? Hast thou forgot what pains thou took in fashioning me ? Is it thy pleasure to turn me to nothing again ? I cannot think that thou wilt so misregard the work of thy hands.

1. We see, sense speaks to Job of destruction, and that God had a mind to cut him off ; and so doth it oftentimes to others. When God afflicts, sense will say, that God afflicts to destroy. This, said sense to Hezekiah ; “Day unto night wilt thou make an end of me ?”—for affliction has commonly the fear of farther joined with it. Even Christ himself feared, albeit he knew certainly of an out-gate, for he did not inhibit his holy nature to have its own affections ; and it is a natural affection, when evil is on, to fear worse. Sense and nature read a number of sad lessons in any one straik,† and write bitter things to come. Wonder not to fear worse when ye are stricken, but know that ye have company enow. Christ himself was assaulted with fear beyond any

\* Loathly or loathsome.

† Stroke.

thing that came on him ; therefore it is said, he was saved from that which he feared : then it is clear, that fears will be of that which will not come ; this the curse of the law imported. When destruction is sounded in affliction, and it is borne in that God will cut off, take it for the voice of sense and suggestion.

2. Job, for supporting of himself against the voice of sense, draws an argument from God's making of him ; and it lets us see, when sense says, God will destroy, faith says, Wilt thou destroy ? His speiring has the force of a denial that it can be. Thus faith stops sense when it speaks contrair to it : sense speaks with faith in the day of consolation ; and whiles it is silent, and whiles against faith. When sense is against faith, let faith hearken what God says, and not what sense says. Let faith say, " I will hearken what the Lord will say, for the Lord will speak peace to his people ; but let them not turn again to folly." He makes of God's creating of him, to help him in to God as his redeemer. We see it a good mean to those who cannot win to God as a saviour at the first step, to take a grip of him as a creator, and from that, fix in themselves to him as a redeemer. " Thou drew me out of the womb, and caused me to hope upon the breast," (Psalm xxii. 9). Thus David claims kindness to God, because he is his workmanship, that he may draw nearer to him, to clasp him as a redeemer. The most tempted and accursed-like soul cannot deny but it is God's creature ; and those who are most hardly exercised, and doubt if ever Christ minded to save them, and will disclaim him as a redeemer, yet will they not disclaim him as a creator. If then, in the time of sore tentation, thou wilt grant that thou art his creature,

are there not some bands betwixt thee and God? Is there not some hameliness\* betwixt the work and the workman? Will he not love it better than another man's work? If the work had sense, it might say to the workman, Thou made me; and now, seeing I am put wrong, thou must right me again. So may thou say to God, Put me right, because I am thy work. Claim to God as thy creator, to get farther kindness; by this mean a door is open to win in to God's outer court, and from that, to the inner court also. If thou win to God as creator, thou may also speir where is the redeemer, for justice and mercies sent are so near other, that thou may speak from the one to the other. There are bands betwixt God, and any who will claim to him, more than betwixt their father and them. A child will go to his offended father; but thou art sibber† to the Creator, than a child to his father or mother; for the father or mother furnishes little to the child's making, by that which God does; for the shape, and all the endowments are of God. Therefore claim kindness of God as creator, and farther favour shall be shown.

“And fashioned me together round about.”—He both shews the work of God, and the fitness of the work; which lets us see, that the work of man's creation, both of matter and shape, is worthy of consideration, and the wisdom of the Creator is to be seen in it. And He is to be praised for it, that a piece of clay being the matter whereof man is made, should be so comelily formed; that man's body should be shapen out of clay, with a pair of eyes in his head, as two watches, to look out and behold the works of God; two ears to hear; a mind within him to sit, as

\* Home-feeling, fellow-feeling.

† Nearer of kin.

in a castle, to command and direct; a soul, with all the faculties of it, to keep counsel and deliberation, and give out directions; and the senses, as so many officers, to execute these directions; the hands ready to work, the feet to go. Here is indeed a curious piece of workmanship, more curious than any watch; so many parts concurring, that it would busy the wisest head to search it; yea, it is an unsearchable deep, as all the works of God are. Therefore let us praise Him, who has made us of so feckless\* a matter, and in such a comely proportion, as there is no lack in our shape; all done exceeding notably; and let us claim some kindred to Him who so curiously has framed all, and taken such pains to make us. For as a workman's work is taken pains upon, so is a price put upon the work. If the work be curious, the work is the dearer; if it be artificially graven or indented, cut or carved, he who has wrought it, sets the dearer price upon it. So says Job to God, Put a price on me, thy piece of work, according to the curious art kythed in fashioning of me: seeing thou hast made such a pretty piece of work, I pray thee destroy it not. When man begins to dip in, and see what God has done for him, and begins at the work of creation common with the beasts, from it he may draw some arguments of confidence, that God will shew mercy to him, if he seek unto Him: but many men miskonning this, make themselves inferior to beasts. Therefore, examine and study what God has done for you, so shall ye draw to nearer acquaintance with him; and suffer not Satan so to blind your mind, as not to think what God has done for you.

“Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made

\* Powerless.

me as clay."—Here as he remembers that he is God's workmanship, so also he remembers his own frailty; and yet he claims to Him who cares for clay, because he has waired such work on him, to frame him out of the clay. It lets us see, if we can find, the care that God has shown about us already in our creation. We may gather from this, that yet more care shall be taken of us, and that he minds to do better to us than to destroy us, especially when we come in to him, as to our Creator. David says, "Thou madest me hope, when I was upon the breast; and now, when grey hairs are on me, thou wilt not forsake me." As if he said, Wilt thou tyne\* me at last, when thou hast had so much care of me hitherto? Learn then to draw along God's care of thee in the creation, to expect his care of providence; and seeing he has had a care to bring thee up from a child, from that, expect yet more good. The more thou can prove God has been good to thee, thou may prove by that, that he shall yet do more good. Therefore father kindness upon him from byganes,† that thou may find kindness for time to come. It is a very evil argument to prevail with man, because he has given much, to crave yet more; but a good argument to prevail with God. For thou may say to him, Thou hast been gracious to me, and must be gracious to me. To tell Him what good he has done, is a band to urge him to do more; yea, it is a point of wisdom in thee, and a point of thankfulness to him.

"Wilt thou bring me to dust again?"—Sense said to him, that for all his prayer, God would destroy him; therefore, as before, he said, Dost thou destroy me? so here, "Wilt thou bring me to dust?" We

\* Lose.

† Things past.

see then, God is dealing sharply with his creature. Sense will say that He has forgot, or will destroy the work of his hand ; but faith will not admit this, especially when it is conscious of the begun work of regeneration. Therefore as oft as sense speaks thus, let faith have the hindmost word : if sense speak thus, let faith speak thus once after. Job turns him not to sense, and speaks thus, but to God ; for sense, natural reason, and suggestion, are not always to be answered to ; but what we would speak to sense, suggestion, or misbelief, speak to God. He that speaks to a stone, looks not for an answer, and he who speaks to a foe, looks not for a friendly answer ; but turn to God, and be sure of a good answer, when neither Satan nor sense will give it.

*Verse 10.* “Hast thou poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese ?”—He compares the work of his conception in his mother’s womb, to the making of cheese of yearned milk. Albeit this seem a base-like comparison, yet the Spirit of God borrows it. As if he said, Lord, what am I in my conception, but as a little curdled milk ? How is it that I am brought to be something, who was of such a small-like substance ? Thou, by putting to thy hand to me, hast wrought me to some solidity, as when one with his hand gathers thickened milk. And yet, it is but a mean comparison ; for when God puts his hand to the work of man’s framing, oh, what curious draughts, smaller than the smallest thread of a worm-web ! When He lays the portrait of the veins of the body, and of the arteries, and of the sinews, so woven as no eye can discern it, nor take it up ; and when they are brought to the uttermost, the tightest physician who has studied anatomy best, cannot reach to the uptak-

ing of all the veins in the body! They can reach to many hundred veins, but yet they tyne of the count, when they come to the cutting of the veins that are on the eye-bree;\* for there, their anatomising knife is grosser than the thing that is to be cut; for there are such small veins on the surface of the eye-bree, by which blood is conveyed, as they cannot be discerned; yea, it is a thing unsearchable, to count or find out all the veins in the body. No anatomist under heaven can do it: so curious is the Lord's work, that no human skill can anatomise one eye, nor tell the tunicles and veins of it. They can show no more in a living man, than they have found out in a dead man: but in a dead man, all cannot be found, because the blood being run from the veins to the heart, at death, then, the veins cannot be discerned. So curious is the Lord's work in the creation, that it is unsearchable, and therefore none need speir about the work of creation, or about the resurrection, seeing there is a daily new creation of man and beast; it is as easy for God to raise again, as to make of nothing. Let the framing of any one member of man's body be meditated upon, and he shall be forced to wonder at it, and to give it over as unsearchable. Always we see, that the framing of man in his conception, is the work of the Lord's own immediate hand.

2. He makes his conception in the womb, God's work, as a thing to humble man, so also to exalt God, both as wise, loving, merciful, careful; and a powerful God, and a humble God, that he works clay with his own hand, and stays upon the framing of it, as if it were a thing something worth, for the space

\* Eye-brow.

of three quarters of a year; and millions made daily, yet all done at leisure, and His majesty nothing troubled with the making of them. And when He has brought out a man, he says to all, What sayest thou to my piece of work? All the on-lookers must grant, that He is a powerful, wise, and good Lord that made him; yet commonly they that are most acquaint with his work, are blindest in observation.

“Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh,” &c. We see the meditation of our making has many branches, and every one of them worthy to be weighed and considered; and, therefore, when we are about to study the work of God, we would not take a general glance, but go to particulars, giving to every particular its own meditation. Job reckons out four here; the bones, sinews, flesh, and skin, every one of them severally and jointly to be considered. The bones, made of the softest substance, and that yet grow to greatest hardness; for what softer than the marrow, and harder than the bone? yet the one is made of the other, and fostered by the other. Man is made of bones within, as the solidest substance for bearing of a burden, so that the bones are the pillars whereon the body stands. If he had been made all of flesh, he could not stand upright, work, nor bear a burden; therefore he is strengthened with bones, like growing steel, and these bones fenced upon their ends with gristle, which will wear better than steel. For if the ends of the bones were shod with steel, they would wear thin by continual moving to and fro; but now, being shod with gristle, they slide to and fro, and wear not. If they were shod with steel, by motion they would heat and fire; but gristle conceives no heat, and in the joint there is a sort of oil that keeps

it from heating; and if the joints be violently pressed beside their ordinar, the heat that is gathered, is evaporate by sweat through the skin. The coldest and softest part of the body is the brain; yet out of that soft, cold, and clotty matter, are all the sinews of the head drawn, like a number of cords, which go along to couple and bind the body together, bone unto bone, and from it comes the marrow; and the bones being thus coupled with sinews, then, for safety of them, they are bolstered with flesh; and because the flesh is tender, it is covered with a skin; and without the skin, a little thin skin, like a scabbard of dead hide, lest the sensible part should be hurt by rubbing upon it; and this outer scabbard is close joined to the other. But the outer skin has no feeling, but only as it is joined with the inner skin; and guards it, as a ply of lining cloth laid about it. To branch out all were longsome; but let us consider what wisdom and providence is here: for worthy is the least work of our meditation; and greater comfort should we find, if we studied his works more and more: light should be shewn in them. "Thy works," says the Psalmist, "are honourable; sought out of all them that have pleasure in them: who is so wise to observe these things, shall mark the loving-kindness of the Lord." If men were set to mark God's works, he would let them see more; as if one brought into a shop of curious work or wares, should roose\* all that he saw, it were a mean to make the owner take pleasure to feed the on-looker's admiration more. If wondering at a craftsman's work will move him to shew more of it, much more God: he shall shew more of his works, and still more, till he bring them to shew them a palace, where the

\* Praise.

praises of his works shall dwell for ever. There He shall say, Man, thou could not get leisure on earth to see all my works; but now, view all at leisure, and enjoy for ever full felicity, in the beholding of me and my works. Oh, how great is our atheism!—the Lord rub it off! Let us meditate on our making, that we may fall in love with our Maker, so shall he shew us greater things; as Christ to Nathaniel, “believest thou for this? thou shalt see greater things.”

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TEXT.

- Verse 12. “Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.  
 13. And these things hast thou hid in thine heart: I know that this is with me.  
 14. If I sin, thou markest me; and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.  
 15. If I be wicked, woe unto me; and if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head. I am full of confusion; therefore see thou mine affliction.”

“Thou hast granted me life and favour.”—Job has been reckoning the pains that God took upon him, in his conception in his mother’s womb; how he drew the draughts of all his body, and pencilled all the wants of it, till he brought him to a perfect man. He follows forth all from his very first original, till he came out complete in all his parts: and now, in this verse, being made and perfected in all his parts after a very comely fashion, he says, that God has granted him life and favour. That is, when He had fashioned him, he let him not lie there where he made him; he made not his mother’s womb his grave, but gave him life, that is birth, or a new life, because he was brought forth of his mother’s womb by God’s hand, who pre-

served him from danger in the birth. And after that he is brought forth, he says, that the Lord's visitation preserved his spirit ; that is, day and night He watched over him, to hold in his life. And while he thus speaks of God's visitation, he borrows a comparison from a father or mother, that wakens and rises in the night to see how the young bairn lieth, and that the nurse or mother that gives it suck overlay it not. As if he said, After I was born and brought out into the world, I would have died, except thou had guided their arms, or in their turning in their sleep, held them off me. God's watchfulness that he should not be smooored,\* was the preserving of his spirit.

Here we see very deep reasoning used, that Job may strengthen himself in the favour of God ; for faith is a great disputer, and a deep logician, and can fetch strong arguments from afar, for its own support and relief. It is like a man plunging in the water, that stretches far to get a grip of any thing that may pull him out of the water. Faith lays hold on common benefits, but misbelief doth not make use of chief arguments. Misbelief, albeit it had been comforted yesterday, counts nothing of it ; daily renewed benefits it makes no use of them : but faith draws favour out of everything ; out of corrections, sparings ; giving, taking ; draws arguments of love, and makes use of the most common argument, even the bringing out of the womb.

To strengthen faith, take all arguments. Reason for thy own standing anv way, for a thread is enough to hale one home. The least appearing of God's working in us or about us, is enough to help faith ; for albeit the argument in itself be weak, yet the dispu-

\* Smothered.

ter's mind is strong, and looks more to that he would be at, than to the force of his argument, and accepts his reasoning whatever it be, when he would be homeward. For albeit his arguments be weak, yea, null, if they were strictly examined, yet seeing he honestly uses such as he has, he is as an advocate, when he is about to plead a cause. If he bring out the best he has, and faithfully plead the cause, albeit his arguments be slender, yet he is allowed, and is rewarded for his pleading. So a believer, when he is honestly set to testify for God, against Satan, and his own wicked heart, he is accepted, albeit his arguments be weak; for a weak argument is as strong to fetch home to God, as a strong, because it proves the conclusion in God's acceptation, as well as the strong. And albeit the argument be weak in the general, yet it is strong enough in the disputer's hand, who would be in at God, and there at kindness with him; for he has said, those that come unto him, he will in no wise cast out.

Let none then be so witless, as to cast away grounds that may uphold them; and say not, what have I gotten, but the reprobate has had as much? I answer, are thy eyes the worse, that a reprobate has a pair of eyes also? What would thou think, to make thee blind when the wicked sees? Or if thou count of prosperity because the wicked has it, what would thou think, for that cause to be steeped in misery? Or when the wicked has two legs or ears, that thou should have but one? Wilt thou cast off or misregard God's benefits, because the wicked have them? What is a benefit the worse, that an unworthy getter of it abuse it? Is thy answer of grace and peace to thy prayer, or any other spiritual benefit the worse, that the like is given to some

temporary believer? No, certainly, and yet this is the best argument that uses to be brought, when God's liberal dealing is lightlied\* by any. But wealth makes wit waver. It were well bestowed we had scant allowance, and were dealt with as tarrowing† bairns, to make the meat they refused to be the first they get; and seeing they except against God's dealing, to make them see the fruit of their folly, by a more sharp dealing. But those who count much of every thing, and by all arguments reason homeward, shall find God more bountiful; and if they laud the bounty of God, they shall get more cause to laud it; they shall overcome him by lauding, but he shall overcome them by his bounty.

2. We see Job makes the putting in, and holding in of his life, a special benefit, and a token of God's favour. It lets us see, that beside the framing of our body, the putting in of life or a reasonable soul in our body, is to be reckoned as a special benefit; and that so much the more excellent, as the soul is above the body. God would be acknowledged for this benefit, as a token of his care, respect, and indulgence above other creatures. To see God take a piece of clay, and plaster it over with so comely a fashion; place holes for eyes, buckle them in with strings, cover them about with a case of bone; and frame so all the members of the body, and then put in it a reasonable soul, to hold all living; and to join that soul with the body, and that soul never to die, albeit the body die, and again the soul to be joined to the body, when it is raised again; is not this abundant matter of God's praise, and an argument sufficient to draw in to God,

\* Lightly esteemed.

† Loathing from being pampered.

and claim acquaintance to him, that he has given the similitude of himself, by putting into man an everlasting spirit, understanding, will, even the image of himself; a reasonable soul, which he has not given to the beasts? But many men turn souls into devils, because God will not resign his throne to them, and do their will, when they should do his. Such is the pride of man's desperate nature. But learn ye to count your bodies a benefit, and the putting of a soul into your body another benefit.

3. "Thou hast granted me life and favour." By life and favour, he means not the shaping of him, and his making men shew favour to him, and women to keep all duty to him in the time of his birth; but also, he counts it God's special favour, that he was born in the company of those who cared for him, when he could not care for himself. We see, that faith counts every thing a favour, even conception, and care in forth-bringing. Faith takes not only conception, but every thing that it gets, as favours and tokens of God's love and good-will. Count every thing received of God a favour, so nothing shall make thee impatient as to storm when he gives or takes; for if he take, it is the loosing of some burden off us; if he strike, it is but the chirurgian's lancet; if he gives a bitter cup, it is physical;\* whether it be sweet or sour, it is to procure our health, and that in a seeming manner, but it is so indeed. Therefore expone God in the best part, for that is faith's part, and the part of one who is reconciled. A friend expones a hard turn done by a friend, friendly; and the more love there be, the better is any thing that is done construed. So those who construe all that God doeth, to be out of love, are

\* Medicinal, healing.

God's friends ; and if any will threap\* love upon God, they shall not be disappointed.

OBJECTION. Every one gets favour of God. ANSWER. But every one makes not use of the benefit received. To get benefits is common, but it is not common to make use of them ; therefore let the wicked man have the benefit as thou, but make thou the use of it. There were ten lepers cleansed, but only one of them gave thanks ; and albeit the rest were cleansed as he, yet he gat a farther benefit ; the spiritual leprosy of his soul was cleansed also. Then see that there be as great difference betwixt the wicked and thee, as betwixt the nine lepers and the tenth. Bless thou God for every thing thou gettest. Oh, that God's children could be persuaded to be thus wise ; even ye who daily whirne and chirme,† to whose pleasure God cannot work ; who will not give his Spirit leave to dwell with you for channering,‡ barking, and misconstructing of his works ! I wish you this rest, that if God should grind you to powder, ye should judge him to do all out of love, for all things work together for the weal of them that love God ; for these always expone God in the best part, and are loath to lay any imputation on him. If ye would still stand to the maintenance of his glory, ye would still love him, and hear no evil tales of him, nor misconstruct any thing that he doeth. Ever hold this ground, to judge of God according to his word, for he still works according to it. If ye would do so, ye should dwell under the shadow of the Almighty ; your life, albeit it seem miserable, should be sugared ; ye should find the loving kindness of the Lord, and should be the meekest

\* Insist, urge. † Fret and murmur. ‡ Peevish blaming.

under his hand that can be; while as now, impatience is for lending an ear to Satan. But let God deal as he pleases, and let Satan calumniate His work as he pleases, yet ye should never admit that God hates you, albeit God himself would say it from heaven. Albeit God say that he is angry, yet ye may say, I believe he loves me, when he has cause to be angry. Oh but the godly who know exercise of conscience, have need of this!

4. "Thy visitation preserves me." It lets us see, that the holding in of common life, is the fruit of God's on-looking or visitation; for God having made a man, keeps a watchful eye over him for his sustentation, and thereby maintains him. The influence of life is from God: where God's eye is, there doth the Spirit quicken; when he draws back the Spirit, the body goeth to the dust. Know that God keeps life in thee, by looking on thee, as the sun looking upon the creatures beneath keeps them warm; for when the sun shines not on a stone, it grows cold. Such is the working of the Sun of Righteousness. He gives light and life; he holds the blood warm, and keeps it from clotting in the veins, that it should not choak. Therefore let thy life, lent to thee, be an evidence of God's upholding and looking on thee. And what I say of the bodily, the same I say of the spiritual life. His visitation is the cause that thou despairest not; that thou hast not shaken off his yoke yet, nor run away from him, but art yet bauchling\* on as thou may; therefore let him have the glory of it.

*Verse 13.* "And these things hast thou hid in thy heart." That is, Albeit now, Lord, thou seemest to be wroth, and about to destroy me, and to forget all

\* Shuffling, as in walking in worn-out slippers.

the pains thou hast taken in forming of me, yet I believe thou hast some love to me, which thou had when thou formed me. Thou made me once a comely body, but now it is leprous and filthy ; my skin, that sometimes was tight, is now eaten up with vermin : I am like one living in his lungs, and rotting in the grave, having only some spunk of life to keep together the rotten body in this estate. No love to me doth kythe ; and yet, I believe that the love which thou had in making me, and adorning me after so comely a manner, is yet to the fore ; albeit now thou hide it, yet I know that same care thou had in fashioning of me continues ; albeit thou seem to destroy me, yet love is hid in thy breast. Thus, Job's faith has strong reasoning, that it creeps through God's hands into his breast, and through his anger and wrath to his purpose. Oh, how piercing is the virtue of faith !

1. We see that God will sometimes hide his love and favour from his own, and make show as if he minded no favour : whiles he will give fewer, whiles more tokens of respect ; and when he gives fewer, he is said to hide, or when he gives evidences of his displeasure ; as he is said to shew his face, when he gives favour. Learn to distinguish betwixt the hiding and manifesting of God's love : wisely observe both, and make use of both.

2. Job is put to a trial when God hides. It lets us see, that the time of God's hiding of his love, is the proper time of faith's trial : such as believe not God for his word, but only for his work, will not believe when he hides. This is not good in many, that they will not let it light,\* that God loves them, except when he claps † their head ; therefore the Lord

\* Allow it to pass.

† Pats, caresses.

lays upon such with his rods, to warn them how they limit his kindness by the daunting\* of his doylt† children. When God hides, give thou a proof of thy believing in him; for herein many are not aware, when God hides himself, that Satan says, God loves them not; and they hearken to Satan, and not to God. But learn ye to amend this, else ye shall be worse dealt with, if ye give not better proof of believing, when God hides his love.

3. See here the piercing look of Job's faith! It passeth in by God's hand to his heart; which lets us see, that faith looks more to God's word than to his work, and more to his heart than to his hand, and to that which is hid, than to that which is seen. It looks more to His affection than to his handling; for albeit God's hand be rough, yet faith says, there is love in his heart; and if his work seem contrair to his word, faith speaks according to his word. All things work together for the weal of them that love God; and so, the hardest straiks, that seem to cut off, work for their weal. Make use of this—whatever God do expone him by his saying, and not by his doing, whatever sign he give, yet look aye to his affection; for if thou wilt look in to God's heart, thou shalt find thy name written upon it: for the Spouse says, "Set me as a seal upon thy arm, and as a signet on thy heart." Thus learn to pass through all disappearance outward.

"If I sin, then thou markest me."—After that Job has thus threaped kindness on God, here he falls into reasoning what these straiks can mean. So will it be with all those who think there is love in God's heart to them. They will be borne out in the dis-

\* Petting.

† Silly, stupid.

pute, and so furnished with arguments, that their mouth will not be closed ; but still matter of dispute will be furnished against misbelief, even when they seem to be confounded. Let us see how Job draws his breath, and followeth the dispute yet farther with God. He falls into reasoning with himself after this manner : What is this that God is doing, by chastising me after this manner ? Either I am dealt with as a wicked man and impenitent, or else, I am exercised as a righteous man, for my humiliation ; or I am dealt with in this exercise, as an impenitent righteous man. If this be, then God is pointing by these straits at my faults, to cause me repent. If He be dealing with me as a wicked man, then these straits are a part of hotter woe and destruction that abides me. But I will not let that light ; but if He be humbling me as a righteous man by these straits, behold, I am already before him, (ver. 14, 15). Then, in the end, he knows not what to do or determine, and confesses his confusion, and turns him to prayer ; for his thoughts are so involved, while he is seeking to know what God is doing, for he cannot rest on one thought ; therefore his confusion kythes, as if he said, I wot not what to think : my wits are all through other : I cannot find an out-get, when I look to my pained and perplexed body, (ver. 15).

That Job is put to search himself in his afflictions, 1. We see that afflictions are sent, that we may be put to a search what the matter can mean. My heart made diligent search, (Psalm lxxvii). Examine yourselves upon your bed, (Psalm iv). Search yourselves, O nation not worthy to be beloved ! When God corrects, search what he means ; as Paul, when he was stricken from his horse, said,

“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” And He will tell thee, as he did Paul : he will tell thee, that he would have thy heart loosed from such a thing, he would have thee stirred up to such a duty ; and if thou had rather sin, than part with such a thing, whether it be thy goods, estimation, children, the affliction has not done the turn. If thou wilt rather stick by these things, and sin, better never thou had seen them ; and if thou cannot find the cause of affliction by search, crave of God that he would shew it.

2. We see, that in the search, we may rank God’s dealing with us in ranks, and say, God is either dealing with me after conversion, or before conversion, or in conversion : I am either dealt with as a man guilty of sins unrepented, or a righteous, tried, and humble man. If I will bow to God, he will heal me ; if I bow not, he will break me : if I come home, he will receive me ; if I run away, he will follow me with judgments. Search, and rank matters right ; for such as know God’s ways, will readily search the manner of his working in the word : and examine yourselves by it ; so shall ye win to the bottom of matters, and find out all sorts of your estate.

3. While he says, God marks his sin, we see, when a man is dealt with as guilty of unrepented sin, then God’s correction or visitation is the marking of his sin, and a declaration that God hates his sin ; for we have oft seen, that God has written men’s faults upon their punishment, so that the on-looker may read the name of the fault, by the correction : but it was not so with Job. But an intemperate man’s sin will be written on his face ; or the man that dotes after worldly things, the Lord will put bitterness on them, and make him find thorniness and vexation. If thou

inhaunch\* or follow after any perishing thing in thy mind, and God meets thee with some rod, know thou hast reached thy mind beyond that which is allowed. And yet thou hast a vantage; thy fault is pointed at. Therefore point thou at it also, and take with it. When God says, Man, there thy fault; read it in thy chastisement! answer thou, Lord, I take both with my fault and chastisement. Then be sure, if thy un-circumcised heart be humbled, he will remember his covenant, as he says to Israel. It is not the taking with the fault that makes God lay on another straik; therefore, when thou art stricken, submit thyself, take with thy fault, and say, Lord, I thank thee that has told me my fault, that I may mend it.

4. "And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity." It is best to read this by way of interrogation, Wilt thou not acquit me from mine iniquity? and so, the speiring has the force of a denial that it can be—which lets us see, when our God corrects for a fault, he is minded to forgive the fault, and to take it away; for the word *correction*, imports the righting or mending of a thing. Therefore where God chops† at a fault, he is minded to make that same person the better, and to pardon that sin. Therefore, when thou art corrected, discourage not; for it is only as the chirurgian's pointing at the sore, and saying, I will lance it, or fire it, and so heal it. If God correct thee for too much love of children, goods, or the world, or credit, by removing these, he is pointing with his lancet, shewing that he is about to mend such a fault.

"If I be wicked, woe unto me."—If God deal with a man as wicked, woe to that man; for if he remain wicked, that dealing is but the beginning of sorrow.

\* Embrace.

† Strikes.

“ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts,” (Isa. lv. 7). If thou find that thou hast not turned in to God before now, humble thyself, and be no more wicked ; yield, and acknowledge thy iniquity ; then no woe shall be to thee : but if thou humble not, then woe, woe still abides thee !

“ And if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.” We see, if God deal with man as righteous, it is to humble him, and to hide pride from his eyes, that he be not puffed up because of his righteousness. A righteous man may be corrected, albeit he be accepted of God, have repented his sins, and is not secure, but still seeking God ; yet the rod bides not away, for he needs it. If then a rod being come, and thou art put to search, and finds thyself in the way of righteousness (for rods come on righteous and unrighteous ;) know that the rod is to hide pride from thine eyes ; for when men are absolved of God, and have the conscience of remission of sins, readily they are puffed up : as a man who is high in court, it is hard to make him keep a low sail, so man is readily puffed up, who is persuaded of God’s favour. To prevent this uplifting, God lays on a rod ; therefore aim at submission. Beware to lift up thy head, but creep in the dust. When God absolves, rejoice in trembling. Remember what thou art. Albeit the Sun of Righteousness has shined on thee, dust and ashes, yet remember thou art but dust and ashes still !

## SERMON.

Verse 16. "For it increaseth : thou huntest me as a fierce lion, and again thou shewest thyself marvellous upon me."

THE Lord has put Job to a search, what the matter means in this his hard exercise ; and Job lays his count that this hard handling is one of the three—either the correction of a secure man, or the punishment of a wicked man, or the trial of a righteous man. As for the first, he has spoken in the 14th verse ; and the meaning of his word is, If this be the correction of a secure man, then I need not look for pardon, till I take with my fault, and humble myself ; and this I am contented to do, if God will point out to me the sin that he marks. If it be the punishment of a wicked man, then woe's me ; woe, and double woe to me ! If so be then, I am far mistaken, for I cannot tell what it is to turn in to God, if I have not turned already. Therefore he casts by this, and will not yield to it that he is wicked, being conscious to himself of the contrair. As if he said, If I have not the comfort of not being wicked, then woe to me, for my friends have win the cause, and I am undone. But in this, my comfort abides, that I am not wicked. If I be righteous, yet will I not lift mine head ;—that is, if the Lord be trying me as a righteous man, I know it is but to humble me, and I am content it be so ; for albeit I were righteous, that is, conscious to myself of no wickedness or unrepented sin, yet would I not lift up my head before God, or stand out stiffly to justify myself.

1. Out of this last, we see albeit a man be righteous, yet is he not freed from correction,—and here stands the dispute between Job and his friends. For Job affirms, that a man indeed may be righteous, and yet hardly handled by God's afflicting hand; but they, not having seen the like in their experience, hold the contrair; yet Job's ground holds fast. Therefore, let those who walk before God in all good consciences, beware to condemn themselves as guilty of that which suggestion would say; but rather know, albeit ye walk before God in all well-pleasing, yet will ye not be freed from the exercise of God's children; so that by outward things, a man may neither know love nor hatred. It reproves the rash judgment of many, who say, if they were not wicked, God would not strike them so; and yet, all the straiks they have gotten are so gentle, that the dearest of God's servants have not been freed from the like straiks. Therefore, reprove this rash censure, which smells of giving too much credit to Satan, and too little to the testimony of God's Spirit and the scriptures, which say, that those who are justified by faith, may be as hardly handled as others.

2. "If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head;" that is, I know thou would have me humbled, and not to lift up my head; for thy affliction says so. Thou would not have me to think of my righteousness, as one that has found honey, not to eat too much of it; so should I not search out the matter of my own praise, or count too highly of my own righteousness. It lets us see, when the righteous are exercised by troubles, it is that they may be humbled, abashed, and pride hid from their eyes, kenning that they are subject to sin and misery, albeit God pardon them; and it is good that the righteous be exercised with

chastisements, lest they be hurt with the rotting sweetness of earthly things. When God corrects thee, know it is to humble thee, and that thou should not be proud of thy own righteousness. Say with thyself, when correction comes, God is either humbling me or trying me; for this shalt thou not miss in the general, albeit thou cannot find out the particular cause: albeit possibly he be switching thee for thy impenitency, yet he is humbling. Be sure ye cannot be mistaken in one of these two,—that God is either humbling or trying. Therefore, resolve to strive to give a proof of thy faith and humiliation. Many, when they find not a stepping-stone whereon to set their foot in trouble, are like to sink over the ears, and drown. But here are two stepping-stones whereon they may stand, and by these two they may be kept up from drowning. Presuppose God by troubles were correcting for security, and so stirring up to repentance; yet, if the party corrected will fasten his faith, and be humbled, it shall bear him out, and serve for a load-star in the dark night, to guide him through to heaven.

3. Job says not here simply, *If I be righteous, thou art humbling me*; but he says, “I will not lift up my head;” that is, I am well content to be humbled, and so, will not strive; and so also will look for an out-gate: this thy marking of my sin, and not acquitting of my iniquity, tells, thou would have me to take with it, and, behold, I do it; and if I were righteous, yet thou would have me humbled, and I am about to be humbled, and therefore thou and I are agreed. And so, when I am humbled, an out-gate must be. I lift not up my head, therefore thou must raise me up, who am humble. It lets us see, that a humble soul under exercise, may look for an out-gate: he that lifts

not up his head in pride, God will lift up his head in consolation ; if he abase himself, God shall exalt him Here a clear ground of encouragement to the humble, and there are sundry promises to back it. God resists the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. If, then, under sore affliction, thou can find nothing to uphold thee, but that thou art humbled, this one stepping-stone is enough to hold both thy feet, yea, a rock to rest upon : albeit there were a great deep round about thee, yet thou may be sure not to drown, but to be comforted and relieved. Therefore, haste to humiliation, ye who would be comforted in trouble: haste to take with your sin and unworthiness, if ye would have Christ to be your physician and your consolation.

“ I am full of confusion.”—For all Job’s search and humbling of himself, yet dolour bides on him ; albeit his faith have gotten an out-gate, yet his sense cannot see it. Therefore he says, that he is full of confusion : as if he said, Surely, I cannot rest ; I am ashamed of my reckoning ; I stick fast in the briars, and cannot win out ; therefore, O Lord, see thou my afflictions.

1. We see it is possible for a man who has searched his own heart, and lighted right on his estate as it is, and has seen an out-gate by faith, that yet he cannot win to rest in his mind. This is the draught of God for keeping low those who are humble, to hold them restless ; for willingness to be humble is not enough, albeit it be a condescending in the mind, except there be a real humility ; for it requires actual humbling, and that which may be a press is requisite ; and therefore, the Lord will both humble, and keep on a weight upon the mind, to make men really submit, as voluntarily they submit in their mind, that there may

be an experimental humiliation, after the mind has condescended.

Wonder nothing then, that after search ye rest unsatisfied, but remain in confusion; for albeit ye have resolved to be humble, yet God may make your mind restless, so as ye may be weary of the burden of it. Albeit the matter be not worth a shilling, yet such vexation may remain, as ye get no rest; but as a mote in the eye makes still restless till it be taken out, so God can hold you in a business in a little thing, and that to work that humiliation which ye are content to have, and to make you thoroughly submissive in everything. Think not that God hath not heard you, because ye cannot get rest, for herein ye are mistaken, seeing Job, accepted of God, and humbled before him, is yet restless in his mind, that he may be experimentally humbled, and patient till the delivery come. Though thou be restless, yet know thou may be accepted of God; yea, humble and restless in thy mind, forgiven of thy sins, and restless in thy mind; and that for good reasons, to mortify thy sins yet more. Therefore mistake not, albeit thou be restless; but ease thy restless mind by laying it over upon God, and ease thy wearying mind by drawing in under his wings.

2. Because he cannot get rest, therefore he is confused and ashamed in himself: he looks like one baized\* and come short of his hope; he blushes like a man disappointed. This sense bears in upon him, as if he were disappointed, so that neither by search, repentance, or humbling of himself, can he find an out-gate. It lets us see, that a restless mind, when it cannot find satisfaction in the exercise it is under,

\* Confounded.

will grow confounded ; and this is a new exercise, and a new affliction. As a horse that has run long about in the tether, and has fanked\* himself, is forced to stand still, not knowing what to do, so the restless mind, except it sit still, by its own restlessness will run about, and grow dizzy. That which is casten, will be taken up again, and that which is taken, casten down again ; and thus, with changes of this and that, the mind grows dizzy, and all seems to run about with him, so that he cannot tell whether the earth stands or goes about ; and yet, it is but the poor silly head which, by turning, is grown confused.

Seeing this is the exercise of the godly, from restlessness to be confused also ; and ye are fallen in confusion, so as ye cannot know whether ye sit, or stand, or lie, be not discouraged, seeing it is an exercise suitable to Christians : rather sit down, as a dussie† body, at God's feet, so shall thy head be settled, and thy confusion shall go. It is your rest to sit still, says the Scripture ; but if ye will stir and flichter,‡ like a bird in a cage, afraid of some ravenous beast, which by flichtering from side to side falls into the beast's claws, while as by sitting still in the midst of the cage, it would have been safe ; so the restless soul by fleeing of danger, puts itself nearer hand ; it gets a scratched skin, wounds, and sores, which by quiet sitting still it would have eschewed. If thou cannot take rest till thou have drawn on confusion, and art become so giddy, as thou knows not what to do, then cower down at God's feet, and lay over thy perplexed mind upon him, so shall he give his beloved rest, sleep, and contentment.

3. What doeth Job in this case ? He turns him to

\* Entangled.

† Docile.

‡ Flutter.

God by prayer, and says, Lord, see my afflictions. It lets us see, that the only out-gate in confusion is prayer. Therefore, go speak to God, albeit thou hast no skill what to say, for there is not another out-gate for a perplexed mind. "Ye people, pour out your heart to God at all times; he is a very present help in the time of trouble." If ye will do this with any eye to the goodness and mercy of God, ye shall find ease and out-gate, or at least, ye shall go away better from prayer than ye came; your girths shall be somewhat slacked. Therefore follow this practice of the saints, and ride this ford which many have ridden before you. "I called upon the Lord, and he heard me," (Psalm xxxiv. 4). Read also the 107th Psalm, and ye shall see how many perplexities the kirk is driven to, that they may call upon God; and when they call, they are heard. It is said, they wandered in the wilderness, and cried, and were heard: they were bound in the prison, and the iron went into their soul, and they cried, and were heard: they forgot to eat their meat, loathed their meat; they are in trouble, as tossed by the sea; they stagger and reel like drunken men, whiles lifted up to heaven, whiles cast down in the deeps; and when they cry, the Lord hears.

Let the afflicted use prayer before they be confused, or at least, after confusion; and if ye find that prayer and wrestling ease the mind, follow prayer the faster, and use it the oftter; and leave not off the exercise of prayer, seeing ye win your meat by this craft of begging. Give it not over; but when ye would have comfort, out-gate, or success, go always to God, for all his strait dealing is to drive you to him—as superiors deal with their vassals; cast fangs,

to catch them, and bring them in their reverence to nurture them; and if they yield and come in, they handle them courteously; but if they remain still unreasonable, hold still a cavil in their teeth, till they fall and yield, and then shew courtesy. Now there is no more generous and noble-minded superior than God. When any seek to him, he seeks no vantage of them, but he will bridle and bind, to force them to acknowledge him; and if they seek in to him, he will pity, for it is his nature to pity poor afflicted and confused souls, when they seek in to him. Be not thou like the horse or mule, whose mouth must be holden by bridle and bitt, else God shall bind and bridle foot and hand, and lay on, till ye be forced to stand. Therefore in time make your prayer to him while he may be found, and surely, in the flood of great waters it shall not come near you.

4. "See thou my affliction."—He speaks as if God looked not. It lets us see, that those in affliction cannot see God pitying or looking on them, for if they knew that he saw, they would also know his helpful and pitiful eye; for when God looks to his own, it is aye in pity. Albeit thy sense say, that God looks not, yet know by the rule of faith, that God looks on thy affliction. Labour to overcome sense, and prove that God looks on, when ye get grace to hold out your sores to him; and if ye be persuaded that he sees and looks upon your trouble, ye may also be persuaded that there is pity in him; and if ye be persuaded that he looks with pity, ye may also be persuaded that he is preparing a remedy.

*Verse 16.* "For it increaseth;"—that is, trouble grows more. This conference with his friends, has diverted his mind from his present trouble, and made

his thoughts run a little in another channel, and not to think on his dolour as he did. It shews, that diverting of the mind in sharpest troubles, is a mean to mitigate a little; for were the mind never so troubled, let it be diverted, and ease comes, which hindereth the seething of the mind. Job's dispute with his friends makes, that his mind is not thoroughly dipped in into all his dolours, but that they are slackened; yet now they increase, and turn back upon him, when he finds no out-gate; and it teaches us, that as in a sickness or fever, the bodily pain will relent and increase again by fits, so, in the fever of the mind, there will be a relenting and a growing of the trouble, as if trouble were, and came back again, or is more sharply apprehended: which is all one as when the sea is flowing, the waves come on the shore a great deal, and incontinent run back; and yet, at the next dash it flows an ell farther, as if it were fetching a race to come farther: so are the troubles of the mind. Therefore David compares troubles to waters, while he says, "All thy waves have gone over me." Let this be one ease to thee, to see thy perplexed case painted out in Job's person, and so know thou art not marrowless\* in thy exercise, but that the dearest children of God have seemed to themselves overflowed in the same flood-gate, and to have sunken in deep waters.

2. "Thou huntest me as a fierce lion."—This is not by way of complaint, but the expression of his sense: for he being now slaked, is like a bruised lamb win out of the lion's paws, that seems to be eased, because it is win out of grips; and when it is pursued again, by reason of the bruised bones, is not able to

\* Companionless.

fly. So counts Job himself before God, as a bruised lamb that is win away, and ere it be aware, is again hinted\* up in his claws, and is sorer bruised than it was before; so thinks Job of himself. As if he said, Lord, albeit I know well thou art my merciful father, yet thou seems to handle me, as a lion doth a silly tender prey, that takes it and toys with it; lets it go, and takes it again, and grips it harder. It lets us see, albeit the Lord be a meek and merciful father to his own, yet in trouble and inward exercise he seems terrible like a lion. Oh, what terror, when God is any way apprehended! albeit he come as a father with a little rod, how fearful is he! What need then have we to walk circumspectly? If God be so fearful and terrible in his mercy, how terrible must he be in his wrath, when he seems to devour the godly? What is the case of the desperate persons? Doubtless they apprehended such terror in God, that heaven glowms,† the earth seems to swallow them up; they think they are going to the pit, and are like to be swallowed up. His anger apprehended is more terrible than hell. Those who know but a little of God's terror, know this to be true. Paul says, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;" and Hezekiah in his complaint says, "Thou runnest upon me like a fierce lion, to break all my bones: from day unto night wilt thou make an end of me?" When thou art thus dealt with, be not overfleyed;‡ conclude not as sense says, for the Lord can both break and bind up, bring down to death and bring back again; he can bruise, as a lion doth the prey, and send whole away again.

"And again thou shewest thyself marvellous."

\* Snatched.

† Frowns.

‡ Too much afraid.

Albeit the Lord seems to him terrible as a lion, yet still he talks on to him, to teach us, when God seems to us a lion, yet still to talk on to him, count him not a foe but a friend ; commune on with him, for under communing he will devour none. The way to keep off ruin is, to keep conference with God, tell him what we fear and what we feel, and what sense says, so shall we not give up the ghost, nor despair.

While he says that God shews himself marvellous, he lets us see two things :

1. That he could not apprehend the deep of dolour ere it came, for when it came, he wondered at it, as a thing surpassing his fore-apprehension ; for men use not to wonder, except it out-reach their conception or fore-apprehension. We see when God exercises, we will be otherwise handled than we trow, more strictly exercised than ever we fore-conceived ; it will be marvellous in comparison with that which we apprehended. What is the reason of many men's plunges and perplexities, but because they see not what God means, and the exercise of sense is sharper than their fore-apprehension ; and that is now set before their eyes, and sensibly felt by them, which they never foresaw or fore-thought.

2. We see God is marvellous in afflicting those on whom he is pleased to shew his power, as a judge, according to his wisdom, devises exquisite tortures to torment those whose life he would have kept in. Yet the wisest man's wit is short to devise tortures, but God is marvellous ; for he can by touching one of the veins, make a marvellous torment ; or by a little stone in the kidneys, or by some humour in the joints, or by a fever, or by a megrim in the head, or by a fester in the foot, he can make a torment inexpressible. And

if God can do so by way of fatherly chastisement, what shall it be, when he exercises his wits to torment the damned in hell? Fools trow, that the torment of the damned in hell-fire shall be nothing as it is said because, say they, there is no material fire in hell, and fire cannot affect the mind, and so, no torment. But the Scripture has not told all; but as never eye saw, nor ears heard, nor ever entered in the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for them that love him; so eye never saw, nor ears heard, nor heart conceived, what God has prepared for them that hate him. What God has prepared for haters of him, who are set to work their own will, and misknow God, never mind could think upon the thousandth part of their torment. For if by the ague in the tooth there be such torment, what shall it be when torment is on all the body, and the body is made durable and strong to bear it; upholden without meat, to bear all, and the torment of the mind more than of their body; the soul and body cursing each other, that ever they knew each other? Therefore, while ye are in the way, agree with your adversary. And consider this, ye who forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you; for here shall ye feel the lion's paw, that rends into so many parts, and so, multiplies your pain. Consider it, that in time ye may seek reconciliation. God persuade you, lest this advertisement make your punishment more.

## SERMON.

Verse 17, "Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.

18. Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!"

JOB is fallen again into complaint, and here he seeks out of sense; and being under temptation, gives vent to suggestions, and lets sense speak instead of faith. His sense says, that God by his sore strokes seems to confirm his advisers, as if he were leading witness against him in anger, and said that Job was the man his friends called him.

"Thou renewest thy witness"—as if he said, When I deny wickedness, thy renewing of witnesses to prove that I am not in love with thee, but highly displeased, and that thy indignation grows, and that still thou speakest bitter things against me (verse 17). Then he breaks forth in a fit of impatience and bitter passion, his fleshly part having prevailed over him; as if he said, I am sorry that ever I was born, that my mother brought me forth, or that I lived longer than I was born, that so I might have been as if I had not been (verses 18, 19).

1. "Thou renewest thy witness,"—He calls the continuance and renewing of his dolour and grief, a leading of witness against him; which shews, that when faith would fain comfort itself by the word and covenant, sense uses to lead witness to disprove faith, taking arguments from present disposition. This is a very hard conflict of faith with sense. When faith

not only wants sense, but has contrary sense to that while it believes, then it is a hard strait; as when faith says, God loves; and sense says, Strokes prove the contrary, and that the believer's case is not such, as he holds himself in hand.

Be prepared for the like exercise, and to stand out in the like battle; and trust not sense in the day of trial. But when trial is sent to sift, sense brings out all the forces, and says all that can be said; and when sense has said what it can, and faith stands out, then faith is made more precious than fine gold. Therefore, ye who are racked with your daily running issues of sin, when ye would believe in God, be not driven from him, knowing that ye have liberty to come in to Christ, when ye are like to be holden in the law's grips; and if any be welcome, it is the soul labouring under the sense of sin; yea, the secure and the proud may not bide away from Christ, but must go to him, for they have an errand to him to take away their security, and to make them humble, and more light to see themselves. But especially those who are handled hotly by the law, and feel the wickedness of their own heart, to be led as witness to prove them unhallowed, let them cleave fast unto Christ, and go not from him for all the tentations; for sense is juggled and embittered by tentation. Therefore, trow not the voice of a liar, but the voice of the word, which says, that those who are fled for refuge to Christ, shall have strong consolation.

2. Let us see what are the witnesses that sense leads against faith. The strongest witnesses are rods. Checks and challenge of conscience, estimation of others who called him a hypocrite,—yet all are false witnesses;—the chiefest witnesses are rods. They

say, That man is wicked, and God corrects in indignation. These specially seem to speak from God, because the Scripture says, "Is there any evil in the city that the Lord has not done?" Rods speak most plainly for misbelief, and against faith. Know then, that when crosses, tortures, miseries, and vexations worldly, come to militate as an host of men against you, and say, that God has no pleasure in you, whom he so vexes, hearken not to such witnesses, because God has told us, that whom he loves, he rebukes and chastises. And so, if the rod speak for God, it must speak love. He loves you, and has no will that ye should perish, and therefore must use rods to mortify your corruptions; and the rods, when they come, say only, We are the Lord's visitation, to testify, that God is come to see what ye are doing; and from the time he sees evil in you, ordains that we should scourge it off you. Ye are in danger, and growing secure, and we are the Lord's messengers to sharpen your prayer, to put by an evil hour, and to make you spend the time better than otherwise you would do. Thus are rods messengers of God, come from him for good. But when men hearken not to this, but to suggestions, then Satan speaks what the rod seems to say, and not what it says in substance. Therefore, take the testimony from the word, else thou shalt be deceived: and whatever false witness would loosen faith, hearken not to it, but know, that sense can be juggled and depone falsely, and trow it no more than the deposition of a hard rod. And whatever sense, Satan, the rod, or on-lookers say, trow them not; for if God liked to let out his wrath, he might at a clap shut you in the pit. Therefore for strokes let never a living man complain, for as long as life is kept in,

strokes are only to draw in to God, and to fly wrath that is coming.

3. Another point of the witnesses deposition is, that the rod seems to say, it is wrath or indignation. We see strokes are heavy, but nothing so heavy as wrath or indignation, when it is apprehended. A soul reconciled to God, cares not for straits, if wrath be away; but if it see wrath with the straits, then it is heavy. It can abide anything but wrath. Therefore David says, "Correct me not in thy wrath;" for that ate up his bones, dried up his moisture as the drouth of summer. It is a sharp-pointed rod, when there is fear of indignation; and those under the sense of wrath are specially to be pitied. Ye who fear and find wrath, albeit God speak not to you, but strike, yet speak ye to him, as Job here tells God, that he fears his indignation be increased.

4. "Changes and wars are upon me."—He had diversity of onsets, hosts of adversaries and powers, that concur to beat him down; and therefore, by a comparison he expresses yet more his anguishes, having apprehended his estate to be, as when new and fresh onsets are made in battle, by fresh soldiers against a beaten party. And this lets us see, that exercised minds have a battle wherein they are contrary parties, faith sustaining and holding out, and troubles and tentations making the onset. The party, defender, thinks that his overthrow is sought, and the matter of contest is about his life. The fits of war are, Satan with one onset, the world with another, God with rods on the third hand—and these all use variety of changes and assays, whiles one way, whiles another; and yet, God having in all a supporting hand of the party defender, when he is laying on with his other hand.

Albeit the party stricken marks only the striking hand of God, yet he has also a supporting hand which he sees not ; but if he considered with himself, he would say, How is it that I have so many strong and powerful enemies, and such hard onsets, and yet am supported to bear out ? If he saw this, doubtless, albeit God seem my party, yet his supporting hand bears up. But he is like a fleyed\* body, who marks not this, but only the strokes.

5. In all these onsets he had changes, whilst their evils set on ; whiles one or other, whiles all set on together. He was like one wading a water on an uneven ground : he goes in, and finds it deep, and up again ; and he finds a bank of sand, and then a new deep again. So up and down wades he on in this affliction, this tentation setting on now, and then that. Wonder not to find changes, for they are kindly.

6. " Wars and hosts."—A part of his exercise was, to have his parties mustered before him at once : God, the world, his friends, sense of indignation, and sins bypast which he thought were forgiven, all fly in his throat together. Here is the peril of giving over, when the whole host is against him. For a soul to stand out at such a time, is a special point of faith's strength, when nothing but the bare letter of the scripture is for it, and all parties as an host against it. In such a case, remember that stronger is He that is in you, than he who is in the world. Stick fast by the bare letter of the scripture, when God, Satan, men are against you, and hold fast this word of scripture, " All things work together for the weal of them that love God ;" or any other place that makes for you ; so shall ye stand solid, as on a rock, albeit the blast be sore.

\* Frightened.

If possibly the godly stagger at such a thick shower of hail, or when all their enemies come about them like bees, thicker than the motty sun, and tentations fly thick as midges, what wonder if ye be set aback?

7. But what is Job's help in this sore onset?—that he is speaking to God, and telling him his case: for he says to him, “Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.” It lets us see, albeit our exercise were never so hard, and parties never so strong, yet let faith ever have recourse to God, for there is no refuge but to him. Tell him the deposition of the witness, that he may refute all; and beware to leave speaking to God, for that is Job's wreck, as the next words show.

*Verse 18.* “Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!”—From once his eye falls off God, incontinent he falls in a passion and fit of impatience; for looking on the host against him, he turns his back upon God, and utters unbecoming words, and asks, why God made him thus miserable. And yet, this is but an agony and fever that will have a cool; and yet it is not to be excused. “Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!” Oh that when my mother bore me, I had expired, or been tane from her womb to the grave; then had mine eyes been hid from all trouble! Job speaks never one right word here, but all his words are like his ravings in a fever, and the voice of his corrupt sense. And now has he gotten such a wound by his adversaries, that he is once driven into the mire, and breaks out in that which became him not—and no wonder, when his body was running with boils, scabs, vermin; liv-

ing and yet rotting ; tossed in his soul, like to be shot\* from God, and all by-gones turned in a contrair. Yet this excuses not his sin.

1. See here the force of dolour and pain. It so takes up his mind, that it lets him think on nothing beside. And ye who have the experience of pain, know that it will transport the mind in the time of it, that ye can only think upon pain, pain, and more pain; pain involving itself as a flame of fire, returning back upon itself, so that the party under pain can think of no other thing. Therefore, spend the time of health and ease well. In your best wit, health, strength, peace, prosperity, put over the work of repentance, and settle it before pain come on; for when pain comes, there is no leisure to repent ; yea, no mind of sin, God, heaven or hell will be, but still mind of pain. Repentance requires a whole young man in his finest wit, health, strength, ease, prosperity, for repentance will take up the whole man within and without ; and therefore they who think to repent when they grow sick or sore, Satan has deceived them, that they should not repent at all. Repent when ye may, else ye shall not get leave to repent when ye would. In pain, fix your eye on God, and cry for faith and patience to bear out. Hold your mind off your pain as far as ye may, and on God, lest your passion break out.

2. See here what frailty is in the strongest ! Job has long foughten mightily ; yet now, being cowed and overset, he becomes weak in the conflict, and staggers, and falls. It lets us see man's frailty by the continuance of sorrow. Therefore let never man lean to his own strength, albeit he had never so many experiences ; for if there be not new strength and furni-

\* Thrust.

ture, there will be no out-bearing. But lippen\* to Him who quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as if they were; lippen to God only, and not on any other strength. And when thou seest others pained and perplexed, and callest them abject, cease, and rather pity them, for thou would rather do worse thyself than better, if thou were not supported: learn compassion on the sick and pained, and suspect yourself. And I bid you not put down your own faith, but put down your own courage and strength natural, and say with yourself, If God support not, I shall be also weak as any. And from the experience of others' weakness, give over confidence in your own strength; then, your weakness being renounced, it is God's time to supply.

3. In Job also, mark here the power of tentation and unmortified corruption. Corruption and sinfulness kythe in holiest Job. Was it not a foolish speech in Job, to say, Wherefore hast thou brought me forth? seeing God might have answered, Not for thy ease and satisfaction of thy humours, Job, but for another end: not to give thee thine own will, but for my own glory; and if I get glory, I will not spare to pain thee yet more. Therefore this was a wild tale of raving in Job; and yet, it is but the voice of his sense—Job's speech in his old man; not all Job, but Job in part only, and the words of his corrupt sense. Know then, that in the holiest are corruption and blemishes, that all flesh may become guilty before God. If the press had been taken off Job before his venom was squeezed out of him, we might have thought of him as a sinless man, especially when he had gotten such a testimony of God, that he was

\* Trust.

a righteous man, and upright, and none like him on the face of the earth. If this had not kythed, we might have thought Job a man fully renewed: and yet we see Job is but renewed in part; and that a hard press will kythe corruption, and a pressure of God's thumb will cause rottenness come out. It lets us also see, that never a man from the beginning was saved by his own righteousness or holiness, for Job was not so saved; for here was a cause sufficient to have caused God cast the bargain of works. But because the covenant of grace could not be broken, therefore this fault is forgiven in Job; and Job has here ado with a merciful father, who took him not at the shoot, or in his passion, but after this, brought him to himself, and made him to know with whom he had ado. When thou seemest all the holiest, know there is much rotten stuff in thee; and ye who think that ye are meek and patient, and can bear trouble well, know ye were never yet afraid to the yondmost.\* A little press would make your rottenness kythe, an ounce weight more would make you stagger; yea, the least thing may make you that ye can neither read, pray, nor confer, but fret and fume in your discontentment, and break out in mad passions: and suppose your passions kythe not, yet know that they are.

4. Consider what guiltiness is in this passion and reasonless speech of Job's: "Wherefore brought thou me forth?" It is a limiting of God's work, a reproving of God's work, a denying to God the glory of his work; a finding fault with God's providence, a casting down of all that God had done to him or by him; for many get good of Job's life, and good

\* Uttermost.

by Job's trouble, yet he casts all down here. This sin, if it were followed, would drive him to hell; but because it is a passion, and beyond his purpose, which he blames, therefore we follow it not. Always mark ye from it how deeply a passion will involve a man in guiltiness, when once it does break forth but a little. Therefore beware of passion; and excuse not yourself, that because ye are naturally passionate, therefore ye take liberty to break out against God, or your neighbour; for ye may as well say, "I am naturally a devil's limb;" the one may be your challenge as well as the other, and so, not an excuse, for that excuse blackens yet more. If any should say, "I have it by nature, or in fashion, or custom," then I say, it is so much the worse; for that which is customary, daily, and ordinary, is worse than that which breaks out but now and then. Therefore, if thou find thyself passionate, love thyself so much the worse; loathe thyself, and seek to have that furious devil casten out that makes thee bite all that are about thee, and pray to be free of the slavery of that furious beast which will not quit thee. Albeit possibly thou would not be a slave to it, yet it gets many a borrowed darg\* of thee.

5. See how reasonless and witless Job's passion is: "Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?" He speirs at God whereto he made him thus, as if all the end of God's creating of him had been to cocker him, and hold him up, like an egg on a cake. It shews that passion is reasonless; and if any will crave a reason of passion, they crave a reason of that which is reasonless.

6. We see Job can draw no comfort to himself from

\* Labour, task.

any thing that is befallen him in this life, or from any good that he has done, nor from any thing God has done to him ; so doth passion blind men, in all that God has done to them, or by them. We see that in the day of trial, from bygone experiences, we may find no comfort. Experience is good when use can be had of it, but an assay may be such, as all former experience may be swallowed up ; yea, so hot a chase, that we can make no use of wit, nor draw comfort from former experiences. Lean no weight upon experience : let it help, but lean not to it ; for ye will tyne the book of register, and will be so tane up with pain, that ye cannot read one line of it, but the book of experience will be a closed book. But lean on this only, “The Lord has spoken ;” and with David, “Take never thy word out of my mouth.” Old bygones help whiles, but not always. It must be fresh furniture that will do thy turn : that thou may have it, depend upon God at all times, and in every case.

7. Out of Job’s error, learn we, whatever comes on us, rue we never that we are in life. No dolour should make us repent our being in life, or make us seek to die, else our sin is so much the greater, as we contravene God’s command. Rather make use of our life. Cast not away God’s gifts, but seek to make use of them. Say not, it is better never to have had children or riches, than to have had them, and then to be taken away, for God has wise reasons both for giving and taking. Be not so foolish as to misinterpret any past work or gift of God.

*Verse 20.* “Are not my days few ? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.”—Here Job falls from passion, and takes up himself, and begins to pray, and exercise his faith, and speak

in other terms. As if he said, Lord, my days are short, let me draw my end; lend me yet life a little; give me comfort ere I die, that I may speak to thee in terms. And thus the passion and braid\* is past by. It lets us see, that the passions of the godly last not, for there is a spirit in them that draws that up: if they break out, they go not on. In this, they differ from the wicked, that that which is the wicked's daily life, they do it in a fit, or in a passion. The wicked are daily departers from God, strangers from the womb; but the godly consider their ways, and turn their feet into the way of God's commandments. The wicked's evil is in habit, the godly's in passion. The wicked are not in their cold blood, what the godly are in their distemper.

1. Such as see the godly fall in a passion, and from that would excuse their own daily wickedness, because the godly are overtaken, know they are far mistaken; for the lecherous man is so in resolution, the drunkard and brawler are so in resolution, but the godly is stolen off his feet only in a passion or fit. Now, there is great odds betwixt a fit and a resolution; betwixt falling, and dabbling and wallowing in the mire. The godly may fall into an act of filthiness, injustice, or other offences, and rise again; but the other falls, wallows, and rises not.

2. We see that the spirit and grace which is in God's children, suffers them not to lie or go away with the tentation, but reclaim them. The seed of God is in them, therefore they continue not in sin. If they be overheyed,† they are turned hame at once. Job has done a great fault, yet when he is wrong, he runs not away, but bides, and prays, and in substance

\* Assault.

† Called back.

acknowledges his wrong, and retreats his saying : seeing he has failed in loathing of his life, now he craves his life again, that he may speak advisedly before he go to the pit of death.

“ Before I go whence I shall not return.”—He describes here the grave, for he knew his soul would go to heaven ; as hereafter he says, that with his eyes he shall see his Redeemer. But here he means of his body, for he knew his body would rot. As if he said, Before my body go to the worms, and my ears and eyes be closed, lend me yet a little the use of them, that I may praise and honour Thee, and then lay them down ; for the ugly devouring grave will neither let me pray, repent, nor teach others, nor praise thee : lend me time, to shew what I should be, and may not be as I am in this my last passion.

1. We see, a short ease in a sharp trouble is a great benefit. When we have so great ease, where is our acknowledgment of it ? Not only do the most part not make use of their ease, but by the contrair, employ their ease and prosperity in serving of Satan and their lusts. But they who want health, and find pain, would count ease or relenting a great benefit.

2. We see that God gives ease in this life, because it is short and troublesome ; he mixes pain with ease, so that the gout, gravel, throb but whiles, not always, that they may get leave to cry to God. The pains of a woman’s birth come in showers, that the silly creature may draw the breath when ease is given, and not tync\* her wits by constant growing pain. Employ the time of ease well, which is given as a breathing time in pain, for ease when it comes, makes pain more tolerable.

\* Lose.

3. "To the land of darkness."—See what death is in itself, when it is looked on by itself. It is a land of darkness; for man lieth in the earth, and his bowels are filled with worms, his bones turn into dust, his flesh into slime, and so death is a comfortless estate in itself.

4. Therefore death is not to be looked on by itself, but with the seasoning of it, and in Christ the through-get\* of it; for the grave is ugly when it is not looked on in Christ. Look to it in Christ, that as he came through death, so may we; and be acquaint with death not as a foe, but as a friend.

Now ye have heard Job's exercise and weakness, to teach you to wrestle and handle your weapons, and when ye break out, shortly to gather yourself; for the shorter way ye go afield, ye will win the sooner hame.

\* Thoroughfare.

SERMONS PREACHED AT A COMMUNION IN  
IRVINE.

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SERMON I.

AT A HUMILIATION BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

ZEPHANIAH III. 1, 2.

“1. Woe to her that is filthy and polluted, woe to the robbing city!

“2. She heard not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the Lord; she drew not near to her God.”

To bring Jerusalem to repentance, the prophet is sent forth to denounce woe and wrath against it. He charges Jerusalem with seven iniquities; three of them against the law, and four against the gospel, or offer of mercy.

The first sin against the law he charges the city with, is gluttony, for he says, “Woe to thee, filthy;” or rather (as the original has it) the gluttonous or gorb.\* city; for the word that is here used, is borrowed from the crop of a fowl, or the gut-pock of a fish: whereby he reproveth all sort of pleasure-taking in pampering of the body in meat, drink, gorgeous apparel, unlawful lusts, and intemperance. The next

\* Voracious.

sin against the law, is their profaning and abusing of religion, the handling of holy things with unhal-  
lowed hands; and therefore he calls them a polluted  
or profane city. The third sin he lays to their charge,  
is oppression;—deceiving one another, greedy ex-  
torting, and taking vantage one of another; therefore  
he calls them the oppressing city.

Their sins against the gospel or offer of mercy were  
these: First, The not obeying of the Lord's voice;  
for when the Lord sent his messengers to them, ris-  
ing up early, and sending his servants the prophets  
to them, and told them their faults, they obeyed not  
the Lord's voice. The next sin against the offer of  
mercy, is their not receiving of correction, not amend-  
ing of their life, by the Lord's fatherly rods. Their  
third sin against the offer of mercy, is that when the  
Lord made fair promises and gracious, they trusted  
him not, and cared not for his promises. Their fourth  
sin against the offer of mercy was, that the Lord drew  
near to them, but they refused to have communion  
with him; they would not draw near to him. Which  
sins against the law and offer of mercy, when they  
are joined together, are layed forth here as the just  
reasons of the denouncing woe—woe for gluttony, woe  
for profaning God's ordinances, woe for injury to  
their neighbour, woe for not obeying God's voice,  
woe for not amending by corrections, woe for not  
trusting in God, and woe for not drawing near him.

Against what place or people is this woe denounced?  
It is against Jerusalem, the holy city, the joy of the  
whole earth, the place of God on earth, the place of  
his habitation, of which he said, "This is the place  
of my rest for ever;"—the place where his laws and  
holy ordinances were taught and administrated; the

place where God was most glorified, where the most holy people were, and means to make men holy. Yet this city is charged with these seven faults :

1. With gluttony, for the prophet says, They drank their wine in bowls, they stretched themselves upon their beds of ivory, they sang unto viol and harp, and remembered not the affliction of Joseph ; they neighed after their neighbours' wives, as fed horses ; their eyes were full of adultery, their eyes were as windows to draw in whorish objects, they denied to themselves no unclean pleasures. 2. And for regard of God's holy ordinances, who but they?—for they gathered daily to the temple, offered their sacrifices, feasted before the Lord, and came to all the solemnities of the Lord's worship, and cried out, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!” Yet here they are called polluted ; their prayers, praises, sacrifices, hearing of the law, feasts, fasts, sabbath, whatever they meddled with are defiled. 3. They are charged with oppression in overreaching their neighbours, either by scant measure, false weight, unrighteous dealing, every one seeking a kinsh\* of his neighbour ; therefore the prophet says, “Let not a brother trust in a brother, for every brother will supplant.” They wronged one another either in body, goods, or good name, and he who might be most master overthrew his neighbour. Then these former sins are aggravated by eiking-to other four sins : 1. Disobeying of the advertisements of God's word—as if the Lord had said, I have no wyte† of their faults, neither I nor my servants ; for I told them their faults, directed them what they should do, and enjoined them to cease from profanity. 2.

\* Twist or wrench—an unfair advantage.

† Blame.

And besides directions, I have not spared sufficient rods, whereby they might well have known that I was angry at their faults: but for all my rods, they are never a whit the better. Whereto then should I strike them more? they will revolt still: albeit I make them sick with smiting, yet they will not return to me. 3. And yet farther to allure them to repent and turn in, I have made them many a fair promise; but they have neither believed me, nor judged me faithful, but counted me one who had said more than I was minded to perform. 4. And when yet I desired to cultivate their kindness, and drew warmly to them, fluttered over them, and gathered them in, as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, yet they would not; therefore woe unto them! Now, what a woe is this? It is not like man's woe, for when a man says "woe" unto himself, he acknowledges his desert; takes with his fault and deserved punishment, that he may eschew. But this woe is God's woe, even the broad curse of God, the terrifying curse of God, the woe that Christ denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees. This woe is the full vial of God's wrath, the malediction of God, the great curse of God, that cleaves to them for their pollution, profanity, oppression, and not obeying of God's voice. Let us make use of this.

DOCTRINE 1. This woe is denounced against Jerusalem, who thought no such thing her due, neither knew herself to be in so miserable a case, neither would take with it; and therefore the prophet Zephaniah must be sent with this message unto them, to tell them of their sin and misery, and charge them with it: for they thought they but used the creatures as they had liberty; and for God's ordinances, they

were diligent enough in the use of them ; and for their neighbours, they thought they but used them according to the law. Of this we learn, that they who profess themselves to be the people of God, may be lying in many gross sins, and yet pleasing themselves with their own estate ; not afraid of woe, nor aware of it, when it is very near hand them—as the kirks of Asia knew not their estate, till Christ caused write epistles to their ministers, and bade tell Ephesus that she was fallen from her first love ; Sardis, that she was a dead kirk, albeit she had a name that she was living ; Laodicea, that she was lukewarm, while as she thought herself rich and increased in all spiritual graces, and had need of nothing, when she was both poor, miserable, blind, and naked. For this cause the prophet is bidden lift up his voice like a trumpet, and tell Israel their sins, and Jacob their transgressions.

Seeing people may be lying under a sevenfold curse and not know of it, beware lest ye be blessing and securing yourselves as if all were well, when the curse and judgment of God is at hand. Agree with thy adversary quickly, lest he deliver thee to the judge, and thou be cast in prison, there to lie till thou pay the uttermost farthing. Examine matters well, because the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; who can know it ? There is no man will die on his own assize ; for if men say their prayers morning and evening, keep the kirk and solemn meetings, and can bide an inquest of their neighbours, they think all is well. But we may lie very near such persons ; therefore search yourselves, O nation not worthy to be beloved, lest ye be deceived, and carried on into a fool's paradise, trowing that all is right, when God shall ding you over the

stair of presumption. See then that ye be not hood-winked, and blindly led on to hell. Know what is your case; for it is a sore matter to be lying under wrath and at feud with God, and not to know it; to be dodged at the heels with heavy judgments, and not to be aware of it; and to have the spait\* of the Lord's fury coming over a high hill, running towards that road ye are walking in, to sweep you away ere ye perceive it. In time then examine yourself, and be wise.

DOCT. 2. We see it is God who knows Jerusalem's works, who censures them; which lets us see that it is not experience, or the conceit and estimation of the country, or the opinion that men have of themselves, that is the rule whereby God will have men tried; but he himself will judge men according to their works. Therefore He says to Laodicea, "I know thy works;" and in all these epistles, he takes a stile to himself, whereby he shews that his censure is according to the truth. He is the "Amen," and the "Faithful Witness;" his eyes "are as flaming fire;" and therefore he sends out his reproofs as men's dispositions require.

Seeing men's estate is not to be judged by their own estimation or by others', but according to the Lord's censure, let all try their carriage by that which he says of them in his word, and all the exercises of his worship. Speir at thy prayer, what devotion is in thee, and it will say, that thy prayers are so coldrife, that they cannot pierce up to heaven. Speir at thy conversation among men, what is thy estate, and it will tell thee it is coldrife, stubborn, implacable, cankered, unmerciful, and has a heart that cannot repent. Speir

\* Flood.

what love thou hast to God, and it will be told thee, thou can hear his name dishonoured, and care little for it; and thou cares not much how thy children and servants grow in knowledge, or fear of God. And if thy deeds speak thus, why art thou so secure? Why blessest thou thyself, when thy manners say, that the world is more in thy mind than heaven? when the account-book is more perused than the Bible? when the debts that are owing thee are more in thy mind, than the debts that thou art owing to God? What is the cause thou can comport with this estate? It is because Satan has no will that the dyvour\* read over the account-book, or the sinner examine his deeds; and men have no will their deeds be brought to the light, but hate the light because it reproves them. Or if the minister point at their faults, "Oh!" say they, "some men have told him yon of me; or he suspects me." But learn ye to examine yourselves as ye shall answer to God, and as ye would be set free that day when he shall judge the secrets of all hearts. Let not the complaint the Lord makes be made of you, "I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done" (Jer. viii. 6). Therefore every one of you speir at yourself, whereon your fear, love, care, grief, pleasure is most set; and if not on God, ye have reason to suspect yourself.

DOCT. 3. We see it is Jerusalem, the holy city, that is threatened; even the city which the Lord had raised out from among all the nations under heaven, to place his name there and privilege, above all others. It lets us see, that no profession or privilege external will save a people from woe, if they lie in any known

\* Bankrupt.

sin. Say not, "We have Abraham to our father; for out of these stones, God can raise up children to Abraham." Say not, "The temple of the Lord are we." Say not, We have the Bible, God's oracles, the truth truly preached; for all these privileges are nought, except ye amend your manners. What is it that Christ has a kirk here, a candlestick erected, a daily covered table with bread, a laver to wash in, if use be not made of these? Doubtless they shall draw on deeper curses, except ye study to approve your hearts to God in secret, and order your conversation among men. If this ye do not, God shall draw you out among hypocrites; he shall tirr\* the visorne off your faces, and shew your rottenness to man and angel. Are ye dearer to God than Ephesus, Corinth, Laodicea, Jerusalem, whom he overthrew for the abuse of their privileges? If he has done so to the green tree, what will he do to the withered? If such fair towns and countries have been thrown down, let not the sandy hillock of Irvine think to be spared; but that your frequent communions, preachings, and solemn meetings, shall draw on hotter wrath, except ye mend your manners. Your fair profession, coming to hear, and all your discharging outwardly of the exercises of God's worship, shall not save you from the judgments threatened from this place, except ye labour to be inwardly, that which ye make show of openly. If ye believe this, ye would take no rest till a new course were intended.

Let us come to particulars in the text :

1. "Woe to the filthy city."—This challenge for gluttony lets us see, that God requires sobriety and temperance of his people; that they would study to be masters over their lusts, and obtain victory over

\* Strip.

their appetites, and that the love of their belly make them not miscarry. Take heed lest at any time ye be oppressed with surfeiting, drunkenness, and the cares of this life, lest Christ come on you, like a thief in the night. At no time give your belly the will; drink not whereby your wits may be made to totter, let be to be beastly; study to sobriety. If ye had to do to speak to some great man, ye would be loath to drink mickle for marring of your wits. Far more, seeing ye are called to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, should ye not possess your vessels in holiness, and be moderate in meat, drink, and apparel? As pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, for the Lord allows enough that is lawful; why then should not unlawful things be spared? Therefore be moderate, and more given to feed and clothe the soul, than the body; to seek to do God's will, than your own.

2. We see that sin in man may so prevail, as to make man unclean, intemperate, and immoderate; and where this uncleanness and intemperance is, WOE is annexed to it. Woe to the gluttonous person who has a crop for all, and ingurgitates every thing! Woe to him who pleases himself, and fulfils his lusts, whose appetites make him draw on sin! The poor man will say, Where get I to waste or use intemperately? I answer, Thou moderatest in nothing if thou may get it; it is want of money makes thee spare, and when thou hast, thou usest it intemperately: thou art intemperate, who art discontent with thy estate, and would have more than God allows, and takest in more than enough when thou may spare it. Therefore, woe unto thee; fye upon these appetites that draw on the curse of God on soul and body! Woe to the unclean person, the fornicator, and adulterer! Woe to thee,

who art given to force and pamper thy belly ! Woe to the drunkard and tippler ! Woe to thee who art given to fleshly ease of body to the hurt of thy soul ! Woe to thee that art given to fleshly delights, contenting thyself with the sow's happiness, and despising the pearl hid in the field !

“ To the polluted.”—This woe against the profaners of religion and exercises of God's worship, lets us see that religion should be kept pure and clean, both for the matter and manner of it : it should be holily handled, the heart within being holy as the external carriage. This people thought the frequenting of religious exercises was enough to mend all their faults ; that the offering of incense and sacrifices appointed under the law, cleansed all their faults—as those men who now glut themselves in all sorts of sin, and come to the communion, thinking that a respite for all by-gones. But God calls such persons, profaners of religion. So then, when men lead an evil life, and amend not their manners, let them meddle with never so holy ordinances, they profane all. The unchaste, the intemperate, the malicious, the greedy, or the man that is given to any known sin, whatever point of religion he puts his hand to, he pollutes it, (Haggai ii. 14). He speirs, what if the unholy touch a holy thing, will the holy make the unholy clean ? no, but the unholy defiles the holy. And so they who are lying in sin, and come to preachings, prayers, fasts, communions, they defile all ; for to the unbelieving man, every thing is unclean, even his mind and his conscience are defiled. And to thee who pollutes all God's ordinances, woe is pronounced against thee : woe to thee for coming to preachings, prayers, communions ! If then thy coming to God's ordinances

make thee not better, they make thee worse: therefore study to be purged from every known sin, lest thou profane holy exercises; and that thou hast profaned them, ask mercy; run to the fountain, lest thou be casten out as an unclean thing.

“Woe to the oppressing city.”—This denouncing of woe against oppression, shews that God requires equitable and righteous dealing of neighbour with neighbour; that none should injure one another, but that men should live blamelessly and holy, under a holy Lawgiver. Here, is not only open oppression, but all sorts of injury, even that which is done under pretence of laws, forbidden. And where sin and temptation so prevail, as injuries mutual are done, there, woe is annexed. Therefore covet not that which is thy neighbours; deceive him not in weight, measure, price, bargain, neither take any unrighteous vantage; neither wrong thy neighbour in any sort, else woe to thee!

And now follow the sins against the mercies of God: “She obeyed not the voice,” (verse 2). This challenge for not obeying of the Lord’s voice, lets us see, that God uses not to condemn or denounce woe against a people, till first he have dealt with them in the voice of the word, in the mouths of his ministers and servants; albeit he uses not to warn those without the kirk, but by the voice of his creatures, the sun, the moon, summer, winter, fruitful seasons, and works of creation; and if they be not made wise by these, he cuts them off. But when his kirk fails, he warns them by the voice of his servants: he will do nothing, till he reveal it to his servants the prophets; God strikes not his people, till he warn them by his ministers; he quarrels them, threatens, and

denounces woe, ere he bring it on. Tak tent\* when ye hear your faults rebuked by the word, for the Lord will next debate the matter with rods. Wrath has been denounced from this place against all your sins ; therefore repent, and read out your own dittay:† indict yourselves before God, and reckon what ye have done in secret and openly : challenge yourselves in time, lest the threatened wrath overtake you.

We see here, albeit it be God's fashion to warn ere he strike, yet when warning is refused, the sin is the greater, and the woe is the heavier. He that hears his sin reprov'd, and hearkens not to the voice of the Lord to mend it, his sin is the greater, and woe the heavier. His sin and woe are bound on him by a double hand ; once because he sinned, another time because he was warned and went on—therefore a double woe.

“ Received not correction.”—We see that God with his word, useth to join his rod ; before he come on with his great judgments, he useth his fatherly rod. But when rods and corrections are not made use of, the sin is greater, and the woe is doubled.

APPLICATION TO IRVINE visited with many rods.—If when ye have been corrected in body, name, goods, souls, and have not mended, know that your sin is double, and your woe is double. As for thee who art corrected, and the dinneling‡ of the rod is yet in the flesh, and art studying to amend, I will not say that woe abides thee. But if thou hast been corrected, and art not like to amend, thou hast to fear that the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and thou shalt be cut down, and cast into the fire. A sore matter for a sinner to be corrected, and yet to go

\* Take heed. † Charge, indictment. ‡ Tingling.

light-farrand\* under it; that he will have his pleasure, strike God as he likes! Woe to that sinner!

“She trusted not in the Lord.”—This lets us see, that God uses to take an assay of his people by fair means, promises, and offers of mercy, goodness, and bounty, that they may put their trust in him; but when promises of grace to the soul, and benefits to the body prevail not, the sin is the more, and the woe doubled. How many promises have ye heard, and yet are not allured to trust in God, and to love him? Know therefore, that refused promises multiply woes.

“She drew not near to her God.”—This lets us see, that the Lord useth, besides the sending of his word, rods, and promises, to offer himself and his goodness, really and warmly to handle them by his benefits, comforts, and good deeds of all sorts. But when people refuse this communion with God, and give him not a kindly meeting, their sin is doubled, and so is the woe. God has drawn near you by his benefits and comforts of all sorts: look whether ye have drawn near him or no, and sought his kindness, or if ye have despised to seek fellowship with him. If so be, your sin and woe are doubled. Compare the two verses, and we see, the last four challenges are for the abuse of mercy, when there are but three challenges for the breach of the law—which lets us see, that the abuse of mercy deserves woe and heavier challenges, than the breach of the law. Filthiness, profanity, oppression, blasphemy, are great sins; but not obeying the voice of the Lord, not receiving correction, not trusting, and not drawing near to God, are greater sins, because the former are only breaches of the law, when the latter, are

\* With levity.

abuse and contempt of the remedy of the breach of the law.

That God challenges both for the breach of the law and abuse of mercy, we see, that the breach of the law and abuse of mercy go always together. If a professor sin against the one, needs must he sin against the other. When thy conscience challenges, it will challenge for both. But especially it will challenge for abuse of the gospel. It is said, that God shall come in flaming fire, and take vengeance on them that obey not the gospel, (2 Thess. i. 8). The gospel commands to believe and repent: when this is disobeyed, God is mistrusted, and his offer of mercy despised; therefore the sin of professors is greater than the sin of Sodom. Lastly, if these seven sins be causes of woe, then the doing of the contrair, is eschewing of woe. If woe abides the intemperate glutton, then no woe to the temperate who give not their flesh the will. If woe be to the polluter of God's worship, then reverend using of the Lord's ordinances delivers from woe. If woe be to the oppressor, then no woe to the meek, courteous, equitable dealer. If woe to not obeying God's voice, then hearing of the Lord's voice, taking with correction, trusting in God, and drawing near him, deliver both from the sin and woe.

That thou may eschew this woe, hearken to the voice of the preacher; hear the sound of the rod, and Him that appointed it. Believe God's goodness, and receive his offers of mercy, and say with David, It is good for me to draw near to thee: I will seek fellowship with thee; that joy, peace, and refreshment which are to be found in thee: I will draw near thee in the use of all the means, that I may be free of this woe.

## SERMON

## FOR PREPARATION TO THE COMMUNION.

## 2 TIMOTHY II. 19.

“Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

WITH you of this congregation, I have ado for the present ; as for others, let them take a share, as God’s word is dealt. It is love to your souls, and a longing to see God’s work thriving amongst you, after so long labour, that makes me sharp upon you this evening, and to speak hard things against you. And now, I am sent forth to you with as hard and as comfortable a message as any,—a hard message to you who will not amend, but a sweet message to you who are begun to amend, or have a solid purpose to amend. As for you who will not amend, but will live on in your profanity, drunkenness, worldliness, malice, deceit, ambition, lechery, or in any known sin, I have a message to you this day, to tell you, that ye look like vessels of dishonour fitted for destruction, reprobate, whom God in his justice has rejected, and all the ministers in the earth shall not be able to convert,—yea, albeit Christ himself should preach, a reprobate villain would not be converted,—such as those to whom Christ spake in the days of his flesh, and told them, that they were not of his sheep ; for if they had been his sheep, he says, they would have heard his voice : but they, like stinking gaits,\* went away their own way, that they might perish as filthy beasts So say I to you,

\* Goats.

If ye will not turn in to God, he shall turn you from him, when he separates the sheep from the goats; ye shall be ranked on his left hand, and he shall say to you, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not." For ye have said, as those who said, "Make the Holy One of Israel to cease from us, for we will have none of his ways:" so says this hypocritical generation, "that draw near me with their lips when their hearts are far away."

The apostle knowing that such persons are rejected, and that there are others, who for the time, having made defection (such as Hymeneus and Philetus), were a great stumbling-block to the people of God; therefore, in this text, he sets himself to guard those who were not fallen, by laying before them the doctrine of election and reprobation, and the use that should be made thereof. Therefore, I wish that ye would take heed to that which shall be spoken, if possibly the wicked may yet forsake his way, that he may return unto the Lord.

1. He tells us, that Hymeneus and Philetus, counterfeit hypocrites, had brought in damnable doctrine, saying that the resurrection is past, and so had overthrown the faith of some; whom, when the people perceived them to have made defection, might conclude and say, We see the faith of some is overthrown; why may it not fall forth so with us also? Yon men were teachers of others, yet are they fallen from Christ, and have drawn others after them: why may not all fall away as they? The apostle answers, Be not troubled for that; let those that are fallen from Christ go, for none of his will leave him; if they will go, let them go, for Christ may well spare them, they were never his. But never one of the elect shall go from

him, for the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knows who are his; and Let every one that names the name of Christ, depart from iniquity." God's elect will be kept fast, go away who will; and they will so adhere to Christ, as they will depart from iniquity.

Yet will they object and say, Those who are fallen from Christ, were once in the kirk as well as we; they came to the word and sacraments, they were teachers of others; and now, they are fallen into Satan's net,—what if we fall also? He answers, A fair matter that they were in the kirk, and came to preachings and communions, and now are gone to sorrow: know ye not, that as in a great man's house there are some vessels to honour made of gold and silver, for honourable uses, and some vessels of wood and earth, to carry out the refuse and jugs\* of the house; so in the house of God, or bosom of the kirk, as there are vessels of honourable elect souls, so are there filthy vessels, that are filled with the devil's refuse, and their own reprobate persons full of rottenness and uncleanness. Let such filthy buckets and their dirt go away together out of God's house, and let nobody bemoan them. Why should any body be troubled to see such filthy vessels flung to the door?

Yet they may object and say, How shall we be made sure that we shall not follow their course? He answers, "If a man purge himself from those, he shall be a vessel of honour," (verse 21); as if he said, Ye are now in the high-gate; hold you in it; purge yourselves from such errors and uncleanness; keep you well from their fashions, and here I make a promise to you, in the name of the Lord, that ye shall be ves-

\* Stale liquids.

sels of honour kept for your Lord's use, and prepared for every good work : let the filthy be filthy still, and hypocrites, like Judas, go to their place, but ye who are holy, be holy still.

Hereof we gather first, in general, that the doctrine of election and reprobation, is a doctrine which may be safely taught and propounded unto people, without fear of any inconvenience that men would pretend, albeit men use to say, it is a doctrine hard, and should not be meddled with ; because (say they) it makes some men despair, and others become careless what they do. I answer, Let God make an answer for his own doctrine, who has commanded us to teach it, and has pointed it out in so many places of scripture. If some abuse this doctrine to licentiousness, and others desperately run away from God, let them answer for it ; to themselves be it said. Yet God has propounded this doctrine in such indefinite terms, that no particular person can conclude from anything that God has said, that he is a reprobate ; but he has told plainly, that of those who come to him, he will put no man away, he will shoot out none that will stay in his house. Therefore, the apostle says boldly, the election obtained it, and the rest were blinded ; and that the god of this world has blinded the eyes of many, who will not receive the gospel. Or would Christ have propounded this doctrine, if it had been dangerous ? Therefore, we oppose to such carnal men, secure sleepers in sin, this doctrine of Christ and his apostles, clearly set down in scripture. Let none take offence at this doctrine, for Christ's sheep will hear his voice, and if any will startle away, let them go.

2. The apostle brings out this doctrine of election and reprobation, when filthy errors are risen in the

kirk, that he may stint the defection of those who are not fallen, and make such a bar betwixt them who are fallen, and those who are standing; which lets us see, that this doctrine of election and reprobation, is a profitable and useful doctrine, and brings special vantage to the godly. It is a fence to keep them from defection, a guard to hold them from stumbling when they see others fall, a bar to hold them from running after a godless world; for, take away this doctrine, men would be atheists. If men saw, that the doctrine of Christ's gospel makes no reformation in the life of professors, they might think and say, that Christianity is no religion, seeing the professors of it are of such lewd lives. But this doctrine tells, that God's elect will be loath to make the gospel be evil spoken of by their lewd conversation; albeit the bulk of deboshed titular Christians do so, the elect will leave their courses, let the reprobate abuse religion as they will. And what are the elect the worse, that there be reprobates in the kirk?—as he were an evil-skilled husbandman, who should take a whole bing of stuff\* to be chaff, because there is much chaff in it; for the owner of it might say, albeit he counted it but chaff, he will not sell it good cheap; for let his bing go through wind, and the chaff shed from the corn, then the corn shall kythe. So in Christ's kirk, albeit there appear to be many more hypocrites than true Christians, yet when the fan comes to winnow, the chaff shall blow away, and Christ shall gather the good stuff in the girnel,† and burn the chaff in unquenchable fire. Be not troubled then, albeit many knaves haunt the kirk and communions, and the next day turn them to the devil's service; for such fashions keep up their own

\* Heap of grain.

† Granary.

damnation, and the means that help others to heaven, help them to hell. Let none scaur\* because they see some fall away, but rather be confirmed by their fall: for as a goldsmith, out of ten pounds of drossy metal, can purge out that which is good, and cast the rest away, so God, for one or two pickles of good stuff, will purge it, and cast away the bad.

3. This doctrine is full of comfort, strength, and encouragement to those who are walking in a good way, and aiming to seek God as they should: for if they be purging themselves from the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, to them it is an evidence that God has chosen them, albeit thousands should be reprobates beside them; for if their ear be nailed to the post of the Lord's door, and they be contented to be his servants for ever, when they hear the doctrine of election and reprobation, and find themselves in the elect's way, it is to them a sweet leaning-stock, to rest and comfort them.

4. When we consider the apostle's drift, who condemns those for reprobates who are fallen away, and uses the doctrine of election and reprobation as a means to hold the rest from falling, we see, that this doctrine is a strong attractive, to draw back those who are fallen in error or vice, that they lie not in it; for this doctrine forces such men to turn to God, or else, to take on the name of reprobates, and to blot out their own name out of the book of life. It is a doctrine meet for this age, wherein God is mocked and blasphemed by the lewd lives of those who are called Christians, to tell them, that they must either turn in to God, or take home with them those black tidings, that they are vessels of dishonour, fitted for destruction

\* Take fright.

This doctrine is very needful to put men to their pre-emptours;\* and yet it condemns not a man to hell presently, who is lying in sin; but it tells him, that there are some elect, who will come home, and some reprobate, who will not come home. Therefore, if a man be elect, albeit for the time he be a deboshed villain, this doctrine will serve him for the third and last summons: for when he hears that he must either quit his sinful courses, or have no portion with God, presently he must resolve, I will renounce my old lovers, my uncleanness, drunkenness, worldliness, and turn in to God, and seek a covering to hide my vile-ness, and a garment to make me beautiful in the eyes of God. This effect will this doctrine work in the elect.

5. This doctrine is only terrible to those who are walking in an evil way, and will not quit it; who, like swine, delight in filthiness, and will not come out of it; as the adulterer or drunkard, who will come to the communion, and back again to his adultery, and again to the communion, and back again to his adultery. For such a person, it were better for him never to have known the way of righteousness, than after having known, to turn away from the holy commandment. Dearly shall he buy his coming to the communion: better to him to have eaten a fiery coal, than to have eaten the consecrated elements. If any, for that is said, will go on desperately in Cain his way, renounce God and Christ, having preferred their pleasures to him, or with Esau, selling their birth-right for pottage, who can hinder them to go to destruction? But let us tell them their doom ere they go. Because they will not quit their sins, the curse

\* Decisions.

of God go with them, for they have chosen to mock God, and dare him to his face, living like filthy dogs; therefore, like dogs, let them be debarred out of New Jerusalem. So, then, this doctrine serves out those who will not come to Christ, and will not quit the devil's service; and it is a doctrine to keep all who have a sore heart for sin; for when others go on in their filthiness, as vessels of dishonour, sealing their own damnation in their bosom, they are preserved, as vessels of honour for their master's use. This in general: now we come to particulars in the text.

“Nevertheless”—that is, for all the falling away of some, and drawing away of other some, yet the foundation of the Lord stands sure; the Lord knows who are his. We see, that albeit there be some in the kirk who depart from the faith and grounds of religion, and by their fall draw others after them, yet the elect shall be preserved, albeit not from falling, yet from falling away; albeit a thousand filthy bodies in a congregation, who call themselves Christians, and live like Pagans, should run away, yet not one shall run away, but shall be severed from them. Let them go; God shall tine\* nothing when they are gone; there shall not be a penny or jewel less in his treasury, a sheep fewer in his fold, nor a pickle of stuff less in his garner.

When some see men of lewd lives in the kirk, taking liberty to fall out into the common gross evils of the land, they think they may do as they, and then say, God forbid that all such men go to hell—will any man say, that all proud folk, all greedy folk, all malicious folk will be damned? We answer, whatever they be that live in known sin, albeit they were never

\* Lose

so many, shall be damned ; for Tophet is large and wide ; there is fire and brimstone enough, God has wrath enough ; and if there be not room enough in hell, let them be laid on heaps above other, or bound together like bunches of thorns, to burn all together.

2. “ The foundation of the Lord stands.”—Ye will say, How do the elect stand, when others fall ? I answer, The ground of that standing is the foundation of the word, which lets us see, that it is nothing in the elect’s self that makes them stand when others fall, but the sure laid foundation of God’s work in them makes them stand. God’s free love and grace, his solid purpose and decree, brought them to Christ, keeps them in Christ, and lets them not fall into deadly errors : it is God that holds their hearts in the hatred of sin, when others hunt after it. It is not their own strength that makes them stand ; but their strength is of the Lord, who has builded them on his unalterable grace and love, and has fore-ordained them to be partakers of his kingdom.

If any run not away with the wicked, let them thank God, and not their own strength ; for it is the strong arm of God’s decree that holds them, and the mighty pull of his hand that pulls them from among the wicked. Thank God that thy heart scunneth\* at the conversation of the wicked, and that Satan’s chain is loosed from thy neck—that they are strong in sin, the devil and they going on together, when God’s strength has made thee to stand.

3. The apostle propounds here the doctrine of election, to fortify them who are not departed from the faith. We see, that those who stand when others fall, and depart not when others make defection, may

\* Nauseates.

take that standing for an evidence of their election, and lean to it, as a strong ground of their strengthening, to keep them from staggering when others fall: for if they stand when others fall, it is a token God has begun, even here, to separate the sheep from the goats, the metal from the dross, and the chaff from the corn; and if he has done so now, much more hereafter. It is, because God has tane pleasure in thee, to make thee confirmed to his son Christ. Take it then for a token of election, and lean upon it as a rock. Let it be an encouragement for farther well-doing, yea, a confirmation of thee in the way, and a thing to make thee bless God that thou standest when others fall. Even now, the Lord's fan is in his hand by the preaching of the word, severing the good from the bad; and the preaching is like the wap\* of a fan, to tell the one that they are chaff, and the other that they are corn, but with this difference—albeit the preaching call the one chaff, and the other corn, yet that which is chaff now, may become corn, by earnest prayer and dealing with God to make a change: but not hereafter. Here is a vantage by the fanning of the word: that which is on the worst side, may be brought to the best. But hereafter, that is, after this life, that which is set apart to the worst side, shall not come to the best; they who are ranked to the left hand, shall not come to the right. Therefore I wish, that those who now, by the preaching of the word, find themselves to be chaff, would pray to God, to fill their chaff with some good stuff; for he can put his Spirit in them, to make of chaff, corn; for if he was able to cause the rod which was in Aaron's hand, bud, flourish, and bring forth ripe almonds in

\* Sweep.

one night, why can he not make of chaff, corn ? Therefore call upon him that he may change thee.

4. "Having this seal."—He takes a comparison from things kept under lock and key ; or things stamped with a seal, which men would have closed and confirmed. It lets us see, that all the elect are under God's great seal and sure custody, reserved for himself ; and their election is a secret thing kept up with God from the world, and from the elect themselves, till he be pleased to reveal it. Seldom are the elect revealed to the world, albeit in due time he will reveal it to themselves, so as he will make them cry, "Abba, Father," and make his Spirit bear witness to their spirits, that they are the children of God : he seals them to the day of redemption.

If election be a thing sealed and secret, let none unreverently break up the Lord's seal : but if ye would know it, know it the way that God has ordained, and wait for his revealing of it. This I speak, to reprove those who will not serve God, till he reveal to them whether they are elect or not. I tell them it is a wrong question at the first : for first, they must set them to do God's bidding, and then, speir if they be elected ; but use not preposterous haste to break up God's seal and coffers, till he like. It is not for the profane to win in upon God's counsel : the secret of the Lord is revealed to them who fear him ; it is the pure in heart that see God. If then thou would know God's love and purpose about thee, purge thine heart ; for the love of sin must be out, ere the love of God be shewn. If thou scrape not out of thy heart the love of sin, thou shalt never read thy name written in the book of life truly.

5. "The Lord knoweth who are his."—Here is the seal of the ministry of election; and it lets us see, that God has chosen a number to himself out of the world, to be his peculiar people, to whom he will shew mercy, reveal and communicate himself, and take for his inheritance. These He knows for his; others he knows not, for they are of their father the devil, and his will they do. As for His own, he will purge them, and make them zealous of well-doing, when others run to the devil. That he says God knows them, it is not only that he is at a point with himself about them, or knows their number and name, what they are, what they were, and what they will be; but also, he knows them, while he sets his eye of pity, care, love upon them, and his good hand to preserve them; he knows when they were born, when they will die; he knows them, while he calls them to his kingdom both of grace and glory; he knows them, when it was agreed betwixt him and his Son about the price of their redemption, when he gave them to Christ, and Christ took in hand to satisfy for them; he knows them whom he called according to his purpose, when he gave them saving faith, and his Holy Spirit to dwell in them; he knows them from his first purpose about them, to the last perfecting of them in glory; he knows them, by loving them, approving them, keeping them [that they fall not, and when they fall, to raise them up again. All is concluded with him, from his first foresight and falling in love with them; and he still keeps them, and preserves them, for he is stronger than all, and none shall be able to reave them out of his hand.

"And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."—Thou wilt say, I wot

well God knows all his own ; but what wot I, if he knows me for one of them ? Here a mark to know,— Let him that names the name of the Lord, depart from iniquity. That he puts this for one part of the seal, it lets us see, that the matter of election is not so secret, that God has given no revelation of it. Some evidences may be of it, both to a man's self and others. A man's election may be evidenced to the kirk, but more powerfully to a man's self ; and possibly the Lord will not reveal to others such a man's election, but he will tell a man himself, and so fill him with the sense and assurance of his favour, that from the spirit of adoption he will cry, “ Abba, Father !” with a good heart ; and God again will acknowledge him for his child : which makes sweet embracement betwixt the soul and God ; and the soul heartily blesses God, and magnifies him, when it perceives what he has done for it.

*Question.* What then is the mark of the seal of election ? *Answer.* So far as it may be seen of men, it has two parts—calling upon, or naming of Jesus, which also includes depending upon him, and believing in him, or adhering to him—and departing from iniquity. Then we see, that the seal of the elect has two sides ; the one is read of God, the other toward us, is read of us. The side toward God is, that he knows who are his : he knows whom he has loved, and fore-ordained for heaven ; and the side of the seal which is toward us is, “ Let every one that names the name of Jesus, depart from iniquity.” And as in a common or ordinarily current coin of money, if ye let a man see the one side of it, he can readily tell what is on the other side of it, so, in this seal, he who knows the one side, will also know the other ; for God has

no adulterate or false coin as uses to be among men, but if any can find that they adhere to Jesus and depart from iniquity on the one side, they may be sure to find that God has elected them on the other side. Whosoever thou art that believest Christ, and adherest to him, and art daily more and more shedding\* from sin, mayest conclude thou art an elect.

If adherence to Jesus and departing from iniquity do evidence election both to the world and a man's own soul, then the soul that wants these two, can have no comfort: they who have not fled to Christ, and have not put the back of their hand to sin, want the comfort of election. I dare not say, they are not elected, for God can change a filthy sinner into a washen saint. But I dare to say, while a soul is separate from Christ, and adheres to sin, that soul can have no comfort in election, nor yet say that it is elected. If thou then would be out of the black band and rank of reprobates, haste in to Christ, and from sin, as thou would be free of hell and damnation. Haste thee from the service of thy old lusts and lovers, and come in to Christ, if thou would eschew that dreary sentence, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Haste, I say, in time, for thou hast too long dwelt in the tents of Kedar: get thee speedily from the tents of these wicked men; turn, and seek the living God.

"Let depart."—He says not, *has* departed, but *let* them depart, by way of command. This presupposes, that elect souls are not yet departed from the way of sin and death. It lets us see, that all who lie in sin be reprobates for the most part: yet it is possible

\* Parting.

that some elect souls may be sticking in sin, and living an evil life, who will turn quickly; and therefore it is not a mark of reprobation to be in the estate of sin, for one may come out of that estate. An elect may be lying as deep in the devil's service as a reprobate; but incontinent he will haste from that estate.

“Let depart” shews, that there are none departed from iniquity, but they must depart farther, and never return again to it, if they would have the comfort of election. So, then, the elect soul may not do as it likes. By this, Satan deceives many, making them trow they are elect, and so cannot fall away, and so may do what they like; and makes them trow they are elected, because after the committing of grievous sins, they have gotten a wound of conscience, and have thrust out some tears for sin, being forced, by the gnawing of their conscience, to take with their faults. On finding this, they trow they are elected; and being elected, must remain so, and so may take on a new lease of sin. But I say, many a Pagan has repented thus far; for the Pagans had fears or terrors of conscience that did chase them from their sins, which fears being ceased, they ran back to sin. Even so, thou who sayest thou hast repented all thy villanies, and yet returnest again, and hardenest thyself more, wilt thou call that repentance? No, for albeit God took instruments that he had tane thee in the fang,\* yet I speir, where is thy new life? Therefore resolve upon a new life: depart from iniquity, or count not thyself an elect; for Christ leaves his blood to no sow to wash in, to go back to the puddle: but having your garments clean, be loath to defile them.

Mark the order here: 1. Name,—the LORD. 2.

\* Fact, deed.

Then,—DEPART. By naming of Jesus, is meant coming to him, and believing in him; professing him, worshipping, and taking him for your master. And depart from sin. We see then, we must first be joined to Christ, come to him, believe in him, and possess him, before we can depart from iniquity; for how shall we either get strength or feet to flee from sin, till we come to Christ? Who shall loose our chains and fetters, or who shall cleanse us, and make us new? Must not fleeing and departing from sin, be from faith in Christ? Whatsoever is not from this fountain, is unclean. Let the vile who would be clean, go to Christ, and say, Draw me, we will run after thee; sever me from sin.

Verse 20. “But in a great house, there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.”—Ye will say, Is not that great dishonour to God, to have hypocrites and chaff always in his house? He answers, No, no more than it is dishonour to a great man, to have vessels of dishonour in his house, to carry out refuse and rubbish. In this comparison, that as a man has power to appoint the vessels of his house, some for honourable uses, some for sordid uses, so God in his house; and man takes also great authority over the creatures given to him, as God doth over men in the matter of election and reprobation. This being well weighed, would stop all men’s mouths from quarrelling God for electing some, and reprobating others. Man will say, Whereto Christian souls, to cast them into hell? I answer, Man, takes not God as great authority over the creatures, as the potter takes one piece of clay, and makes a vessel of it, and casts away another piece of clay?

And man saves the life of some of his beasts, and kills others: shall not God have as great liberty over his creatures, as man has over them? What the Lord doth in the matter of election and reprobation, he doth it justly; for he says to man, Leave thy sins, and come to me, and thou shalt get heaven. Man answers, I will not leave sin. Then says the Lord, Thou shalt go to hell. Is not this justice? From these words, no particular person can gather a mark of reprobation, or conclude that he is a reprobate; but contrarily, there is here a mark of election. Why then should any quarrel God, while he shews a possibility of election, and no mark of reprobation? Doth he not lay before all, life and death, and bids choose? And why then should any carp if thou canst not come to Him, and choice bade him draw thee, and he shall do it?

We see it is no dishonour to God nor his kirk, to have wicked hypocrites in the bosom of it; as it is no dishonour to a great man, to have vessels of dishonour in his house. We see, that God makes use of these hypocrites to purge the rest of his household, as vessels of dishonour to keep clean a great man's house: when they go out, the filth goes out with them. Hypocrites and filthy persons serve to make the rest honester and cleaner; for the sight of their filthiness makes God's children labour to purge themselves, and by their falls they are made wise, to stand the better. As to the wicked's abomination, it is their own, and the dishonour is their own; and when they go out of God's house, the filth goes out, so that God has no dishonour by them. Albeit God has letten them in to his kirk, yet they hurt not his kirk; but their falls make his children wise, for they say, I

am of the same stuff by nature; Lord, cleanse me. When they feel the stench of the wicked, they flee up to a higher house, and by all means seek to cleanse themselves. So God can make use of the wicked, albeit not for their own, yet for others' vantage.

*Question.* How shall I know whether I be a vessel of honour or dishonour? *Answer.* Look what stuff is in thee. Wherein delightest thou? If it be in the devil's vessels, worldliness, filthiness; if thy mind, will, affections, be upon the filthy puddle of the devil's abominations, thou art a vessel of dishonour. See what employment thou givest to the vessel of thy mind, heart, memory, and by that try thyself.

OBJECTION.—Are there any so clean and holy, that their mind and heart have no filthiness in them? *Answer.* I grant, the holiest have their own filth and dirtiness: but they are not vessels to keep still that dirtiness; their vessels are ordained to keep holiness, the graces and gifts of God's Spirit; and if dirtiness be gathered, they are daily washing again. Is thy ear then a conduit to bring in knowledge to thy mind; thy eye, tongue, heart, all to keep and vent holiness? Then thou art a vessel of honour: albeit thou contract filthiness, yet the Master of the household, Christ Jesus, has a care that thou be daily washen, and thy organ is sanctified for a holy use. But thou to whom holy discourses are a burden and weariness to hear, and in a conference of good things will be tickled with delight in songs and tales, thou lookest like a vessel of dishonour. Thou art like those of whom the prophet speaks; thy "throat is an open sepulchre;" the stench of thy oaths, blasphemy, lewd language, defiles all that are about thee, so that the godly soul is vexed with thee, as Lot was

in Sodom: thy deeds, plots, courses, desires, tell thou art a vessel of dishonour.

*Question.* But how shall I be made sure that I am one of that number? *Answer.* In the next verse (verse 21), the apostle gives thee a counsel what to do. Purge thyself from these, and thou shalt be a vessel of honour. So then, he that would be a vessel of honour, must purge himself. This is not, that any *can* purge himself, or that a tree of itself can bring out good fruit. But he shews here, what is required of us; and to shew the order of God's working, which is, to work in us, and by us, using us as instruments, albeit he be the chief doer of the work. The right use of this doctrine, is not to dispute what strength a man has to purge himself, but to set himself to the practice of it; not to be discouraged finding his own weakness, but to set to a reformation; and whatever estate he find himself in, set to, and purge himself: for if such be, he looks like a vessel of honour, for all holy vessels are making for some honourable use, and purging from dishonourable. Art thou then purging thyself from thy old deeds? crying with David, "Purge me with hyssop, cleanse me from my sins?" breaking thy heart for grieving the Holy One of Israel? thou carriest the mark of a vessel of honour.

"Sanctified for the Master's use."—The hypocrite or the foul vessel has this mark; whatever he doeth, it is all for his own ends, not to God, if he be not swearing, lying, drinking, &c. But if they be not for God's use, they are for dishonest uses: following of their lawful calling, working, ploughing, making merchandise, are all dishonest uses with them, for they do these to make themselves rich and honourable.

They are not done as service to God, therefore they are unclean; and to the unclean, all things are unclean: their eating, drinking, working, not being for God's use, are turned into sin. But the vessel of honour goes to the plough, and makes merchandise, for God's use; for albeit he might deceive in bargains, and so get gain, he will not, because he is for his Lord's use. He goes to the kirk, not to see and be seen, but to meet God in the assembly; he comes to the communion, to get the seal of God's love.

Let a man be what he may for the time bygane and present, yet if you fly to Jesus, seeking to be purged, come to Jesus, and be ranked the morn at the table, with the vessels of honour. Repent thy bygane misbehaviour; cast out jugs\* by confession; or rather, hold to the well of Christ's blood; to that clean water, and washing of his Spirit. Pray Christ to purge with his Spirit and with fire. If so thou wilt do, thou shalt be a sanctified vessel for the Lord's use. Either obey this doctrine, or carry with you the appearance of reprobation, and a forerunner of hell. Either live a clean life, or I debar you from the Lord's table. Fly both from evil company, vessels of dishonour, and eschew works of dishonesty; else quit you and God. Depart from foul company, and foul ways, as ye would not depart from God. To that God, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all praise and honour, for now and ever Amen.

\* Foul or stale water.

## SERMON III.

PREACHED ON THE FIRST COMMUNION SABBATH.

ISAIAH LII. 13, 14, 15.

“13. Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

“14. As many were astonished at thee ; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men :

“15. So shall he sprinkle many nations ; the kings shall shut their mouths at him : for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider.”

YE hear who are spoken to here. Yesterday, they were called “vessels of honour ;” and this day, they are called “bearers of the Lord’s vessels,” whom the prophet bids be clean. Those who then bore the Lord’s vessels, were the priests and Levites ; and now, all of us are made priests unto God the Father, through Christ, that we may daily offer up to him the sacrifices of prayers and praises ; all of us are now admitted to the altar of incense, to offer up our prayers and praises unto God. Therefore, as yesterday ye were charged to be clean vessels, under the pain of out-casting, so this day ye are exhorted to be clean, as holy priests admitted to the Lord’s temple, that ye may lay on the sacrifice on the altar, Christ Jesus ; ye are directed to separate yourselves from unclean thoughts, to depart from them, and to touch no unclean thing. Which lets us see, how one part of God’s word answers to another. Therefore out of both learn we to study to holiness. Let not the

mockers at godliness look to see God, or to get leave to come near his altar; yea, I debar all such mockers from the Lord's table, except they repent their mocking. But if any have had a sore heart, that they have been so blinded by Satan, as to lend their tongues to chace any away from God who would be at him—even such a villain being penitent, shall not be despised.

In the 12th verse, the Lord's people are bidden go out with displayed banner, not in haste, or as cowards; and the reason is given; Because the Lord will go before them in the vanguard, and behind them in the rearward, and shall so compass them, that they need to stand in awe, or be feared for none. Thus he would have them avowing their Lord, and boldly professing holiness; which reproves many who would be holy, and not let others wit of it. For here, command is given to go out boldly. That holiness is not kindly, that any is ashamed of; and if any will think shame of holiness, beware lest Christ think shame of them. Therefore say, Albeit I be not holy, yet I have a purpose to be holy, and my endeavours shall be that way: for what honour gets Christ, if thou be holy in hidlings? Therefore thou must honour him before the wicked world, and confess him before men, lest he disclaim thee one day.

Ye will say, How shall we win to holiness; how shall we get that banner holden out, avowing holiness, or get holiness wrought? The text that I have read, answers: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently." As if the Lord had said, Lo, I have given you a wise Captain and Master to go before you; he shall guide you prudently, or "he shall prosper," as the old translation has it. As canny wise men use to have success, so shall Christ have: therefore follow him at

the back, and he shall teach you to depart from the world, and from uncleanness; he shall teach you to avow holiness; he shall go before you, as the flower of the flock, or chief of the sheep, and ye may follow as lambs at his back; or as your Captain, and ye as soldiers ranked at his back.

“He shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high.”—That is, his kingdom and glory shall grow; honour, and dominion, and glory shall follow upon him: and if he be high and honourable, if we follow him we may be sure to get a share; for it is his honour, that they who follow him at the back, should do valiantly, tread their enemies under their feet, fight stoutly, and set their faces to the battle. And then, as Christ is exalted, so needs must his soldiers be: they must prove gallant men, and through him they must do valiantly. Albeit their enemies come about them like bees, yet in the name of the Lord they will destroy them all; they will be victors over sin, and Satan will be shortly trod under foot.

Then ye will speir, How shall Christ and his followers win to this high exaltation and glory? I answer out of the 14th verse, By sufferings. “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” That is, my Son will not get the victory good cheap; dear will it cost him; he will have a blackened, a blue, and a bloody face; his back, side, hands, feet, will be both blue and bloody, ere he get this victory; he will be so shamed, as never man was; he will be so shamefully handled, that it would make any man astonied, yea, affrighted to look upon him; he will be so disfigured with his own blood and blue strokes, that none will know his face, and never

man handled as he. And yet, for all these blue and bloody strokes, and hard and uncouth sufferings, ye shall get glory in the end : for by this blood, he shall sprinkle many nations ; his blood shall wash many a sinful soul ; many nations shall get good of the marring and spoiling of his face ; many souls shall he redeem by his blood. “ The kings shall shut their mouths at him,” that is, they shall count nothing of their crowns and glory, when they consider his, but shall cast all down at his feet. And the reason is, “ Because that which had not been told them shall they see.” When they shall see and hear of Christ’s glory, they shall reverence, admire, and subject themselves, stoop, and fall down before him (verse 15).

Here then those who will bear the vessels of the Lord, and deliver them off their hands with full weight, are directed, 1. To follow Christ ; 2. To consider his victory ; 3. His sufferings ; 4. His glory. Glorious things are spoken here of Christ, and hard to be believed. A fair banquet for feeding of hungry souls is set out in these words, bread enough here and to spare ; therefore crave appetite, that ye may be comforted and refreshed ; that ye may love your Lord and rejoice, giving praises unto the master of the feast, who of outlaws and rebels has brought you into his banquet, and ye who were afar off, and are made near by his blood.

1st, Hereafter that many glorious things are promised in this chapter, we are directed to behold Christ, God’s servant, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. It teaches us, in all the promises made by God, to cast our eye upon Christ, in whom they are all performed, and by whom they shall all be made good to us ; for he, as a wise tutor, has gotten all into his hand,

to give out to us. Thou would think thyself happy, if thou could get that promise applied, that thou shalt be made clean, and that thou shalt come before the Lord, as his High Priest, carrying his vessels, and be made holy, and avow holiness before men. But, lo, here a way to get it. Do look to Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. Take Christ in thy arms, and getting him, thou gettest all the promises for life, salvation, and glorification : and if thou forget the words of a promise that fits thy estate, cast thy eye upon Christ ; then dost thou fall upon the whole bundle of the promises, and out of them, missing the particular promise, thou cannot miss him. Come to him, then, and say, Lord Jesus, thou must perform this to me, for the Father has bidden me behold thee: he has told me, that he has given thee for a “ leader and witness to his people ;” that thou art his elect servant ; that thou art the surety of the covenant, which includes the whole promises : thou art cautioner both for God’s part and my part of the covenant ; therefore perform this promise of making me clean, bringing of me to the temple, making me holy, and giving me victory over my enemies. The Lord has said to me, Behold my servant ; and lo, thou pleasest me well, thou art of mine own flesh. I take thee for the cautioner : pay thy Father’s debt, and perform all that he has promised.

*2dly*, We see that the kirk is here directed to help herself in the sight of all her difficulties and impossibilities, by beholding Christ ; for this avowing of holiness, and coming forth in the sight of adversaries, imports a thousand difficulties, bogles\* to scare and chase away from taking hold of the promise ; against

\* Bugbears.

which, we are bidden to behold Christ. Which teaches us to meet all difficulties and obstacles that would hinder us to embrace the promises, by opposing Christ to all, for overcoming of all difficulties within or without; from heaven, hell, or the world, or our own corruptions. Look to Christ, and be victorious over all; give Christ thy hand, and he shall cause thee leap over all impediments; yea, he shall give thee wings, to mount up as eagles over all.

*3dly*, “Behold my servant, he shall deal prudently.” —We see the whole matter is put over upon Christ, as the doer of all. Albeit we be bidden depart, come out, and touch no unclean thing, yet He must do all the work; which lets us see, that whatever we are bidden do, Christ has gotten commission to do it; the Father has committed us to him, and of him he will crave account. Therefore Christ must perform that which concerns us; he must do all our works; for the whole company of the elect are given to him, to be framed and fashioned by him, as clay into the hands of the potter, to make us clean vessels; as rebels to ransom, enemies to reconcile, sheep to make account of; for he has all by head and by mark, and he says, “This is the will of Him that sent me, that of these that he has given me, I should lose none.” Then, say to Christ, Do thou what I am bidden do: let thy Spirit work all my works, for thou hast power. When the Lord urges thee to do that thou cannot, then urge thou Christ the cautioner to do it. And yet, Christ has not gotten the work to do, as if thou would so take the sluggard’s ease: for thou wilt find it no small work, to waken up thy Lord; thou wilt be put to cry, with Peter, “Save, master, I perish!” Many questions will be ere he answer, or let wit he hears; therefore

still must we put upon him, and urge him till he rise. Therefore be not idle, but still urge Christ, for it is well-pleasing to him. Urge him to present thee spotless and blameless before the Father, for that is his office, and it is his desire to do it; he is God's servant furnished to do it; he only can deal prudently. Give Him no rest, till he make peace betwixt the Father and thee, till he sanctify thee, and make the renovation solid, for this is the right way, by importunate and earnest dealing; and never lose grips with him, till he do all that we should do.

*4thly*, Ye will say, How will the Father be pleased, when I urge Christ to do what he bids me do? God says, "Behold my servant;" which lets us see, that the work of our redemption is a special point of service to God, wherewith he is well pleased. God counts it good service in his Son, to bring home rebels; and Christ has humbled himself to the estate of a servant, that he may help the helpless, and restore rebels; and nothing will be counted service, but that which he doeth. In this service His soul delights; and he is well pleased that Christ do all the work in our name, that he sanctify us and save us, and we draw life from him. Say not then, What am I if the justice of God will let me get good of Christ, who am guilty of so many sins? Seeing God has bidden thee behold his Servant, and so it is service done to God, when any good is done to thee, doubt nothing but God's good will towards thee is the same with Christ's; for the Father is pleased with all with whom the Son is pleased. Therefore Christ says, "If any love me, my Father loves him, and I and my Father will come, and make our abode with him."

If God count it good service in his Son to help

home souls, then study ye to do the like service, helping home one another. Let Andrew tell Philip and Nathaniel, masters study to draw home their children and servants; strengthen and encourage one another in the country where ye dwell. But specially this is the minister's duty, because he is set apart for the work. It is his duty to shew Israel their sins; and,

*5thly*, While he shews Christ's prudent dealing, his success and exaltation, he lets us see that Christ is thoroughly furnished and qualified for the service committed to him: for if he be a prudent dealer, then he is wise; if he get victory and glory, than he is strong. It lets us see, that Christ is well qualified for his employment; that there is nothing requisite for the work, but he has it; in his person, office, endowments, he is fully furnished in every thing, that he may be a meet Mediator. He is the Son of God and Son of man, and so a fit man, being sib\* both to God and us. If we be blind, he is a prophet to instruct and teach, and reveal God's will unto us; and if we have enemies, he is a king, to controul them, and rule over all our adversaries with a rod of iron; if we be cursed and filthy, he is a priest to bless us. And for his endowments, he has gotten the Spirit without measure, that out of his fulness we may all receive, and grace for grace; he has wisdom, strength, and ability to do all our work.

So then, we may lippen† our soul upon him, and we may be sure, nothing committed to him shall fall through his fingers; no burden how heavy soever laid on him, shall fall, because of the weight of it; nothing shall be forgot for want of memory. Albeit there were never so many floating on the water ready

\* Of kin.

† Entrust.

to perish, he can help all ; for he has large arms to spread over them all at once, so as no other man can do ; he can help and hoist up all their heads at once above the water. Then, let us sit down under his shadow ; and if we want light and comfort, come, and get all supplied in him, for he is fully qualified in all.

*6thly*, He may be able enough to do all I need ; but what know I, if he be willing to employ his wisdom and strength for me ? *Answer*—He not only has wisdom and strength, but he will deal prudently ; or as the other translation has it, he will prosper, and have success. He shall both deal prudently and prosperously ; he shall leave no strength, wisdom, or any sort of qualification he has, unemployed, that may further the mark. So then we see, there is great canniness and prudent convoy in the Mediator, to further the service he has tane in hand. He foresees all the impediments in his way, and all the inconveniences that can mar the work of man's salvation. Not a wound any of his soldiers gets, but he has convenient salve for it ; no adversary, but he knows how to encounter and meet him ; in a word, there is nothing from eternity to eternity, but he has convoyed all prudently.

Let us shew some points of his prudence :

1. He has the justice of God to encounter with— it shall want nothing. For if it be said, before we be reconciled or get heaven, a just God must be satisfied, our prudent and cautious Lord answers, “ Sacrifices and oblations wouldst thou not, but a body hast thou formed unto me : behold, I come, in the volume of thy book it is written of me, to do thy will, O Lord.” If these men cannot win to heaven till thy justice be satisfied, behold I am come to satisfy

it. And yet the Lord's mercy shall have as great place as it pleases ; for he deals so prudently, that he makes mercy and justice kiss each other. Mercy is letten run like a river, and justice is satisfied—is not that prudent and canny dealing ?

2. The law says, Well, I will take satisfaction of Christ for byganes ; but what obedience shall I have for time to come ? Shall those whom Christ has redeemed, be permitted to break me for time to come ? Prudent Christ answers, “ What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” Here, prudent dealing, that while as the law before could get nothing but punishment for the breach of it, now, it gets full obedience of us by Christ ; for Christ came not to abolish the law, but to fulfil the law ; he came only to abolish the  *cursing*  part of it, but to establish the  *obeying*  part of it.

3. In comes Satan the jailer, and death with him, and flies upon Christ to get him overthrown : but prudent and cautious Christ destroyed him who had the power of death ; by the means of death, he overcomes him who had the power of death, and says, O death, I will be thy death ! so death lies down in the grave, and all his die, and lie down with him. Thus Satan thinks to get him holden, but he could not be holden of the dolours of death ; therefore he rises, and breaks an opening with him through death—as Samson, he takes away the ports and bars of death, and has left death neither door nor lock to hold us in. Herein is prudence.

4. See his prudent dealing in his coming into the

world. He comes not with pomp or show, but in humble wise. "Behold, your king comes, meek and lowly, riding on an ass's colt." Albeit he was a great king, yet oftentimes he went on foot; and when he rode, it was on a laigh\* beast, that any might have stood beside him, and rounded their petition in his ear, as he rode.

5. Prudent dealing in sending forth of his gospel to win home souls. He takes not thunder and fire; but silly weak men, with his word in their mouth, the rod of Zion, and by that dings down proud hearts, and allures others: he puts his heavenly treasure in earthen vessels, and lets them carry it, and takes the glory to himself; he puts up the sceptre of his kingdom in these weak men's mouths.

6. He gives unto kings no occasion of eye-sore, or envying of his kingdom; he gives his ministers neither crowns nor lands, but only bids to give the workman his wages, and to let him that feeds the flock, eat of the milk—as much as to uphold meat and maintenance to his servants. Is not this great prudence, that he troubles not the kings and nobles of the land with his kingdom on earth; for all his office-bearers must be every man's servant? This made Paul to say, "We are your servants, whether Paul, Cephas, or Apollos; all is yours, and ye are Christ's." His kingdom is not of this world, but a spiritual kingdom.

7 He deals so prudently, that the mouth of the reprobate shall be stopped, and have no just quarrel for their condemnation: for either he sends his gospel to them, and so, invites them to repentance; or he makes them know his goodness by fruitful seasons, summer and winter, and use of all his good creatures.

\* Low, short-sized.

If they will not make use of these, let them wyte\* themselves : they shall be found to have in themselves the cause of their own damnation ; and if some of them grow wicked by hearing of the word, what wyte has Christ ?

8. Great prudence in giving out his doctrine (as ye heard yesterday) while he tells, some are elect vessels of honour, some are rejected vessels of dishonour : for by this peremptory doctrine, he forces the elect to quit their sins, and come in, that they may be vessels of honour ; and propounds his doctrines so, that none in themselves shall find a mark of reprobation, who desire to quit their sins, and come to him : how filthy soever, if they come, he will cleanse them. His doctrine is so wise, that it shall hurt none that would be at him ; but it strikes against those who will not quit their sins.

9. Prudent dealing—the elect's pride may be laid, and they so handled, that they may neither misken God nor themselves ; for still they are made to see their sinfulness, wants, and unworthiness, that they may have his sufferings in high estimation, as their main refuge.

10. Prudent dealing in urging all to believe, and yet he keeps in his own hand the dispensation of sense and comfort ; bids them believe, and yet keeps back the comfort of believing, till they vomit out their sins.

11. Prudent dealing, to call his children to peace, joy, and comfort, and yet fill their flesh with sore burdens, and lay on heavy crosses, lest they debord ; † whereby he comforts their souls, as he is sure also to have their flesh mortified. If he lift them up in himself, he puts them as low as hell in themselves :

\* Blame.

† Go to excess.

he lets them not sink into trouble for fault of comforts, nor yet lets them misken him for fault of crosses ; he fills them with comfort, and makes them shed tears for affliction.

12. Great prudence to make a man righteous, and yet that righteousness not to be in himself, nor yet to be of his own keeping. Prudent dealing, to send forth ministers to preach, and dispense heavenly mysteries, and yet to keep the seal in his own hand : for Paul may plant, Apollos water, but God gives the increase ; so, none may lean upon the minister for the blessing.

13. Great prudence to forgive sin, and yet still hold us crying, Lord, forgive us our sins !

14. Still feeding with food that endures to life eternal, and yet still keeps us hungry for it ; holding our mouths to the well, and yet still thirsty.

15. Exalting his own above principalities, powers, crosses, and yet laying them exceedingly low in the sight and sense of their sins : heartily and warmly comforting and refreshing them, making their bed in sickness, and yet keeping them humble, so that the heartier he, the humbler they ; quietly and cannily sliding in consolations into their hearts when none know of it, for his voice is not heard in the streets—still keeping a covered table with rich delicates in the souls of his own, and none know of it, for strangers meddle not with their joy.

I have here told you some part of Christ's prudent and wise dealing ; but it is a deep which cannot be sounded, for even the angels stoop down, to learn his wisdom and prudence. Of the kirk, they wonder at the wisdom of the cross, that by death, so many should be brought to life ; by his shame, there should come so much glory ; by abasing him down to the death,

so many should be brought to heaven; by his becoming cursed, so many should be blessed. This wisdom and prudence cannot be told, therefore I leave it, as a thing that cannot be reached unto. But I would ye should make some use of it; that is, when the work of Christ is not such as ye would have it, then suspect deeper wisdom in it than ye can see; for herein stands his wise and prudent dealing, to dispose to every one's estate according as their case requires. For if he have ado with a thrawn\* knotty piece of work, he drives a hard wedge; if he have ado with one that is stubborn, he takes a baton; if with one whose root is fastened in the earth, he takes a sharp knife to cut these roots—if he have a heavy heart, he comforts; lays on such a weight as he overweighs not; lifts up, but not over high; so that every thing is done in wisdom, due time, measure, manner, and might. Therefore thou who wilt say, Alas! I have gotten no good of communion this day; I miss the comfort of it;—fool! I tell thee, if thou got it in the kirk, thou could not contain thyself, but would burst out in the sight of all that look; therefore thy wise and prudent Lord is keeping it for thee, to give in some secret place, where none shall see, or hear, or envy thee.

*7thly*, That the word signifies also “to prosper.” We see that Christ's prudence is so perfect, that nothing he takes in hand shall misgive, or be marred; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He will do nothing needlessly and superfluously, nor leave anything undone that should be done. The booty or prey he comes to take, he shall carry it with him; the soul that he intends to convert, he shall bring it in due

\* Twisted, gnarled.

season : he shall call, draw, direct, admonish, rebuke, comfort, and make that soul hear a voice behind it, "This is the way, walk in it." If the soul that He would convert, will not be won by the word, he will use a rod ; if the rod do it not, he will hound out the devil, to bark and chase in, but yet he has him so muzzled that he cannot bite. He will overcome the most hard heart, and take in the strongest hold : he will use violence, while he will stand at the door and knock ; and whiles he will so brainge,\* that he will lay the door on the floor. He will cast out the strongest devil, for he is that strong one who binds that strong man, and casts him out.

If so be he shall prosper in all he takes in hand, let none stand out against him, but yield in time ; for if you delay, it is for a mischief to your own head. He will put you under iron harrows, and make you know, that it is an evil and bitter thing to depart away from him. Delay not, lest for a moment's pleasure, ye undergo eternal pain ; and know, that when ye are come in to Him, he shall keep and preserve you, for none shall reave any of his sheep out of his hand, neither shall be able to seduce his elect. Albeit they be weak, yet he is strong, full of grace and understanding. I know, says Paul, that he will keep that which I have committed to him.

*Sthly*, "He shall be exalted."—Three words are used in the translation here, but all of them have the same force ; but it had been best translated, to say, "He shall be high ;" which lets us see, that the prudent dealing of Christ is such, as shall bring him great glory, so that his kingdom and glory shall still grow. For his subjects shall be still increased, and never one

\* Beat with violence.

that comes in shall die: he shall rule in the midst of his enemies, and turn in greatest foes, and make them friends. His glory shall be high, so very high, that all kinds of glory that can be thought upon shall be his; it shall fill hell, earth, and heaven. With his Father, he shall be exalted among his foes, in the sight of his subjects in this world, at the death of his own, and at the day of judgment; he shall be glorious, who will, who will not. He shall have glory in heaven, for he has gotten a name above all names, that at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, both in heaven and earth. Angels, principalities, powers, are made subject to the low man, Christ Jesus, and the angels hold their standing of him: he shall have glory with his Father, for he sits down at his right hand, and it is no robbery for him to be counted equal with God. He shall have glory in hell, for upon the cross, he triumphed over all the powers in hell: he makes Satan fall from heaven like lightning, he robs him of his armour, and inspraith;\* the devils stand in awe of him, and tremble, and come out of men at his bidding, and he makes them acknowledge him. He has glory in earth, for when he shews his justice, the most wicked will acknowledge him; Belshazzer shall tremble, and his joints shall shake. He shall reign in the midst of his enemies. If briars and thorns will rise up against Him, he will go through them. What mountain so high, that shall not fall down before Zerubbabel? It is His glory, that if his gospel softens not, it hardens more; and that those who will not come in to him, should be shot far away from him; that those who will not take heaven, should be thrust into hell. "Bring hither," says he,

\* Furniture, household goods.

“those my enemies, that would not I should reign over them, that I may slay them.” That lecherous body\* who preferred his lusts to me, that greedy worldly body who made gold his god, let his name be written in the earth.

He has also glory among his own, which is the glory wherein he most delights. The crown that his mother made him, the crown of king Solomon, in the day of his espousals, this is the glory which his kirk gives him ; for when they come and crave of him strength, grace, or mercy, he gives it, and they give him glory : they fall into new sins, he pardons and washes, and they give him glory : when they are in bands, he delivers them, as David, “when the bands of hell took hold of me, He delivered ;” therefore he says, “what shall I render unto thee?” And if any will give Him glory for peace, direction, comfort, and liberty to cry, “Abba, Father!” he will give them yet greater cause to give him glory, when he leads them into the palace of his Father, to see that glory which he had with him, before the world was. He gets glory of his own, when their souls are loosed from their bodies, and they are brought to the spirits of just men made perfect ; and glory, when both soul and body are joined and brought to heaven ; and glory at the day of judgment, when all meet him in the clouds, and thence are tane up to heaven, and there get leave to look upon, and speak to him, and sacrifice songs of praise to him. What glory must that be, when a shout of all saved souls praising him shall be raised, that shall never have an end, when they shall have nothing to do, but to sing Hallelujah for ever ? In a word, all Christ’s matters bring him glory, for his wisdom is such, as all of them bring him glory.

\* Person.

Verse 14. "As many were astonished."—This follows the way of his coming to glory. It is by sufferings. He must lout laigh,\* ere he win so high; he must be abased, ere he win to this glory. We see then, there is a necessity that Christ must first suffer, and then enter into glory; therefore, he said to his disciples, that they were dull and slow to believe; and rebukes them, that they knew not that he behoved first to suffer, and then enter into glory. These his sufferings, were the way to satisfy the law, and remove the curse of it; and, seeing he took on our debt, he behoved also to take on our punishment. By this, all the scandal of Christ's cross is removed; for when we see, that all that Christ suffered, was a concluded matter betwixt the Father and him, and that he was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world, if it was fore-agreed betwixt him and the Father, we have no reason to stumble at his sufferings.

"His visage was more marred."—That is, He was an overset† man with the greatness of his sufferings, and his glory was laid by; he was emptied of strength; the buffets and knocks that were laid on his lean face, raised colours on him; the blood that ran down upon it, with the pricks of thorns from his head, marred his face, so that he was without form or beauty; a soldier's pie‡ was put upon him, and they mocked him. He was so poor, that he had not whereon to lay his head; his body so lean, that one might have told all his ribs; his face spitted on and buffeted, and they said, "Behold your king!" his beard plucked out. More than any man's was his humiliation, deeper than any man's his misery, for who ever so trod on as he? Who ever was so abused before a

\* Stoop low.

† Overpowered.

‡ Cloak.

judgment-seat as he? The soldiers struck him, and the judge reprov'd it not; all men forsook him, even his own disciples,—not a friend to speak a word for him, not a cup of water to refresh him.

“Astonished at thee.”—Christ’s sufferings astonished the beholders, for they thought he suffered such things, that might put them in doubt if he was that which he called himself. They thought him a man smitten and plagued of God; they think with themselves, Can this be the King of Glory, who is thus shamefully used? Can this be the Redeemer of the world, who is thus bound with cords? Yea, it was a sword through his heart, when his mother thought with herself, Can this be he of whom the angel said to me, Thou shalt conceive and bring forth a son, and he shall be called the Son of the Highest, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end? When she sees his sufferings, she is astonished, and made to question if it be he: his plague was so uncouth,\* that the disciples were astonished and fled. Whereof we learn, that Christ’s sufferings being seen, will yet astonish carnal reason; for would it not astonish any, that the God of glory should take on the imputation of man’s sin, the fault and punishment of it, and to take on the curse of the law, and the Father’s wrath? Would it not astonish any, that the Word of life, the Upholder of all things, should be so weak, as that he could not bear the tree of the cross, but there must be one gotten to help him? And yet, at the same time, by his power, he was upholding heaven and earth! Thus, he who was God of glory, should be tirred† naked, and exposed to shame, albeit he dark-

\* Strange.

† Stripped.

ened the sun for a covering to hide it ; that he should not find so much among men, as to give him a drink of water, when he is suffering for men ; yea, instead of pity, they mock him, and say, “ If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross,” and so, would have had him desert the work of their redemption.

In the celebration of the sacrament this day, we are met for the commemoration of these sufferings ; and He will have us at this time to remember what he suffered for us, to breed in us love to him, faith in him, and to cast out sin. Then, behold this day the Lord of life a slain man ; him who was higher than the angels, lower than any man, made a worm and not a man, trodden on by men. Behold Him in whom a number of contraries are conjoined : the holiest, and the guiltiest ; the Lord of life, and yet dying ; the Prince of glory, and yet exposed to greatest shame ; the feeder and clother of all, and yet hungry, thirsty, and tirred naked : the Commander of heaven and earth getting neither room in heaven nor earth, but lifted up betwixt them on the cross, God, the devils, and men against him—and yet Redeemer of all !

“ At thee.”—Before, he was speaking to us, and now the person is changed, and he speaks to Christ, to let us see that the promises of the gospel belong to Christ as to us ; to Christ as the head, to us as the members ; to him, that he may have the glory ; to us, that we may get the good of them : first to him, then through him, to us—all spoken to him, promised to him, done to him, and all for our cause : whether God strike Christ or comfort him. all is for our cause.

“ So shall he sprinkle many nations.”—Here we see, how deep soever Christ’s humiliation was, as high

was his exaltation ; and as he was humbled low, so he gets his glory in sprinkling many nations. He took on pain and grief, but he wist well wherefore he did it. He suffered his head to be pricked with thorns, to save us from the pricking wrath of God ; he suffered himself to be spitten on, to cleanse us ; to be cursed, that we might be blessed ; he suffered the pains of hell, to bring us to heaven. In a word, He is sure, whatever pain and torment came upon him, it is holden off us ; for he said, when he was tane in the garden, “ If ye take me, let these go their way.” If He be condemned, it is that we may be absolved ; if he die, it is that we may get life : if he lie in the grave, rise, ascend, all is for us ; and because Christ humbled himself for us thus, therefore God gave him a name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Yea, His glory goes farther than his shame or his humiliation, for his shame and humiliation were but for a short time, and before some few thousands who saw him crucified ; but his glory and exaltation are before many nations, and for ever. His glory is not like the glory of other kings, for kings reign not over their subjects after their death ; but Christ’s glory is, that he reigns over all while they live and after death, and makes his subjects still to live, and is still gathering more.

2. This sprinkling of many nations is a prophecy this day fulfilled in our eyes, for we are one of these nations.

3. This sprinkling is an action of the ceremonial law, which was used for two ends ; for sealing of the covenant betwixt God and man, and for cleansing ; therefore Moses sprinkled the books of the testimony. So Christ sprinkles, by making a covenant, and re-

counting us to the Father, and sprinkles many foul souls. The marring of his face, makes many a fair face; the spitting and defiling of Christ's visage, clears many a down-casten conscience, and washes many a foul face. Therefore he says, "Let me hear thy voice, and see thy face, for thy voice is pleasant, and thy countenance is comely."

4. "Kings shall shut their mouths"—or stop their mouths, that is, they shall lay their hands upon their mouths, stoop, be silent, wonder, adore, reverence, and subject themselves to Christ, casting down their sceptres at his feet, when they consider his wisdom, power, and glory. It lets us see, that when worldly glory comes in the sight of Christ's spiritual glory, it thinks shame of itself, adheres to his, and wonders at it. So is it with worldly power and wisdom. Then, fall thou down before Christ, and give him glory, when thou countest nothing of thy own at the sight of his.

5. That kings are said to do thus, we see, as it is a glorious thing to Christ when any come in to him, so, especially, when those who have worldly honour, wealth, and dignity. Thou in high place, who hast gotten grace to abase thyself, it is a token to thee that thou hast seen, and shalt see the King in his glory. That thou mayest think little of thy high place, look up to Christ's glory; then, albeit thou wert descended of the blood royal, thou wouldst not glory, because of another higher generation to be sought after.

6. "That which had not been told, they see."—The apostle (Rom. x. 12) explains this of the preaching of the gospel to them who had not heard of it; whereof we learn, that the preaching of the gospel is the way that Christ glorifies himself, amplifies his kingdom, subdues many kings and kingdoms, and

sprinkles many nations. Seek then to be sprinkled and sanctified by the gospel, and preaching of the word, for by the word, the virtue of the blood and Spirit comes.

7. "That which they had not heard shall they consider."—We see, that where the gospel is powerfully preached, and fruitfully heard, men get their eyes open, to see the thing they never saw the like of it, and wisdom to consider the thing they never took up. If then the glory and wisdom of Christ shine in thy eyes, it is a token thou hast seen, heard, and considered what thou knew not before.

8. "Stop their mouths, for they shall see."—This lets us see, that a man cannot submit to Christ, believe in him, adhere to him, nor wonder at his wisdom, power, and goodness, till first he see and consider. Beg open eyes to see the Lord's suffering for you.

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#### SERMON IV.

##### ON THE MONDAY FOR DIRECTION.

ISAIAH XLI. 14, 15.

"14. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

"15. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp thrashing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thrash the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff."

GOD has threatened the overthrow of idolaters in the former part of the chapter. Now, in this part of the chapter, he promises to do for his true worshippers: that he shall uphold them, deliver them,

comfort them, and make them victorious over all their enemies, whom here he comprises under the name of adversaries great and small, the angels that lay about them.

The encouragement given to them in the former verses, is repeated and insisted on by a promise of help (verse 14), and of strength and victory over their enemies (verses 15, 16); and if need be, a drink of comfort is promised in their conflict, or time of sore trouble (verse 17). It is very fit ye should hear this, because ye are called to war; ye must fight, before ye can win to heaven. There is more ado, than to say your prayers, come to the kirk, and haunt communions; for ye must run, strike, fight, and endure sore bickerings, before the crown be gotten: there is no coming to heaven with ease; but as Christ came to heaven, so must all his, through many tribulations and conflicts. But this generation has neither will to work nor fight. Their hearts faint, their feeble knees bow, and their hands refuse to work: men sleep over in security, and dream of the fool's paradise. They come to the communion to be cleansed, and fall over again, as swine in the mire; as if the coming to the communion, were like the confessions made to the Papist priests, and their absolutions. But the truth must be told. Now ye have a fight, a task-work, ere ye get the treasure; a hell to go past, ere ye win to heaven. As ye have reconciliation to seek with God, so ye have the devil and the world to encounter with; therefore ye have need to guard yourselves upon all hands.

After that here a Redeemer is promised to Jacob, he is encouraged to go in the battle: "Fear not, thou worm Jacob." As if he said, I know thee; thou

hast a great turn to do, and thou art but a feeble and feeble thing, in the sense of thy own weakness ; yet, fear not, for I will help thee ; I thy Redeemer have said it. Oh, but what shall I do with my strong and mighty adversaries, that are like mountains and hills, says Jacob ? The Lord answers, Thou shalt thrash them like a sheaf of corn, and winnow them like chaff. I shall make thee like a new-shod flail with iron, or like a cast wheel shod with iron nails, that takes the corn off the straw ; so that albeit thy great enemies be as mountains, and thy smaller enemies as hills, yet I shall cause thee beat them as a sheaf of corn, that lies still before thee, and stirs not, till thou be tired of thrashing, and then casts it by thee, and when it is thrashed, is letten through the wind ; and thy enemies shall be carried away, as chaff, that is carried out of the gate with the wind. Now, because Jacob might think this an easy victory over his enemies, therefore he tells them in the next words, that for all this, he will be put to a sore pinch, before this victory be gotten in his sense ; for it is a victory that is given to faith, and faith will count no more of all enemies, the devil, the world, and the man's own corruptions, than a thrasher will count of a corn-sheaf, when it looks to the Lord's strength. But before sense get the victory, there will be a strange warsling,\* sweating, and breathing, and such a weariness in the conflict, that there must needs be a drink of consolation. Therefore the Lord says, "When the poor and needy want water, and their tongue fails them for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, and will not forsake them." I know, that for all the notable victory I have promised, Jacob will

\* Wrestling.

faint; but when Jacob is so forfoughten,\* that he cannot cry to me for a drink, yet I will hear him when his tongue cannot speak, when he cannot pray for swooning. I will hear him, and not forsake him. This for the meaning of the words: let us now make our use of them.

1. "Fear not."—When God is speaking to Jacob and all his redeemed people, he says, "Fear not;" which lets us see, that God knows that his people are very feeble and weak in the time of trouble, trial, and tentation, and how much we are taken up with the sight of impediments, when we meet them in a strait. We are all stout enough till we be assayed, but when we have adversaries to meet with, and see their strength, then our hearts fall into the dust. We are like Peter, who minted to his Master on the water; but when the wind blows, and he is like to sink, he cries, "Help, Master, I perish!" I grant, it is no wonder the godly be feeble, they carry about with them so great misbelief and manifold corruptions; yet let them know, that know their fears.

2. "Fear not, saith the Lord."—We see there is no remedy for this fear, but the voice and word of the Lord: only his encouragement can hold us up in the conflict, and no created power will bear us up in the strait; his voice and word give boldness and courage. Thou who art afraid to win through thy sins, and get impediments overcome, take the Lord's word, the staff of his promise, to strengthen; let this word dwell plentifully in thee. Take the sword of the Spirit, the leg-harness of resolution, the helmet of hope, spoken of in Ephesians vi., and guard thyself with the word on all quarters.

\* Over-fought, exhausted with fighting.

3. In the 10th verse he forbids Jacob to fear, and here he repeats it. It lets us see, that as nothing is more comfortable to a feeble or fleyed\* soul, than the word, so the Lord is not sparing of it, but large in his promises; he repeats, inculcates, and strengthens in the battle. So that look how feared we are, and what need we have of encouragements, as ready is the Lord to lay them to our hand, both to rebuke our fear, and strengthen our doubtings: the same he does to Joshua, to Jeremiah, and here, to Jacob.

4. "Thou worm Jacob."—Jacob a worm, 1. For weakness; for what is all flesh but grass, when it is to stand out against the fight of sin, the devil, and the wrath of God? 2. A worm, for unworthiness; for of all the unworthy things that can be, a piece of sinful flesh is the unworthiest, for sin disgraces the substance wherein it is. 3. A worm, for afflictions and dejection in the mire of trouble; therefore in the twenty-second Psalm, "I am a worm, and no man;" for it is a worm's place to be trodden in the dirt; so was Jacob, an offcast for reproach and affliction. 4. A worm, because of the sense of his own naughtiness; a worm in his own estimation, because of his present estate: he was so cast down and discouraged in himself, that he cannot lift up himself: as David, "I am a beast before thee;" (Psalm lxxiii.), I have not the understanding of a man. Here then God, by calling Jacob a worm, recounts all his objections which might mar his faith; as if he said, Jacob, I know well enough that thy weakness, unworthiness, thy afflictions, and estimation thou hast of thyself, make thee fear; yet fear not for all that. It lets us see that the consciousness of these, which is in man, makes him to fear, and breaks

\* Frightened.

his courage. Try what makes thee fear that thou shalt not win to heaven. I speak to thee who art yoked in the battle, and not to lazy sluggards that love to loiter and sleep, and will not wrestle against sin, Satan, and their own corruptions; but to the striver I speak. What makes thee afraid? I am weak, sayest thou? and I have many strong enemies and adversaries, sins, and God's hand is upon me day and night, both upon body and soul; I am unworthy to stand upon God's earth; I am sensible of my own naughtiness, and see reasons anew within me. I answer, All is true that thou sayest; but God who knows all this, saith, "Fear not, thou worm." Therefore seeing God knows thy weakness, unworthiness, and every evil that troubles thee, and meets them with, "Fear not," take heart—strive on!

5. "Fear not, thou worm."—Jacob, I know thou art a worm, and what are the causes of thy fear; and yet, that hinders me not to make unto thee a promise of help against all thy enemies. It lets us see, seeing our weakness, unworthiness, troubles, and sense of want, hinder not God to make a promise, neither should they hinder us to embrace the promise. If we find ourselves unworthy worms, and God saying, Fear not, then we should answer God and say, Albeit, Lord, I be a weak unworthy worm, and my foes many and strong, yet seeing thou forbiddest me to fear, I will not look to my own dead body; but having thy promises, as Abraham did, I will give glory to thee in believing, whatever unlikelihood be in the performance of the promise: I will not look to these, but to thee who promisest.

Seeing God knows the fears, and passes them by, let us pass them by also; for he makes not a promise

for any thing in us, but for his own love and grace's sake. Therefore let us not, because of our unworthiness, refuse the promise. If it were for our deservings, it were not grace. Labour indeed to be sensible of thy weakness and unworthiness, that thou may the better take the promise. But, alas! the most part are not sensible of their weakness and unworthiness, but bolster up themselves with some one conceit or other; as those who say to Christ, Hast thou not taught in our streets? have we not eaten and drunken at thy table? have we not preached in thy name? And yet, never have their hearts been brought low in the sense of their own vileness and unworthiness; never have they searched the reason of their fears or doubts. To whom, I say, it is very needful that they should search the causes of fear and doubting to work humiliation: for fault of this, sin is not repented, God's anger not laid to heart; Hell is not seen gaping for them, but rather a covenant is made with hell, and an agreement with death. I grant, we should not doubt nor fear, yet we should dispute about the causes of fear and doubting; and if any dispute not, let them beware, lest they presume. Therefore hear the reasons of the doubts of thy conscience; and if thy conscience say thou hast reason to fear and doubt, because thou art a rotten hypocrite, thou hast never pannelled thyself before God's tribunal for sin; thou hast never tane pains to know if thou art reconciled to God; thou hast never been loathsome in thine own eyes; and for thy prayers, hearing, reading, communicating, they have been but counterfeit. When the conscience thus accuses, thou hast reason to dispute the matter; thou must either grant or deny, when thou art challenged on true

grounds ; and if after dispute and trial, all be found true that is said, hast thou not reason to be humbled, and to fall down, and mourn in the sense of thy own vileness ? And yet, I would not that in this estate thou should quit the promise, but keep the promise fast in thy hand, and mournfully cry to God with thy mouth for pardon. Jacob, thou seest he is a worm, weak and unworthy in his own sense ; and therefore if thou be unhumbled, proud, and beastly, thou hast cause to fear and doubt. If thou hast never doubted, beware lest thou never believed. Yet I condemn not doubting, but I speir, How came thou to that strength of faith, that never staggered, or felt thy own weakness ? Beware thou be not circumvented by the devil's delusions ! Therefore rest not without impregnable grounds : labour first for a sense of unworthiness and wretchedness, and grip the promise of not fearing. Here I have digressed a little ; but men's sluggishness and customary slighting of God's service, makes me fear, that many a one is not prepared for the consolation that here is offered to such as are become worms, as Jacob, in their own estimation. However, the point I had in hand is this, that unworthiness should not hinder to take the promise, seeing it hinders not God to make it.

6. "Worm Jacob, I will help thee."—Wherefore will God help Jacob ? because Jacob is a worm, and cannot help himself. It lets us see, that our weakness and unworthiness are so far from hindering God to make the promise, that it is the very fit disposition in us to stir him up to make a promise to help us. And therefore the feeling of our weakness and unworthiness should be so far from hindering us to believe the promise, as it should further us to it, for now

we are in the disposition fittest to receive God's help ; our sense of the need of help, should make us take it ; the sense of our weakness and wants should make us apply the comforts. This is a notable mean to overcome Satan and all our doubts. When Satan says, Thou art vile, weak, and unworthy, therefore thou cannot lay hold on God's promise ; retort his argument and say, that by the contrair, because thou art so, thou shouldst lay hold. If he say, Will such a feckless weak wretch as thou stand out against principalities and powers ; or will such a worm as thou bear out the godliness thou aimest at ? thou mayest answer, Because God has letten me see my weakness, worthlessness, and sinfulness, and in sense of it has laid me low, flat along upon the earth, as a worm, therefore I know he will help and regard me in this low estate.

7. We see, albeit Jacob be a worm, he must neither misken himself, nor refuse God's offer of help ; but his disposition must be such, as he must both be abased in himself, and confident in God ; for these two stand well together. Take it for a proof of faith, when thou findest both ; and of presumption, when these two are parted. If thou believe in God, and see not thyself a worm, thou but presumest ; but if the sense of thy vileness make thee tremble to draw near to God, and yet thou comest, then art thou confident. Let this then be the trial of thy faith : Art thou vile, wretched, and unworthy in thyself, and at the same time believest in God ?—thou hast found faith, for the composition of the sanctuary is in the ointment. Now, to deny thyself, is to be a worm ; and to lean on Christ is to believe in him. That this may be done, hold the glass of the law still before thine

eyes, to shew thy vileness, and so be humble ; and Christ shining in the mirror of the gospel, his goodness and pity to make thee believe : look on both, and thou shalt be borne through.

8. “ I will help thee,”—the reason why Jacob should not fear : it lets us see, that having God on our side, we should not fear. If God be with us, who can be against us ? Follow God at the back, and in his name pray, work ; then, fear not, for he will be with thee in all thy ways, to guide thee, and has given his angels charge over thee, that thou should not dash thy foot against a stone. Hold thyself in God’s ways, and at his back, and fear nothing.

9. While God says he will help Jacob, it imports, that he will join himself with Jacob in the turn ; for He sayeth not simply, I will do the turn, but, I will help thee to it. It is true, God doeth the turn ; but he doeth it by Jacob. It lets us see, that God so works his work in all his own, as that they are not idle, but are employed in the work. This reproves those who will lay over the matter upon God, and go idle themselves. It is true, all we can do is nought ; yet by us as instruments, God will work. It reproves those who say, It is bootless for me to mint for repentance, till God please to give me it ; and so they will follow the devil’s service merrily : and if God will fetch them from the devil’s back, it is well ; if he will not, they cannot help it. But I tell these men, they tempt God never to give them repentance. If they will have mastery of their sinful corruptions, they must put to their own hand to the fight, and they must bear some bulk with God. Albeit they can neither fight nor work, when God bids them put out their hand to do any thing, they must assay to put it, albeit

it be lame and sick, and so, God shall furnish strength to do the work ; for God, and any thing with him, are strong enough against all our foes, spiritual and bodily.

10. "Says the Lord, and thy Redeemer."—He puts three styles to the promise, or shews his great name in three titles, that Jacob may know who is the promise-maker ; for it is a matter of singular worth, to know what he is who makes a promise, and the promise takes worth from him who makes it ; and so, we see the Lord sets to his name to the promise, and subscribes it. See here God's willingness to make his kirk believe his promises : he not only makes promises, but subscribes, and would have us to read his written subscription at the end of the promise. He is not like the false flatterers in the world, that will make many fair promises, and when it comes to the subscribing or sealing, will draw back. But God both promises, and subscribes it in all his three styles ; the LORD, thy REDEEMER, the HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL. In all God's promises, read God's stamp and subscription, and when thou perceivest the promise to be his, distrust not : say not it will never be, call not his obligation in question, controul not his truth ; for that would crab\* an honest man, far more the God of truth.

11. These three styles, are God's name in three titles, which lets us see the distinct persons of the Trinity ; for here both the works of creation, redemption, and sanctification are clearly shewn ; whereby He lets us see, there is a consent given to this promise by all the three persons of the Trinity, and God is content that his great styles lie in pawn, till he per-

\* Offend.

form the promise he has made, that as he would give honour in these three styles, so shall he get it, in performing of this promise. Therefore when God lays his crown royal in pawn, his name Jehovah, having being of himself, and giving being unto all ; his name in redeeming us his people, his name of sanctifying them ; he intimates, that as he loves to be honoured in one and all of these styles, so shall he surely perform his promise ; and he will no more quit his being of himself, redeeming and sanctifying of his people, than he will quit the performance of his promise. Neither yet think, that there is a division among the persons of the Godhead, when a promise is made ; for when the Lord says it, it is the Redeemer says it, and the Holy One says it ; for He promises not that the Son knows not of ; for both their promises are one, their word and works are one to us.

Verse 15. “ Behold I will make thee a new thrashing instrument.” Here the Lord’s promise to make them strong against their adversaries. As a sheaf of corn is unable to resist the thrashing instrument, so shall their adversaries spiritual and temporal, compared to mountains and hills, be unable to resist them.

1. It lets us see, that the victory of God’s people over their enemies, looking to God their helper, is as easy, as the thrashing of a sheaf of corn. I say, it is easy to faith, albeit not to the flesh ; for the apostle Paul, when he looks to his flesh in his conflict, he says, “ O miserable man that I am ! who shall deliver me ?” But when it comes to faith, he says, “ I am persuaded that neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

There he thrashes all his enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and all that can be against him. And in the 118th Psalm, "They ran about me like bees, but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them all." For temptations come about him, like bees swarming upon all hands, and no place to fly to : but in the name of the Lord, that is, his faith looking to God, he will destroy them all. He only stands, and sees the salvation of the Lord ; holds on the whole armour of God, resists the devil, and he flies from him ; yea, no enemy, great or small, but faith in God makes them all fly.

2. "Thou shalt fan them."—We see Jacob's adversaries who were great like mountains, being thrashed and put to the wind : they seem strong and terrible, and he like a weak worm ; but from once they be holden to the wind of God's promise, they are blown away as chaff. It lets us see, that the godly seem weak, and their adversaries strong, before God put to his hand : but then, the godly seem strong, and their adversaries weak ; for when the devil's strength is compared to God's, it is but like chaff to the wind, or the forces of kings and potentates. Therefore the prophet says, "What art thou, who art afraid of man whose breath is in his nostrils, and forgettest the Lord his Maker ?" And David says, "I will not fear what flesh can do to me." This is after fainting. Therefore winnow all the doubts which arise from the strength of thy adversaries, and thine own weakness ; but see that thou winnow them at God's barn-door, in the sanctuary, as David in the 73d Psalm. When he had almost fallen at the sight of the prosperity of the wicked, he went to the sanctuary, and there he saw, they were set on slippery places, and horribly consumed in a moment.

3. “Thou shalt beat small”—and “the wind shall carry them.” They are something before God put to his hand—mountains and hills—and Jacob nothing: but from once God put to his hand, Jacob is strong and they are weak. So it is at this day with the kirk and her adversaries: that which was something is nothing, and nothing is by God’s hand become something. For who would have said, that the King of Sweden,\* when he came from home with six thousand men, when his enemies were six hundred thousand, should have done that which is done, but through God’s putting to of his hand. He has done great things.

4. We see, in God’s promises, it matters not what strength they have or want, to whom the promise is made, for the whole strength stands in the promise. And when God threatens, it matters not what strength be in the party threatened; for albeit they were as mountains, yet he who threatens, can make a worm thrash them; God’s flail can ding them all in dust. Look never how weak or how strong those are to whom God speaks, for the weak shall be strong, and the strong shall become weak.

“And thou shalt rejoice in the Lord.”—Jacob’s part of the battle is won, and now, God must have his victory. We see it is a part of the Lord’s honour, and our thankfulness, to rejoice in the Lord, when we have gotten victory. Has God promised that he will be our God, and renewed covenant with us, and communicated himself in the sacrament, and has done it? it is our part to rejoice, in testimony of our thankfulness.

2. He says, that worm Jacob shall rejoice, which

\* Gustavus Adolphus.

lets us see, that we may be a worm in our own sense, and yet rejoice in the Lord, and in him, triumph over all his enemies. These two stand well together, for we are bidden rejoice in trembling.

3. Rejoice, is for the time bygone and present, and glory is for the time to come; which lets us see, that the fruit or right use-making of our delivery past, is to make us rejoice for the present, and glory for the time to come. And indeed, the godly, if they will not look to themselves but to God, may rejoice for time bygone, and glory for time to come: they may boast themselves in God all the day long; they may not glory in their own strength or wisdom, but let him that glories, glory in the Lord: through him, they do valiantly. Albeit they have many strong foes, and great adversaries, yet God shall tramp them under foot, and rule over them with a rod of iron.

Verse 17. "When the poor and needy seek water." —This victory formerly promised, is yet not very easy to sense; for albeit faith may lay hold on this victory, yet flesh and sense will flag and fail, and be more worm-like and naughty before the battle be ended. Therefore a promise is here subjoined to such as in their own sense are weak in the conflict, that they shall get a drink of consolation. We see, whatever promise be made to God's children of victory over their foes, yet they may not think but to find great pain to the flesh, and sore and uncouth skirmishes; albeit faith get the victory easily, yet it is hard victory to the flesh. Wonder not to find it so that ye be like Elisha at Jordan, crying, Where is now the God of Elias? I am like to be overcome. In such straits as these, think not that God will fail in his promise.

*Question.* But how far may victory of faith be kept under in the flesh? *Answer.* Till one become poor and needy, fainting, forfoughten,\* and fallen by, and their tongue so failing, that they cannot seek a drink, yea, no water or drink of consolation at all, but debarred the sight of all comfort in the conflict; so deprived of all comfort, that their tongue is so far sealed, that they dare not say, God help me! or pant unto God. Think it no wonder when thou art thus borne down, and thy face thus rolled in the dust: know it is but thy flesh and thy pride that God is abasing; he is but making thee nought to thy own sense. It is true, all will grant in their words that they are nought, but it is mickle to get acknowledgment of our own naughtiness from experience; therefore that we may win to this, God yokes us with a hard party, and so empties us in ourselves, that being closely contemned of ourselves, we may seek help in Him. Therefore, at the hardest pinch, look up to God, for there is adversity betwixt faith's estate and flesh's estate. Think not that faith is failed when flesh fails, for David says, "My heart and flesh fail, but God fails me never." God and his word cannot fail, whatever we feel or fear.

*Question.* What will God do, when we are brought thus low? *Answer.* I the Lord will hear and help. This is a strange kind of hearing, to hear one whose tongue is sealed, so as he cannot speak. 1. We see that the consolation of the godly may be so long delayed, till their strength be found to be spent, and they neither able to help themselves, nor seek help, their tongues sealed with thirst. 2. It lets us see,

\* Over-fought, exhausted with conflict.

that their impotency and weakness in the trial shall do them no prejudice; for the dumb silence of their pressed soul is a loud speech, and an earnest prayer in the ears of God, which he will both hear and answer. When their tongues are tacked, and speak nothing—so straitly frozen, that they cannot stir, no more than a frozen worm in the clay—even then they have a loud cry to God. Know then, that when thou art forfoughten, like one gasping in the water ready to give up the ghost, and cannot cry, “Help me!” this gasping dumbness speaks to the on-lookers, to haste to help, so thy estate hastes the Lord to help thee.

“I the God of Israel will not forsake them.”—1. Jacob, who before was called a worm, is now called Israel. It lets us see, albeit God call his children worms, yet he keeps his estimation of them as Israelites: whatever styles of baseness he gives for our humiliation, yet he has the same estimation of us, as when he gives us highest styles. Learn we then so to be base in our own eyes, that we quit not our prerogatives; for God counts of us at the worst, as he doth when we are at the best—as the woman of Canaan was called a dog at the one word, but a woman of great faith at the other word. God counts nothing less of a humble soul, than at another time. Therefore humble thyself under the mighty hand of God, and know, that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble; yet quit not thy privileges in thy low estate.

2. This name of Israel is a glorious style, a word of estimation, and imports a duty. He was called Jacob, a supplanter, because of a trick which he

played to his brother, in stealing his birthright ; but he is called Israel, because he wrestled, and prevailed with God. And his glorious style puts him, and all Israelites in mind of a duty. Every worm Jacob must be an Israel ; every true Israelite must be a wrestler with God, in the time of his deepest dejections. Wilt thou then, a pressed worm with sore troubles, make thee for wrestling, as a worm that is trampled in the clay ?—at the one end it will sprawl, and stir at the other end. So must thou : whatever part is loose or free of thee, stir that. If thou cannot pray, meditate, hear, or confer ;—yet sigh, bow thy knees, lift up thy eyes, and stir whatever is loose.

3. “ I the God of Israel will not forsake.”—That is, because I am become your God in covenant with you, I will not forsake you. It lets us see, that those whom God has tane by the hand to be of Israel, whatever be their straits, for his covenant’s sake he will not forsake them. Our heart, flesh, and courage may fail, but God neither fails nor forsakes. Forsake not Him, but fight out the spiritual combat as good soldiers, so shall your glorious God be with you. To that God be all praise for now and ever : Amen.

## SERMON V.

## ON THE SECOND SABBATH FOR THE COMMUNION.

## PHILIPPIANS III. 7, 8.

“7. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

“8. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”

HERE, we have Paul's coss,\* and quitting of all other things that he may get Christ, and a fruitful communion with him; for he saw no other way to get Christ, but to quit all other things for him, and to get more of Christ: still to quit all things more—to be more out of himself and the world, and to be a greater stranger unto these things his nature was very prone unto, that he may get Christ. Therefore here he shews himself contented to quit all things worldly which might yield him pleasure or contentment, that he might get Christ; and by so doing, sets down a rule for all men to follow his example, as may be seen out of the 15th verse of the same chapter, where he says, “Let as many as will be perfect, be thus minded.” If any would have Christ, they must be loosed from all other things, and be content to want them: if they will not, let them wyte† themselves, if they want Christ.

In general, I observe here, that it is no wonder the world know not Christ, and care not for him: no wonder they come to preachings and communions, and

\* Exchange, bargain.

† Blame.

go away worse than they came : no wonder they profess Christ, and get no comfort from him : and say many prayers, and yet not be heard, because men are wedded in their affections to other things than Christ. Men are so fallen in love with other idols and lusts, that they care not for Christ. The inn or house of their heart has gotten so many other guests to lodge, that there is no room for Christ, except he will take a stable to lodge in. This world is still in a controversy with Christ : he is set to draw them from that they cannot enjoy with him, and they still to keep ; he to twine\* them and their lusts, and they to keep their lusts and him with them ; he to twine them and the world that they may get heaven, but they to retain the world, and yet to look for heaven ; he to draw them from all false confidence, and they to stick by it ; he to separate them from all things, that they may get himself, they to make a mixed medley of other things and him.

As for you who profess ye are this day come to seek Christ, I tell you, except ye quit all other things for him, ye shall not get him : ye must either thrust his foes to the door of your heart, or look not that he will come in. These strange lords that have ruled over you, their service must be renounced, else ye quit yourselves of Christ, for ye cannot possess both. God has said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me:" if then ye will have other gods, ye shall not get him ; therefore either must ye quit your whoredom, drunkenness, worldliness, and every thing that he abhors, or ye shall not get him. Be not deceived ; God will not be mocked ; for such things comes the wrath of God upon them. But the devil has so deceived the

\* Separate, part.

men of this world, that they are become his bond-slaves, ready to all sorts of sin; and they being deceived, trow to deceive God. Also they think, God is like themselves, because he keeps silence. But he will come and set all their sins in order. Consider this, ye who forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and none be able to deliver you out of his hand.

Let us come to the apostle's purpose here. When he was a Pharisee, he was an adversar to Christ, and would have been ready to dip his hands in Christ's blood; yea, he did it indeed, for he was with them that martyred Stephen. Yet, at the same time, he looked for heaven, and had many reasons to persuade himself that he should get heaven, and thought it needful for him to go on in the way he was walking, that he might get heaven. But now, being drawn in to the knowledge of Christ, his mind is changed, and he says, what things were gain to him before, now he counts them loss for Christ.

Here he is about to guard the Philippians against false teachers, who urged justification by the law, and bids them beware of them; and tells them, albeit these false teachers would glory in this, that they are the only true kirk, have the law of Moses clearly expounded with them; that they are of the seed of Abraham, the only true worshippers of God, and boast of their manifold privileges,—yet says he, whatever these men have to glory in, he has more. For he was circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, partaker of the Jewish sacraments; and for strait keeping of the law, he was a Pharisee. And for zeal in religion, he was as forward as any; for he persecuted the kirk that followed not his course, and for

that righteousness which is in the law, he walked so blamelessly, that none could find offence in him. All these things, he says, he found to be gain to him, when he was a Pharisee ; but now when he is come to Christ, he counts them all for loss and hindrances, and therefore will quit them all for Christ, (ver. 7). And not only is he content once to say, that all these things which some time he counted gain to be loss now, but over again he says, “ Yea doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.” As if he said, I rue nothing my loss ; for I am not only content to quit all these privileges, but all other things for Christ : yea, I see nothing that is not to be quit for Christ ; whether they be things pleasant and profitable for soul and body, I count them all but loss, when I think upon the excellent knowledge of Christ. When I look to the righteousness that is in him, I quit all righteousness but his : when I look to the honour, riches, pleasures, which are in him, I quit all honour, riches, pleasures, for that which is in him, and count it loss and hinder to stick to any thing but him. Yea, for Him I have suffered the loss of all things ; for I was a man in estimation with the best : when my forwardness for religion was seen, letters of commission would have been given me, to take men’s lives, and enough to follow me. For learning, I profited beyond my equals ; I was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel : for my religion, I was of the strictest sort ; and for my conversation, it was blameless. For my blood and descent, I was come of an ancient tribe ; friends, lovers, followers, and possessions I had enough. But I have suffered loss of all these for Christ ; and when I have

quit them, I yet count nothing of them, yea, I count I have tint\* nothing; for I count them all but dung, that I may win Christ (verse 8), and may be found in him, when God makes inquisition for souls; that I may be found out of myself, and in Christ, possessed and kept by him; having nothing but that which is borrowed from him; not having my own righteousness which is by the law, but the righteousness which is by faith in him, the righteousness which is by faith in God, that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection. There is more experimental knowledge of him, more power from his resurrection, to rise to newness of life and the fellowship of his sufferings, that may cause me yet endure more loss, pain, trouble, and that I may bear all that can be laid on me, as I should, being conformable to his death, that am a poor, dead, lost man to the world. I care not what I be, if I be in him dying; for if I die with him, I shall live with him; and if I suffer with him, I shall reign with him: if I get a share of his sufferings, I shall get a share of his glory, (verse 10).

“But what things were gain to me”—We see, when Paul was a Pharisee, he had an aim to be at heaven, and was making bargain for it, using means to win to it, and had a stock-purse to gather gain whereby he might get heaven. And here he shews, what were the things whereby he thought to have gained heaven: 1. That he was circumcised. 2. That he was of the stock of Abraham. 3. Of the tribe of Benjamin; therefore he thought he should not be shut out of heaven. 4. That he had removed all known sins. 5. That he had tane on the strictest form of religion; and beside the keeping of the law, he had received

\* Lost.

the traditions of the fathers. 6. That he was so zealous, that he persecuted all that were contrary minded. Of these, and the like things, was Paul's gain, whereby he looked to have gotten heaven.

1. It lets us see, that a man who is only natural, may look to get heaven: he may bargain for it, use means that he thinks may bring him to it, and he may set himself in the way that leads to it, and have hopes and persuasions to get it. How far then are they behind some natural men, who never set themselves in the way to life eternal, and never aimed at it as a main matter; but are lying among atheists, beastly belly-gods, seeking their own sensuality, and fulfilling of carnal delights for their main happiness? These are not yet come to the length of natural men, who are without God in the world, let be to come as far on as a Pharisee. Many never lay their account to seek heaven, but say within themselves, Bide, till I grow old; bide, till I get such a business by hand; bide, till I grow rich. They may as well say, Bide till I can serve the devil no longer. To these folks I say, it will be late ere they win to heaven, for they are not yet pressing for heaven. They have their houses, and standing of their estate to care for; their back to clothe, their bellies to feed, their name and credit to uphold, their pleasures to follow, their companions to be merry with: as for heaven or hell, a soul-righteousness or life eternal, they know not but by common report, yea, they care not, nor count for none of these. Yet we see Paul, ere he kenned Christ, was reckoning what things were gain to him, that he might get to heaven.

2. "Were gain"—We see Paul being a Pharisee, as he looked for heaven, so had he gain whereby he

thought to get heaven. So every natural man that has heard tell of heaven, and hopes to get it, has some apparent reasons, some carnal confidences that satisfy him, and which he reckons for gain, and makes them whereby he thinks to get heaven. We told you what was Paul's gain; but let us see what is the natural man's gain in this world, that he has gathered, to get heaven. One thinks God has given him great worldly means, more than twenty of his neighbours, therefore he cannot miss heaven: another, because he is just and true in all his bargains, and gives to every man his due; another, because he keeps the kirk well, haunts communion, loves the true religion, and would fight for it if needs were. And yet, never one of them has had a wrung heart with grief for sin; never saw hell open, and themselves worthy to be cast into it; never were pricked in heart for the wrongs done to Christ, albeit, possibly, for some gross fault against the light of their natural conscience, they have had some grief that soon vanished, yet never lasting sorrow for sin. They think, because they are men of honest rank, and good account with men, and countenance the true religion, that such as they cannot miss heaven; or if they be put out, few will win in. Others have not gathered so much gain as these to get heaven, but they have sundry good qualities good in many things: but they have some faults: either they must leave to be drunken whiles, or to play the harlot at a time, or have a little spice of pride, or love to the world. In a word, they are good men with one fault, and if God be strict to hold men out of heaven that have faults, he will let none in; therefore such good fellows as they, may not be holden out. Others are rude ignorants, and their reasons wherefore they must

be in heaven are such as these:—Has God (say they) ordained any Christian souls not to get heaven? Are not they of the true religion? come they not to the kirk and the communion? and they have a good mind to God. This their stock-purse is not worth a farthing, yet they look for heaven. I cannot reckon out all the deceits of men's hearts; but let every man speir at his own heart wherefore he looks to be in heaven, and it shall be found, that the natural man has aye some feckless, frivolous reason or other wherefore he looks for heaven.

3. "Loss"—Paul says, that the things which before he counted gain, now he counts them loss; to let us see, that to be born in the kirk, to be of the true religion, to keep the kirk, to say our prayers morning and evening, to live blamelessly, to deal equitably with men, are so far from doing us good to get heaven, that they are loss, and hindrances from Christ, and impediments to keep from heaven; yea, the very cut-throats of men's souls, and that lead men blindlings to destruction. For the man who leans on these, never truly repents of sin; never troubles himself to mortify his own evil nature; is not earnest for reconciliation with God; never arrests himself before God's tribunal, nor mourns before him in secret for sin; but soothes himself in his estate, as if all were well, and thinks, when he compares himself with other men, if he be barred out of heaven, many a one has cause to be dismayed. But here, we see all these things they count gain, are losses and hindrances, main deceits, that hinder men to be humbled before God, and being leaned to, prove rotten reeds, that break, and stab the man that leans on them.

4. "Were gain, now loss."—When counted Paul

those things to be loss, that some time were gain? Not till a change was wrought, and he made to know that Christ would not be mocked with such things, and that they were not furtherancers to Christ. When he saw that a man might be a Hebrew of the Hebrews, of the true religion, free of open vice, zealous of good things, and yet be secluded from Christ, then his feathers fell, and his gain is turned into loss, and that which should have brought him into heaven, is a bar to hold him out of it. We see, that these things which a man counts his gain to get heaven, will not be seen to be loss, till God open his eyes to see the vanity of deceit; then he sees that which was gain, is now loss. Till God arrest a man before his tribunal, put him on the pannel, and shew him his sin, and make him cast off all his confidences, he will never quit them. Therefore pray for open eyes, that ye may see the frivolousness and fecklessness of these things that make you look for heaven; for if ye see right, these things which before seemed furtherances, will now become bars to hold you out of heaven. Your righteousness will be seen to be vileness, and every thing ye leaned to will be casten off, that ye may get the garment of Christ's righteousness to cover you; for till all these things be renounced, Christ will not be gotten as a garment to cover.

Verse 8. "Yea, doubtless, I counted all things loss."—He repeats the same thing again, and says, not only counts he these things loss, but all things to be loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. As if he said, I have now gotten more than I had when I was a Pharisee; and not only do I quit these which I had being a Pharisee, but all things, since I came to Christ, that I may win Christ.

When I was a Pharisee, I quitted all known sin (albeit then I knew not sin well, and so could not well quit it), yet now, when I know sin better, I quit it more for Christ. When I was a Pharisee, I was blameless concerning the law : I quit that ; and now, when I know the spiritual meaning of the law (as then I did not) I quit that also. When I was a Pharisee, I drew none to Christ ; but now, I draw in many a thousand souls to Christ (if any work be of worth with God, then, specially, the winning of souls). But albeit I have made a fair conquest of souls, having carried the gospel triumphantly athort\* many nations, yet I quit that as loss to me : it shall be no gain to me ; I shall never bid God take me into heaven for that cause. In a word, I quit all that I have done, said, or suffered ; all the righteousness that ever I had, have, or am aiming at, all shall be loss to me, that I may get Christ and his righteousness ; all shall be hindrances to me, they shall not be relied on, they shall never come in among the matter of my gain ; but all of them, if they were a thousand times more, shall be counted loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ ; so that I will now come in among the poorest and unworthiest to Christ ; with them who have never won one soul to Christ, but are in question about the estate of their own soul ; with such poor, needy lost things, who have nothing in themselves to bring before Christ ; and will take me to the knowledge and righteousness of Christ alone. I will take him for my portion and matter of confidence ; I will come into him as an unprofitable servant, and will lean on himself, his goodness, truth, and mercy, which are given to them who

\* Across, athwart.

have nothing of their own ; for first and last, then and now, I count all things but loss for him.

That he counts all things loss, we see, that there are more things than one or two which men grip instead of Christ, for which they lose Christ, and are deprived of him. But Paul counted all things loss. 1. The pleasures of sin, he counted them loss for Christ. 2. His lawful liberties, houses, lands, were loss. 3. The more fine things, his learning, and understanding of all sciences, which served to make a complete natural man. 4. His righteousness by the law, and righteousness since he came to Christ ; all his good deeds and words before and after he came to Christ, he quits all.

Seeing there are so many things to hold a man from Christ, try how far ye are from Christ, and how near ye are to come unto him. Try if ye have quit your lusts for Christ : if ye have not, then ye are not come so far as the apostle when he was a Pharisee, for even then, he was blameless. But ye count your sinful lusts your gain. Ye who count a day spent among your companions, in the service of your lusts and pleasures, a won day, ye know not Christ yet, for your beastly sensuality is your god. Ye who think that to take a good drink with good fellows, or to take a harlot in secret is your gain, ye, with Esau, have sold your birthright for a mess of pottage. Ye who are given to revenge, and will have amends of him that has wronged you, and count it your contentment to plot his overthrow ; to be above him and about, and count it your gain to horse his heels, ye neither know Christ, nor have tane hold of him ; yea, even humanity and civility, and the moral lives of Pagans, would abhor those things which thou keepest, and countest

the matter of thy glory. But thy glory is thy shame, and thou shewest plainly that the goodness, meekness, and majesty of Christ, have never shined upon thee. Therefore must thou quit such things, or quit thee of Christ, (I speak to thee who comest to the communion, and frequentest all the exercises of God's worship); quit, I say, thy filthiness, drunkenness, pride, worldliness, deceit, revenge, and unjust dealing.

OBJECTION. But how shall I get my living won in this evil world, if I use straight and just courses?

*Answer.* If thou wilt not quit these, and every known sin, quit thee of Christ. And yet, when thou hast quit these, thou hast not come to the Pharisee's garters, for the Pharisees not only were free and blameless of scandalous sins, but also did many things that thou never minted; for they fasted two days in the week, and gave their meat these days to the poor. And yet, Christ says, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Some may answer me and say, they have indeed quit all such sinful lusts, pleasures, delights; but they must have leave to plod and plea about the getting of worldly commodities; they must have leave to spend their morning and evening meditations, how to get this, and yon, and a third business compassed; he for his house, another for his farms and ploughs. He may not neglect his affairs, nor cease to be careful for his household. He has his estate to guide, albeit his soul should be lost; he has the standing of his house to care for, come of his soul what may: in a word, all he does are the points of his lawful calling. But I answer, Has God given a house to care for, a living to guide, and a high place to uphold, first, that he

may shut thee in hell next? Or has he given thee a calling, that it should have the first room, and God the next room? Should not these be means to further thee to serve God, and not hindrances? Therefore, take heed what ye are doing, for here is the very hose-net wherein Satan catches the civilians of the world; and yet they are counted godly honest folks, while as they are nothing but rotten worldlings, who never truly repented sin, nor stood in awe of God: for if they could colour their matters by the law, or some pretence of reason, and so make all fish that comes in their net, it is well,—they must have leave to devour and scrape, to hunger and thirst for things in the world more than for heaven, and yet be ranked for sound Christians! But attest the conscience of such persons, if ever they had such grief of heart for their sins, as when the things of this world went wrong; or such joy of heart in Christ's favour, in the remission of sins, in the hope of heaven, as they had joy when things of the world go right. Therefore, let such persons either quit themselves of such worldly clogs as hold them from Christ, or quit him.

OBJECTION. Shall I quit those things that God has given me, my lands, houses, and liberties? *Answer.* Quit not thy calling, thy lands, houses, and lawful liberties, in action, but quit them in thy affection and estimation, because thou hast better things to spend thy care, fear, grief, and travail upon. Labour for the bread that perishes not. Lay up treasures in heaven, where the thief cannot break through, nor the canker consume. Hold only a moderate care and diligence about the things of this world, doing all thy worldly business without carking care, anxiety, or solicitude; leaving all on God's providence, not caring

what be the success, whether things go right or wrong, whether thou get profit or loss. If this thou would do, every thing should be a step to advance thee nearer heaven; for if thy affairs succeed, thou would take it from God, and bless him for it; if they succeed not, thou would be contented to let things of the world go, because they are only thy moveables, and thy heritage is kept to the fore in heaven. Quit, I say, the love of the world, for if the love of the world be in you, the love of God is not in you. Quit the love of friendship, credit, estimation, for if thou wilt busk\* up thyself in any of these, or let thy heart and thy hand, thy time and thy travail, be more on these than Christ, thou hast set up an idol in Christ's room. But either quit thee of these, or quit thee of Christ.

A third sort are those who lean to their knowledge and learning, which they will not quit as Paul did; their knowledge puffs them up. Let the poor ignorants (say they) who can neither read nor write, go to hell; but for them, they may not be barred from the communion, nor yet out of heaven, because they can read. And if they can answer some questions of the catechism, and prattle some grounds of religion, or have some insight in the cases of conscience, they must pass for current money, and be brought in without a stop to heaven. And if they be scholars, learned men, or preachers, what should hold them out of heaven, who teach others the way to it? But Christ says, that many shall say to him at the great day, "We have preached and prophesied in thy name," to whom he will say, "Depart from me ye workers of iniquity; I know you not." Therefore I say to thee who hast confidence in thy knowledge,

\* Dress.

learning, preaching, and winning in of souls to Christ, thou shalt not get Christ, except thou quit that, and all other things for him.

A fourth sort lean to their righteousness, alms, and works; tears for sin, prayers; the worth of their faith, love, and such like graces. These also must be quit, if they would have Christ. The apostle names not the rest of the things he had done, to leave which, he has quit as things unworthy to be spoken of;—his sinful pleasures, friends, familiars, human learning which he got at the feet of Gamaliel, for he knows that the wisdom of this world comes to nought. But the thing which he specially quits, is his own righteousness, for he says, he counts all things loss that he may win Christ, and may be found in him, not having his own righteousness,—which is the hardest point of all. As for those who lean to their alms-deeds, keeping of the kirk, coming to communions, saying of their morning and evening prayers, reading of the chapter, I say to them, as holy have gone to hell. As for those who because of the gnawing of their conscience for sin, have shed some tears, and so, count themselves true penitents, I say, Pagans have had some torments and furies of conscience which have forced them to shed tears, and yet have not quit their sins. As for those who are ready to further each other in good, minister a word of comfort to the weary, and speak to the edification of others, and preach the gospel, I say, they who have done more than all these, will get from Christ, “Depart, I know you not.” Therefore all confidence in these must be quit.

As for those who lean to their own righteousness, and have not quit it, let me here speak unto the godly,

who having searched well, will find they have not quit this; for albeit they have renounced all known sin, are begun to lead a blameless life, and are taking daily pains to do God's will, yet will they say, I cannot go to Christ: and why? say they, Because I am so unworthy. Then I say, thou hast not quit thy own righteousness; for if thy own unworthiness, or want of righteousness, hinders thee to go to Christ, then if thou had it, it would be the matter of thy contentment, encouragement, and confidence, to make thee draw in to him; and so, that thou hast not quit it.

And here is the reason why many a beloved soul lies in the dead-thraws—because they miss something in themselves, which if they had, they would go to Christ. To such I say, If thou go to Christ with thy own righteousness, he will not have thee; for he will have none but lost things, for he came to seek and save that which was lost. But thou art pingling with him, to have the idol of thy own righteousness set up; thou to possess it, and he to have it down; thou to come in as a holy man before him, he to have thee coming as a tint thing, to seek life. I say, as long as thou dost thus contest, the spirit of holiness and consolation will not come in; but so soon as thou quittest thine own righteousness, then comes the consolation. As long as thou lookest but to the righteousness of the law, the spirit of Jesus leaves thee, till thou acknowledge Christ for the Saviour of the lost, the justifier of the ungodly, the gracer of the unworthy, and the healer of the sick. Hence it is that Christ leaves sin in his own to humble them; for if they had righteousness of their own, they would misken him and his righteousness. And because they will not quit their own righteousness, he gives

them an assay of themselves : and when after a proof of their own naughtiness, they will not yet submit to him, then he sends crosses, sicknesses, troubles of all sorts, that they may be forced to despair in themselves, and resolve to come in to Christ's hospital, diseased and loathesome things, there to lie, till they be cured of all their sinful maladies. Therefore ye who are Christ's beloved saints, learn in time to discern this cut-throat of your souls. Know that albeit ye have quit many things for Christ, yet ye have not quit your own righteousness ; ye are yet seeking to come to Christ, busked with something of your own : and because ye will be in with a harlot's busking, he puts you aback ; for he calls things that are not, as if they were ; he quickens the dead, he saves the lost.

Seeing there are so many things that take up a man's heart, mind, estimation and affections, which are due to Christ, and all things must be quit, therefore quit in time your riches, honour, pleasures, the love and estimation of the world ; quit your plodding in a lawful calling ; quit your care of the world, lest ye counting more of it than ye should, ye lose the pearl of price, and gripping an unworthy thing, ye shed with God. For Christ says, He that loves father or mother, wife, children, brethren and sisters better than me, is not worthy of me. Let all be counted loss for Christ : put them out of your affection and estimation which otherwise are lawful ; but especially quit your own righteousness or self-perfection, the clothing and busking of yourselves with that which is not your own. Quit all for Him, else thou art not worthy of him.

“ All things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.”—This lets us see, that the sound

knowledge of Christ being rightly seen in the super-excellency of it, is only able to put all other to the door, and by the sight of it, all other things must be dispossessed; else the quitting of other things is not right, as things must be quit and renounced in the favours of Christ, and for Christ, as here Paul doth. For there are many who will quit their pleasures, because they cannot follow them; many will quit their honour, because they cannot get it maintained; riches, because it flies from them and they cannot get a grip of it; and righteousness, because they cannot get it. But this is not the right quitting of these, albeit I grant, the Lord's laying of thorns in their way that they cannot win after their lovers, may be a mean to make them quit them as they should; yet it is a quitting of necessity, and not voluntar. But if any be come to this, to say that they would not want a sweet blink of Christ's favourable face, which they will get at a morning prayer, for a year's pleasure by sin; I will not meddle with things lawful, but in sobriety, lest I mar communication with my Lord, and quit him; I will not stick to my own righteousness, because a super-excellent righteousness is in Christ to be gotten;—if so be thou quit all for the excellent knowledge of Christ, thou renoucest all for him, and in his favour.

“Doubtless I count them loss”—or yet loss, or still I count them loss: whereby he shews, that still he stands to his choice, and still puts all these things under; he has quit them all for Christ, and rues nothing his coss.\* It lets us see, that a man who has quit all things for Christ, may not rue again, or change his coss, or turn back again, but must stand in the same mind as when he first made the coss, and pro-

\* Bargain.

fessed his embracing of Christ. He may not be like the dog, that has casten his meat because of the pain of his stomach, and when he is eased, thinks it overgood cheer to want, and so turns back to it. Even so doth the lecherous person or the drunkard. When the terror of hell strikes on the soul of him, he quits his filthiness, and resolves never to meddle with it again; but when he is eased of that fear and terror, he goes back again. That man renews his choice; for after he seemed to embrace Christ, and quit his lusts, he rues, and goes back to his lusts. But if thou hast once quit all things for Christ, and hast said it, say it over again, and stand to thy choice.

“ I count them but loss.”—Thou who quittest any thing for Christ, must account them loss; they must be still in thy account and estimation as hindrances to keep out Christ, or hold from Christ, for so they will be indeed. When they oversway a man’s affection and estimation, they will draw a man farther after them than Christ allows.

“ My Lord.”—The sweetness of the felt band betwixt Christ and his soul, makes him stand to his coss, and with joy to rest on Christ: so shall it do with every one that has truly laid hold on him.

“ For whom I suffer the loss.”—Paul was already put to a proof of that which he says, when for the gospel’s cause he was turned out of his country, friendship, estimation, and commodities of this life; in hunger, nakedness, perils by sea and land, and perils by his countrymen; deserted by his companions, scholars, and kinsmen; shot out to preach among the Gentiles. And yet, he reckoned himself no loser by the means. It lets us see, that besides the quitting of all things earthly for Christ in estimation and af-

fection, God will call forth some of his children, to give a real proof in action of the quitting of all things, when they cannot get them and Christ both kept.

Quit sinful things both in action, and estimation, and affection, for no man can serve God and Mammon. Quit thy lawful liberties and commodities worldly in affection and estimation, and yet keep the possession of them, as long as they hinder thee not to possess Christ; for albeit he bids a man quit his houses, lands, and friends, to follow, yet he bids no man be such a fool as to cast away his goods at every occasion; but only he craves, that man should quit them in estimation and affection, and yet still be studying to do righteousness with your neighbour. Cut only away the affection and confidence in good things. Quit your lawful liberties, goods, country, friendship, by actual resignation as well as affection, when God calls for it; for when ye were baptized, ye took in hand to quit all and follow Christ. It is true, Christ takes not this proof of every one, but of some. Therefore it is said, "To you it is given, not not<sup>o</sup>ly to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake," (Philipp. i. 29). Christ will only honour some to be sufferers for him, as Paul, who suffered the loss of all things for Christ.

"And do count them but dung"—After he has quit all things for Christ, and suffered the loss of them in affection, he counts them but dung; that is, he counts them but feckless, and himself to have lost little. We see, after a man has quit any thing for Christ, he must keep the same estimation of the thing he quit, that he had before he quit it; he must still count it dung, else he may be wooed, and fall in love with it again, and so be snared. When he has once

quit them, he must still keep the same estimation of them, that he had when he first professed renunciation of them.

This land has not yet been put to this trial for Christ, but only some few persons. A wind of law blew loud, and many, ere the blast of it came near them, rowed to the lee-shore. "For," said they, "what need we peril our lands, goods, estimation, for so petty matters?" But I say, in this they have proven light, (albeit possibly they may get strength to stand out in a greater matter). What shall these men do when trial comes? Whether will they keep the truth they have received, or receive mixture of Antichristian doctrine; else have their lands forfeited, and their bodies prisoned? Trials may come, whether men will be Papists in effect, or quit things dear to them; therefore we have need to sit, and lay our account what the building of Christianity will cost, lest we leave the work with shame, for fault of expenses. Therefore Paul would have us to count all things to be but dung, that are to be lost for Christ. Crave, therefore, that nothing we have, may be a hindrance to confess the name of Christ.

But mark how Paul won to this, and in what order. First, he counted them but loss; then he quit them; and having quit them, he counted them yet still to be loss and dung. It lets us see, when we renounce any thing of this world for Christ; houses, land, life; we must first quit them in estimation and affection, and then, we will easily quit them in action: count them still dung in our estimation and affection, else we will not quit them in action; for as the estimation puts price on them, so will we labour to enjoy them. Having quit any thing for Christ, count it

still dung ; write upon thy lands, the name of dung ; write upon thy houses, the name of dung ; write upon thy life, the name of dung ; for if this be not written upon them, thou wilt not quit them for Christ ; and having counted them loss and dung, let it stand so, never to be sought back again.

Put Paul's gain in the one balance, and his loss in the other balance, and ye shall see, he has reason to count and call all things he has lost but dung ; for his gain is the excellent knowledge of Christ his Lord, his loss is only lawful liberties, country, friends, possessions. It lets us see, that the vantage in gaining Christ is far beyond the loss ; that the loss is dear of the reckoning, yea, the loss is none at all. For what loses any man for Christ ? Is it friends worldly ? he shall have friends in heaven. Is it houses ? he shall have a mansion in heaven. Is it lands ? he has a heavenly inheritance. In a word, all his loss is of things temporal, and his gain is of things spiritual and eternal, and Christ himself to make all his loss. To quit all things for Christ, look to the excellency of Christ, then all thou quittest will be but dung.

“And be found in Him.”—Here is the thing he would be in grips with, instead of all his losses; a more fruitful communion with Christ ;—he would be found in Christ. This imports, that in the day of God's judging, there will be an inquisition made for every man, and every man will be sought till he be found. The Lord will search and find out men, whether they be lying in the devil's kitchen, or in the swine-trough of nature, or in Christ. His eyelids try the children of men. The apostle, when this inquisition is made, has no will to be found out of Christ.

When God makes inquisition for blood, adultery,

deceivers, profane, ignorants, misbelievers, see that thou be not found among them, for God will search Jerusalem with candles. There shall not be a man frozen in his dregs, but he shall be found out, by a more narrow search than the Spanish Inquisition: man, woman, bairn shall be found out; as death laid them down, judgment shall find them again that day. Paul is providing a covering, a resting-place, and a righteousness to cover him; labour, therefore, in quitting other things, to find a residence where ye would that God should find you. There is no safe place but Christ; and if thy sins and unworthiness chase thee, flee to Christ, to the holes of the rock; and if thou flee to him, sensible of thy blindness, laying out thy blind eyes; hard heart, lame limbs, he will heal thee, and hold the door open till thou come in. Quit all things this day, and come to him, and be received; whether thou be in sense of guiltiness, or in the sense of wants, come to him, and still come, till the day of inquisition.

“Found in Him.”—He that gets communication with Christ, will be found in him, and will remain in him. There are as many of him, and about him, who will be cast out; but they who are found in him, stay in him till the inquisition be made.

What is the mark of those that shall be found in him? —“Not having mine own righteousness, which is by the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” So then, the mark of the man that will be found in Christ, is this,—he must be stripped of his own righteousness, and all confidence in it, and possessed and fastened in that righteousness which is of God’s gift in Christ imputed to him. This is the humble peni-

tent fled to Christ, who will never be cast out; who comes to him challenging, accusing, condemning, be-beasting himself; crying, "Woe is me, that I have grieved God, tane my own will, prized the world so highly, counted so little of my own soul; Lord forgive me!" This person will be welcome, and not cast out, for he is fled to Christ, to get his borrowed righteousness, never to be taken back again, but to remain his for ever. Take the whole mark, and not the half of it; for many will say, I may soon quit all my righteousness, for it is feckless (and much ado ere this be done), yet will not take Christ's. But I speir, What makes thee stand aback from Christ? Seeing thou art naked, why goest thou not to the wardrobe, to get a garment? If thou be blind, why goest thou not to get eye-salve? If poor, why goest thou not to get gold to enrich thee? Thus, because thou hast the one half of the mark, and not the other, thou hast no righteousness of thy own, and yet thou wilt not take Christ's.

OBJECTION.—What know I if He will take me?

*Answer*—Will He not take those whom he calls? Came He not to justify the ungodly; to seek and save the lost? Has He not an office to cure the blind? Is He not a king, to make beggars rich? Why beliest thou Him in the face?—thou shouldst believe, because he has said it. Either take heaven *gratis*, or else thou shalt not get it. If thou must have something of thy own ere thou come to Him, thou shalt not get him: except thou come in even vile, even filthy, and foolish, he will not have thee. Therefore come in so, and take this righteousness. If thou art pleased with the bargain, thus it shall stand. In this stands that poisonable error of the Papists;

—they will not quit their own righteousness, and take his; and consider not, that they need wholly the merits of Christ. But here the opposing of the two, lets us see clearly, that no man can lean to both these sorts of righteousness; but if we take us to the one, we must quit the other: if any will lean to his own righteousness, he will be found in himself, and without Christ and his righteousness. But we may not stay now to cangle\* with the Papists.

Verse 10. “That I may know him.”—That is, that I may experimentally win in upon Christ, to know him. Ye will say, Knew not Paul Christ? Was he not ravished up to the third heavens, and saw things unutterable? I answer, He knew him, but he would know him better. Albeit he had his conversation in heaven, yet he would so experimentally know Him in his nature, will, office, fashions, that that light of knowledge might be transfused into his soul; that he might draw life and power from Christ; that he might feel the power of his resurrection;—that is, such a communion with Him in his resurrection, as may raise him to newness of life, and make him have more peace and joy in him, and lift him out of himself to heaven, where he should dwell; and fellowship of his sufferings, that as Christ suffered, so he may be content to be a crucified man, ready to take the cross on his back, and follow after Christ, renouncing the world, contented to be scourged back and side, and to suffer many things, whereby he might be like Christ. As He was spitted on, buffeted, scourged, so he desires patiently to endure all, and so may get that patience, peace, joy, which flow from his suffering, being made conformable to his death,

\* Quarrel, debate.

that is, mortified in his lusts, will, mind, and affections, conformed to his death in dying to sin.

1. That he quits all things that he may know Christ, we see, the quitting of other things in our estimation and affection, and flying to Christ, is not that we should be idle, but that we may know Christ better; to draw virtue from him, that we may live a better life. Not that we should come to Christ, to make him a conveniency to bear our sins, or to get leave to do what we will; but to come to him to work and to walk with him, to suffer and die with him, and to be as he was in the world.

2. That he would know Christ better. We see that the more a man knows Christ, he is more desirous to know him further. So lovely and enamouring is the knowledge of Christ, that there will not be so much of it gotten in this world, but still there will be a longing for more: yea, in heaven, when a man enjoys it fully, he will still drink in more of it, without satiety or wearying. While he desires to know the power of Christ's resurrection, he tells us, that from Christ in every part of redeeming of us, there comes a power to work answerable effects in us; as here, from his resurrection, power must be gotten to work the expiation of sin, freedom from the guilt of sin, victory over death, and the means of life. If the fruits of Christ's resurrection be newness of life, then all the lustre a man has of a holy and blameless life before he come to Christ, is but of the old man; it is but a Pagan's lustre. Albeit a man would fast six meals in the week, give all his goods to the poor, whip himself for his faults—all is nought, seeing it flows not from the spirit of Christ. Whoever would have a new life, must draw it from Christ

risen. Thy new gentle nature must be from the meek spirit of Christ, so that he who before would patiently have borne wrong, must lay down his old patience, and get patience from Christ; and he who had old courage, must lay it down, and get new courage to fight for religion, else he will prove, like Peter, to take himself aback when he should stand—new humility, liberality, patience, love from Christ, “for behold,” says he, “I will make all things new.”

3. Ye will say, How will these things be gotten? I answer, By the power of his resurrection: that is, our faith must so grip him, that we may draw this power out of him: being naked and empty of all in ourselves, take him for supply of all, embracing the slain Son of God, saying, “Now let thy servant depart in peace.” And He being thus gripped by faith, we may never hunger and thirst for worldly pleasures we followed before, nor for the world, but he must be our portion; nor honour, but that which is of Christ,

4. While he subjoins fellowship in his sufferings and conformity with his death, he lets us see, that the way to be partakers of the power of Christ’s resurrection, is first to take part with him in his sufferings—such exercises or troubles as God is pleased to call us unto—that we may be conform to Christ; and to behave ourselves under these sufferings as he did, in our measure. Know then, that before thou be a new man from the power of Christ’s resurrection, that many a black bat\* will thy flesh get: thou wilt be disgraced and slandered by thy neighbours, and suffer twenty wrongs. But there are many who seem to follow Christ at the back, who have no will of sufferings, but say, with Naaman, “God be merciful to me

\* Stroke.

when I go to the house of Rimmon ;”—for their credit, their houses, their lands, their pleasures may not be meddled with. To whom I say, if thou wilt follow Christ, thou must be content instead of favour to be fuffed,\* instead of honour to be disgraced. If not, He shall pour shame upon thee; because thou preferred thy credit to him, therefore thou art given to the idol of credit, and will not quit it, for Christ's shame to be upon thee. Think not that Christ made himself shame for thee, that thou should not go to that same gate : thou must endure the cross of Christ. “ Ye seek honour one of another,” says Christ ; “ how can ye believe ?” Seeing ye stand to your own reputation and honour, how shall ye get me honoured ? So say I to thee : except thou canst forgive quarrels without amends, thy profession is not worth a pin. Therefore if thou be not content to take fellowship with Christ's sufferings, look not for fellowship in his resurrection : if thou wilt not be partaker of his sufferings, a straw shall bar thee out of heaven. But thou that would be partaker of his resurrection, dip thyself in his sufferings by faith, so as thou may have fellowship with him in the spirit of that power and patience which bore him through.

5. But how shall disgrace and loss of goods be borne ? *Answer*—By being conformable to his death : That is—labour more to die to sin, study to mortify thy inward corruptions, and that will be a mean to make thee bear outward troubles the better. If thou be pingling with sin within thee, thou can care little for any disgrace or loss of goods thou can suffer for Christ. We see, whosoever will endure fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, that is, bear outward

\* Ruffled, thrown into disorder by rude handling.

troubles, he must study to a conformity in Christ's death, that is, study to slay sin within him; for he that is not labouring to slay sin within, will never slay sin without. The drunkard's vow that he shall not drink wine for a year, will not slay his sin of drunkenness; for that is only a covenant made with his sin, that it shall go away for such a space: his sin is only put in the prison a while, to be well fed there, and when the time of his vow is expired, his sin comes forth with greater strength, and flies upon him, and slays him. But if thou wouldst mortify sin rightly, lay it down before thy dead and crucified Lord, and see how he was scourged back and side, crucified, and pierced with a spear, for thy sin that thou takest pleasure in; then think with thyself, Shall I drink, whore, deceive, which has brought on such pain and torment on my sweet Lord? Bring all thy sins to slay Christ; the love of the world, honour, ease, credit, thy own righteousness, and lay them down in dead Jesus, who was dead, and is alive for the slaughter of thy iniquity. Will ye then from this day forward be slain servants to sin, and sworn servants to Christ; friends to him, and foes to your sinful lusts, drunkenness, falset,\* pride, worldliness, ease to the flesh, your own righteousness which may draw you from Christ, and be ready to quit all things for Christ? Then come to his table, and be accepted, and what ye want shall be made up. Quit, I say, thy pleasures, lands, houses, and come, and get better honours, pleasures, friendship, an inheritance and happiness that shall never be tane from you. Only let Jesus be your Lord, and ye be his servants, and get all ye would have.

\* Falsehood.

## SERMON VI.

ON THE MONDAY FOLLOWING THE COMMUNION.

PHILIPPIANS III. 11, 12.

“ 11. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

“ 12. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”

YE have heard Paul's coss,\* and quitting of all things to get Christ; and that from his example, a necessity is laid upon all to do the like, under the pain of not getting Christ. For if we love any thing better than Him, he cannot be our God, neither can we look for any comfort in him: if there be any idol tane in his room,—pleasure, riches, honour, life,—we shall not get him. Therefore we must needs lay down all things that we may gain Christ. If He get not the highest room with us, we may not look for any room with him; for it is impossible to be sincere, if all idols be not thrown down that would claim his seat. I grant, there will be great fight ere this be gotten done; for all our lusts will be on foot, to set up some idol in his room. But down must they all, that Christ may be set on his throne; for he has not redeemed us from the devil, that the devil should get a seat above him in our soul: but he must be above all; he must be our delight, our wisdom, our riches, our glory, our life; and if he be not in his room, he will not have a room in us at all. Therefore

\* Exchange.

ye who would be Christians indeed, I lay a necessity upon you, to get Christ the highest room and chiefest seat in your heart, else ye shall not get him. And scorn him not with your sins and purposes, but let your aiming, industry, and endeavours bear witness of it, in lifting up your hands to his commandments, as well as unto prayer.

Here the apostle shews the way how to behave ourselves, and sets forth to us his own sense of shortcoming in sanctification, and his aim to have it better. He wished for a more near communion with Christ, more than for all things; and for it he shews himself content to be rid of every thing his soul affects, that he may feel it in the fruits of it.

“If by any means I might attain unto this resurrection.”—Here a fruit of his communion with Christ he would be at. Now, by resurrection from the dead, is not here meant the last resurrection at the great day (albeit I will not exclude that;) but by resurrection from the dead here, is meant the same as in Romans vi. 5. “If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” There he says, as Christ rose from the dead, so also we should rise from our dead works and ways, unto newness of life. So here, by resurrection from the dead, is meant complete satisfaction in newness of life. This is it which Paul here aims at, in quitting his own righteousness, and taking himself to Christ’s; for he has won to some measure of sanctification. But he would be farther on to a higher degree of resurrection from the deadness of his nature, to the life of Christ, and complete stature of a Christian man. In a word, he desires to be a complete Christian (verse 11). And because the

Philippians hearing the apostle say, that he wants of that measure of sanctification that he is striving for, might say with themselves, Would God we were as far on as he is! therefore he answers this their thought of him, and tells them, that he is not so far on in sanctification as they trow : for says he, I have not already attained it as if I were perfect ; but I am following fast on, if I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ: that is, I have tane a grip of Christ, to see if I can win to that measure of holiness wherefore he has gripped me. (Verse 12) Then he doubles\* the same purpose, and says over again, Think not so of me, that I am come so far on in sanctification ; for I am not yet won to the mark that I would be at, but have many unmortified sins, many tatters and rags of sin hanging at me, which hold me that I cannot win forward. Yet I am labouring for it. I count nothing of any thing that I have done, there is so much yet to be done. I reckon none of by-gones, but I am reaching to those before me. I am assaying if I can win to the thing I would be at ; and what is not done, I am minting to it. This is set down in the similitude of a race (verses 13, 14). Then he bids all honest men be like-minded, and come on the same way that he is striving, (verse 15).

1. "If by any means."—In the former verse, he was seeking further communion with Christ : here, he is seeking further sanctification. Whereof we learn, that in quitting of our own righteousness that we may get Christ's, we may not quit a study to sanctification. But the more we grip Christ's righteousness, the more we should study to sanctification. But Satan has put a trick upon many men, that when they hear

\* Reiterates.

there is no justification but by Christ's righteousness, then say they, My holiness or righteousness will not bring me to heaven ; and so, they run on in the devil's service. To whom I say, If thou be not holy, thou shalt never win to heaven. Therefore thou must so renounce, that thou also aim at righteousness or holiness in Christ ; for Christ has not bought thee to be Satan's servant, and not his. If He has bought thee to be his servant, wilt thou devote thyself to thy own sinful lusts, and so, serve Satan ? If he has bought thee from the slavery of Egypt, why dost thou not follow him into the Holy Land ? Beware lest thou be an unwashed dog, if thou be not aiming at sanctification ; and that thou be not deceiving thyself in looking to the blood which thou respectest not.

2. We see, albeit communion with Christ, and the knowledge of it be sweet, yet the sweetness of it alone may not be sought that we may rest upon it, except also we seek for fruit and virtue out of it to renew us, so as we may glorify our Lord. Do not seek so to repose thy mind on Christ, as if only ease were to be sought in him ; but so must thou rest in thy conscience, that thou stir up thyself to draw grace from him, to glorify him in thy life and conversation : for as thou gettest life in him, so must thou labour in his vineyard, and labour for a new plantation of grace and virtue within thee. Think not, because thou hast been at the communion, thou may do as thou likest : but by the contrair, thou must be the more devoted to God's service, else thou hast eaten and drunken thy own damnation. Herein stands the difference betwixt true and counterfeit profession—the counterfeit goes from the communion as he came ; the true aims at holiness and reformation, and is set

more carefully to serve God. If thou hast gotten thy heart devoted to God's service, thou may be sure thou could never have done so, except the Lord had first accepted, and tane thee in his protection. If thy heart be consecrate to His service, thou may be sure he is become thy Saviour : if hereafter thou scunners\* at sin, thou hast an evidence of a worthy communicant.

3. See the order he keeps. First, he would be at communion with Christ ; and next, he would be devoted to sanctification, to teach us to seek sanctification in this order : First, take us to Christ, renouncing our own righteousness ; then draw strength from him, and in his strength bring forth good fruits, and so be renewed ; come to Christ as a fool, a tint impotent thing that can neither think, say, nor do any thing of thyself, and get righteousness from Christ ; then crave new strength from him (for thou hast none of thy own), to be holy. Upon this order stands the contest betwixt God and his children : they not finding their own righteousness, they will not take Christ's, and take new strength, as fellowship, from his resurrection, sufferings, and death, and so get power to slay sin ; and they know not that all the righteousness that can be in man before he get Christ's is but mere hypocrisy and an outward lustre, when the heart within is rotten. But from once they come to Christ, then holiness begins at the heart's roots, by the new power given by Christ. That first righteousness they would be at, holds aye a man proud ; but this righteousness God would have them to embrace, holds them humble.

4. We see the apostle would be at farther resurrection after he is risen ; which lets us see, that there

\* Shudders with loathing.

is a first and second resurrection, and the first resurrection has a progress of time and degrees. It is like regeneration, which is still in working till it be complete; for as the regenerate are in a great part unregenerate, so those who are risen to newness of life, are not enough risen; but Christ is both come in, and yet standing at the door, knocking, so that there are degrees and intervals betwixt the one and the other. When they rise out of the grave of sin, death hangs on all the powers and parts of the soul: as there is a quick part of the heart, so also a dead part: at all parts rottenness hangs; not only pieces of the grave-clothes, but lumps of rottenness hang on, so that there is rottenness in their words, in their mind, and endeavours. But the Christian man that is risen, is still raxing\* himself, to have the lumps of rotten flesh shaven off him: he is elevating his heart to Christ; and aye as he comes up nearer Christ, the clouts and rottenness of the grave fall off; and still he rises higher and higher, and grows by degrees in rising, till his head be in heaven—and at the door-posts of heaven all his filthiness and rottenness are stripped off him. Look then to rise more and more out of the grave of sin, piece and piece to rise after Christ, and seek of him renovation and a new life; and albeit ye find the clouts of the grave hanging at you, discourage not, but aim still more and more to be freed of them.

“If by any means.”—It seems, that Paul makes a question in the matter. Was there any question but that Paul would attain to this resurrection? I answer, at the first he knew he would not get all his will, but yet he is still aiming at it—albeit he see it hard to

\* Stretching.

be won to, yet he aims at it. It lets us see, that the difficulty or impossibility of attaining full regeneration or newness of life while we are here, should not discourage us, or slacken our bensil, but by the contrair, it should animate and encourage us to strive to be at it ; for albeit we attain not perfection at the first, yet by aiming at it, we get it in the end ; and if we run fast to be at it, Christ pulls us in his arms, and lifts us there at a loup.\* As that ship wherein Christ entered, when the disciples had toiled long, was by and by at the shore, so are we carried to the race ; and when we are aiming, striving, rowing, running, Christ helps us a lift, and pulls us up to the shore. Yet is it only those who are running, contending, striving, and bachling† on in the way, whom he pulls in his arms, and sets forward. Therefore let difficulties stir us up to run forward, especially seeing we have such helps and encouragements. Albeit at the first we cannot attain to the fulness of that we would be at, yet there is possibility to get it in the end ; and if we win not so far on as we would, it shall make us go farther down in humility, and take a better grip of Christ for justification. And so if we miss our purpose, God misses not his, when we are more humbled, and grip Christ better.

“Not as though I had already attained.”—The Philippians hearing Paul speak thus, might say, Before thou wast a Christian, thou lived blameless ; and now, being turned to Christ, and having converted millions to him, thy life seems like an angel for holiness. To this he answers, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect : but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which

\* Leap.

† Shuffling as in slip-shod shoes.

also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." That is, I purpose not to sit down and rest me, for as forward as ye think me; for neither is all done: neither yet speak I of myself, as a man perfected; for I see more before me. Ye see me far on the way, but I see I must go far farther: ye think I have attained to mickle holiness, but I see far more to be sought after. It is true, when I was a Pharisee, I was a man of a blameless life, a man separated for God's service; but all these things I counted loss for Christ: and when I came to Christ, I saw I behoved to repent more, and cast away all these things, as a man casts wares out of a ship, which he cannot brook with safety of his life. So I am content to quit all both before and after my coming to Christ, that I may win into his hospital, and bide there to be helped of my evils; and so, I am not come out to that measure of holiness that ye trow.

1. That he gives this for a reason of his strife for a greater measure of sanctification, because he is not perfect, he lets us see, that he who strives not to mend his hand, and to win to a greater measure of sanctification, says he is perfect, and has attained the prize. How great evils lurk here, let any man judge. Is it not a foul shame for a lukewarm Laodicean, to say, "I am rich, increased in goods, and have need of nothing?" The same say all those who sit down, as if they were holy enough. I say to such, Rise again, or thou shalt never win to heaven; for none will sit down, but the Laodicean, or main counterfeit. Some will say, What would ye have me doing? I pray twice a-day; I read two chapters every day; I keep the kirk all the preaching days. These men have a temper of their own, and draw godliness to their own

model, subordinate it to their own silly minds. They make God and religion serve them as they like, and not they Him as he likes, and so are right hypocrites. If any go beyond their measure, they call these, hypocrites and precisians; and if any be below their measure, they are profane, and themselves only are the honest men. But they are sitten down in the race; not like Paul, who will not sit down, till he be at the race-end. If a man in a race should draw bridle and sit down, shall ever he win the race? As there is no stay in a race, till one win over the score, so there is no stay in a Christian man's race, till he be in at heaven's door. Therefore make all to the way, ye who are late; start, run the faster, cry for the wings of faith, and lift up the hands of your Lord to help you. Ye who are run a piece of the way, sit not down; say not, I have done well; but still mend your hand, else ye will tine the race and reward; and shame and confusion of face, black burning shame shall come on you, for minting to go to heaven, and then sitting down in the way.

2. As a man would prove himself to be far from this pride, hypocrisy, and false deceit, so he must labour to make it known, by his study and endeavour to purge his mind from daffing,\* and his life from rottenness; for it is the mark of an honest man ever to mend his hand, to grow up piece and piece, and to be still unsatisfied with himself. As contentment with a measure is a mark of hypocrisy and lukewarmness, so, discontentment with their case joined with an endeavour to more, proves uprightness; for that which is sown will still grow. As thou would be approuen for sound, stand never till thou be at Christ; for if thou

\* Recklessness.

stand, thou dost that the apostle durst not do. If thou wilt sit down, or be perfect, thou sayest thou art perfect, and castest down all thou hast done.

“But I follow after.”—He proves, that he conceits not of himself as already perfect, by his diligence to amend his pace, to shew us, we should rule that foul conceit of being perfect, and prove it, by mending our pace, and striving to win to perfection. This following after, is a word borrowed from a chace, wherein the man still sees before him the thing he is chacing, and still follows on it, and is still ready to grip it, and yet still it is running before him out of his grips. The comparison lets us see, that God so holds out holiness in our sight, that he makes us to follow after it, and still it is out of grips, in the fulness of it, yet still so near, that it is within sight, and ready to be gripped. Christ still runs before us, and holds out to us the crown of holiness and happiness, and bids us run and have it; and when we see we must either run at it, or else not win into heaven, we follow on still. And so, He trains us into heaven, holding out before us all the way that which he will give us in the end. Here, the wisdom of our Lord, that he is our fore-runner in the race, and holds out in our sight the pearl we would fain be in grips with, and the prize that we would fain have, that we may run and get it. When ye see it, and cannot win to it, make not a claite\* to it, a faird† only to be at it, and then leave it there; but still follow on, for it will fly no farther than heaven’s door, and there thou shalt not miss it. Say not, What wot I if God has ordained it for me? What if he *has* ordained it for thee?—let the one WHAT stand for the other. Never reason so, but go

\* Snatch.

† Bustle.

thy way, and do that which is clearly commanded; then thou may be sure, thou shalt not miss the thing promised; for Christ says, "Those whom the Father has given me, will come to me; and those who come to me, I will not cast out." Therefore come thou to Christ, and fly from unholiness, so shall thou be made to know that God has purposed to call thee to a crown. Secret things belong to the Lord, revealed things to thee.

"That I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended."—This lets us see, that no man sets himself to the course of sanctification; but that we are gripped by Christ, before we can grip him, or aim to grip sanctification through him; and that whom Christ has gripped to draw to salvation, that man will grip Christ to win to sanctification. Wouldst thou know if Christ has gripped thee to salvation? Thou shalt know it by this—if thou be gripping Him for sanctification. If thou had rather be at holiness, than any thing, not caring what thou lose or gain if thou win to holiness, then, be sure that Christ has gripped thee to salvation. Therefore from this gather strength to look unto Christ, for if thou be set to have all known sin purged out, Christ has tane a grip of thee. As Paul was first apprehended, and then seeks to apprehend, so art thou. Christ has gripped and loved thee first, for all the work begins upon his side.

"For which I am apprehended."—One of the ends of Christ's apprehending of Paul, was to make him a holy man, and to give him life eternal: and it lets us see, that one of the ends wherefore Christ grips us, and calls us from wickedness and vileness, is to make us holy. This serves to strengthen thee who aimest at holiness. Albeit thou, for weakness, cannot win to thy purpose, yet Christ shall not fail in his pur-

pose ; for having gripped thee for that end, he will not shed with his grip, till he have made thee holy, and caused thee to grip him. Here is an encouragement to labour and not to loiter. Christ and thou shall not come short of his aim.

Christ's aim and Paul's aim are one, for both of them aim to make him a vessel of honour. It lets us see, that Christ's aiming about us, should be our aim also. Aims Christ at this—to have us strong in the faith, to encourage us against doubting, to give us victory over foes, joy in crosses?—wherever he looks, look we.

“Already made perfect.”—He changes the similitude of apprehending in a race, to a proper speech ; and the active word in attaining, is changed into a passive of being perfected, lest he should seem to take the glory to himself. It lets us see, that we are so employed in this work, as that there is another's hand to be looked to from whom the strength is gotten. We are so workers, as we are also wrought upon ; we so run in the race, that we are also carried, that we may not glory in our own strength, nor lean unto it, but may give glory to God in all that is done.

Verse 13. “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.”—Here he expounds the similitude of a race in more clear words ; and because the Philipians would hardly believe that he is come so far short of his purpose as he says, therefore he says, “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.” As if he said, Keep what thought ye will of me, yet I have no such thoughts of myself, that I am so far forward as ye think. While he calls them BRETHREN, he ranks or matches himself with them, albeit they were behind him ; whereby he shews his humility.

It tells us, that true Christians associate themselves to all who seek God. A truly holy man is humble, according to the measure of holiness, and aye the holier the humbler : as he grows up in holiness, so he grows down in humility and conceit of himself.

“ I count not myself.”—There is a token of his humility. Whatever estimation others have of him, he labours to keep a true estimation of himself. It lets us see, that a truly godly man will be loath to foster any other body’s conceit of him, as if he were that which he is not. The proud man has clear evidence of hypocrisy ; but the humble man, let others commend him as they will, he thinks the less of himself. Therefore the same apostle (2 Cor. xi.) is loath to bring out his revelations, lest any should think of him above that they see or hear of him. That foolish conceit that others have of a large measure of holiness in some of the godly, the godly have no will of it, lest, if their imperfections kythe, they discourage those who counted so highly of them. As for those who think worse of themselves than others, they have a token of greater holiness, and a greater measure of light, which discovers their filthiness ; for the nearer they draw unto God, they will see themselves the more vile. Therefore Isaiah says, “ Woe is me ! I am a man of polluted lips.”

1. Take it for a mark of the augmentation of thy light, because the farther thou be on in the way, and nearer God, thou seest more of thy own mischief to abase thee.
2. Foster nobody’s conceit, that would think more of thee than is meet.
3. And if thou cannot mend other folk’s conceits of thee, but they will esteem of thee, yet have a low conceit of thyself ; so shall not their conceit hurt thee. This serves to keep men from being puffed up, and

to teach them to walk circumspectly in their eyes, and abstain from all appearance of evil. When they think how short way they are come on in godliness, then all the commendation that can be given them, will not puff them up. What makes many a one walk on a while in the way, and then their heels are tripped up, and they fall by, but because they have an overweening conceit of themselves? Their rottenness, which inwardly stank before, breaks out like a boil. While they were low in their own estimation, and still battling with their own evil nature within them, the world about would be less cumbered with it. The more pains in secret, the less shall break out; for those who deal with the root of sin, cannot but mar the branches of it.

“I count not myself to have apprehended.”—Before, in his words, he glances at the similitude of a race, while he was speaking of apprehending, attaining, and following; but here he evidently sets forth the similitude, and lets us see, that he is running a race. Therefore, in the similitude we learn, 1. That the Christian man’s life is like a race; whether he sit or stand, he is still running the race. The length of the way of the race is the man’s life-time; the actions and passages of a man’s life, are the steps of the race; our high calling is our starting and on-holding in the race; the prize we run for, is holiness and eternal blessedness. It is called a race, not for foolhardiness or hastiness, but for diligence, circumspectness, so contriving of all things, that one thing hinder not another. It is called a race, because we may not sit down in it all our lifetime. There is one that starts the race, even God, who calls and starts all the runners by the voice of his word: he goes on beside

them in the race, and exhorts them to run this or that way, as may best further them in the race: whiles he bids them mend their pace; and if they fall behind, he encourages, as a friend that stirs up one whom he would fain have winning the race. So God cries, "Run, my children; run, and get heaven and happiness!" Every direction from the word, is an encouragement in the race. In a race there are witnesses who look on: so here, God, angels, men, devils, are witnesses, but God is the chief witness or judge. Run this race; sit not down; run as in the sight of God. Remember that every action or word is a step of this race: words spoken to edification are steps; words of thy calling levelled at the mark are steps; for a man may speak of worldly purposes, but with a heavenly mind, and do worldly actions, being levelled by a spiritual rule. Therefore it is said, "Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." Albeit God ordains to run this Christian race, yet he ordains no man to cast away his calling; the ploughman to quit his plough, the servant his service, or the tradesman his trade; but every man continue in his calling, and yet run on, holding his eye on the mark; for every point of a man's service done as service to God, shall promote him in his race.

What's Paul's behaviour in this race? "One thing I do."—Being sensible of short remaining in the race, he sets himself to this one thing; he takes not many turns in hand, or if he did, he put them into this one thing: he laid aside all that might hinder or divert him from this one thing; whereby he teaches us to lay aside every weight that presses down. The care of lawful business, in as far as it draws from God, cast thou away the care, but do the business. In loss or

gain, labour to further in this one thing, and be sure, time what thou wilt, thou shalt get eternal life; and then, what lovest thou? Cast away lumpish sorrow in common business; streight all things to the rule of the word; and let all the points of thy calling and work be done, as parts of that one necessary thing.

“Forgetting the things that are behind.”—This is another point of his behaviour in the race. Had he many faults which he behoved to remember, for his encouragement to do more? He forgot things that were past, in the estimation of them; he conceived nothing of them, and forgot all things which might teagle\* him in the way. It is true, thoughts of things done were encouragements, and things left undone were whips to drive and chase him forward, and so these teagled him not: he forgot all things that might slack his swiftness, or hinder him in the race; or he forgot things behind, as a runner of the race looks not how much of the race is to be run. Even so should we do,—forget things past that would teagle us. Look not how many things we have overcome, but how many we have to overcome; not how many good works are done, but how short we are come of that we should; what time we have to spend, that we may spend it well.

3. “Reaching forth to the things that are before.”—A third point is, he looks before him, how far he had to run; what sins there were to mortify, what he wanted of full sanctification and conformity to Christ. So should we do. Look what we want, follow to, and get that. We have little daylight, and a long journey—run fast! If ye have much pride and vanity to mortify, set yourselves to do it. Say, I must have

\* Delay, impede

this sin dead ; this cankered nature borne down, that it break not out before men ; then I must have it slain within, murdered in the hole, and my canker turned into meekness. So chase every sin to the root, and hold it out.

4. "I press toward the mark."—A fourth point of his behaviour in the race is, he bended all his forces, stretched out himself like a man that is running, having his head before his feet, looking forward to the way ; that is, he employed all his wit and pains in well-doing, set himself with might and main to overtake every good duty. So should we do,—strive with our whole heart, soul, strength, and mind, to do the duties required.

5. "On to the mark."—As he held his eye on the mark, following all the rules of the race, so should we do.

6. "For the prize of the high calling."—He held his eye on the prize for his encouragement : as a man in a race runs because of the gold, and the honour that is gotten at the score ; when he looks at these, it serves him for a pair of spurs. So when we look to the prize, or vantage that is to be had at the end of our Christian race, we will care nothing for many grieved hearts, crosses, troubles, in the top of the race, for all these further us. This reproves those who clog themselves so with the world, that they cannot run this race ; therefore, God many times pulls off such clogs from the backs of his own, that they may run the faster. He holds riches, respect of friends, and the things of this world from them ; and if, instead of these, he gives them sore hearts, disgraces, poverty, by these he is only helping them a lift, that they may run the faster. Albeit these things take the flesh off

them, yet this makes them the lighter for the race, and speeds them to the end of it.

7. The prize he runs for is glory and immortality, the perfection of his soul and body in joy and glory incomprehensible, and being with God for ever; for when his flesh shall be perfected, it shall be like the glorious body of Christ: then shall sin, sorrow, pain, grief, be done away, and instead of these, eternal joy. What reckon we then of pain, loss, disgrace, seeing eternal pleasure, durable riches, and a crown of glory abide us?

8. "Of the high calling of God."—He held his calling to the work in high estimation, for his caller was the high God. He had his *elsin*\* and *lincyel*† for sewing of leather, for he was a maker of tents, to teach us so to do our worldly calling, in packing it all up in our Christian calling.

"In Christ Jesus."—He eiks this as the back-warrant. He has told of a race, and all the parts of it how it should be run; but here he tells, that all must be done in Christ. Christ is all his confidence. To get the race run, he takes himself to Christ, to get all made possible and easy. So should we do, that we may run the race well; and to get it easy and possible, take ourselves to Christ to help us, for he is the way, the truth, and the life. We must run all the race upon his ground; he is the new and the living way—the living way that makes dead runners grow quick, and tired men grow fresh, so that all the runners are carried by coach to the race-end. And when we know that Christ must cause us run at the race, the knowing of this makes us draw strength and courage from Christ, to draw on, and run still, till we come

\* Awl.

† Twine, packthread.

to the end. If we be hungry or faint in the race, he is bread of life to refresh ; he is the Truth to direct ; the Life to hold in our life, till the race be run ; he is also our Guide and Forerunner ; The Prize we run for ; our Swiftmess, our Strength, and Perfection. For when we run on a while, as a young child that runs when his father bears him by the shoulders, he only pats and stirs with his feet, but his father bears the weight of him,—and when he comes to a mire, he only bids the child loup, but yet it is the father's strength that carries him over the mire—even so Christ carries along all his children in the Christian race ; and when they come to the last step of death, he having them in his arms, lifts them over death, and sets them safe into heaven. Therefore take courage, and be not dashed nor driven from Christ's back. Let your honest carriage tell, that ye have been at his banquet : express the virtues of Christ in a holy life if so be. Then, as ye were ranked yesterday at his table, so shall ye be ranked in heaven, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whatever task God's word has laid upon you, make use of Christ, and he shall do all your turn ; else how should bond-slaves to Satan get this race run, were it not that Christ supplies all enlack, lifts over all impediments, carries them to the race-end, and sets them in heaven himself ? God write these things in our hearts ! Amen.

# Therapeutica Sacra,

shewing shortly

THE METHOD OF HEALING THE DISEASES OF  
THE CONSCIENCE CONCERNING  
REGENERATION.

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(DEDICATION.)

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VERY NOBLE THE  
COUNTESS DOWAGER OF GLENCAIRN.

MADAM,—After the author had written and published this treatise in Latin, for the use of young students in Theology, by the earnest and frequent entreaty of friends, he was induced and persuaded to translate it into our vulgar tongue, for the benefit of those who understood not the Latin; and for preventing the labour of others, who, more forward than skilful, were about the doing of it; and had once so far proceeded, as to offer it to the press, without acquainting him therewith.

When he had finished the translation, his purpose was to have dedicated it to your Ladyship, and to have sent it abroad into the world under your protection; but weakness and sickness, the ordinary companions of age, and after them death (whereby God Almighty and Gracious called him from his la-

bours to enter into his Master's joy) seizing upon him, before he could write an Epistle Dedicatory, it was his will, that your honourable name should be prefixed unto it. In pursuance whereof, it comes now, as an orphan, to kiss your noble hands, fraughted with hopes of favour and shelter for the parent's sake, and of acceptance, as a testimony of the sincerity of the respect he carried to your Ladyship's virtues.

It hath the stronger plea for a tender reception, that it is the child of his age, being his last labour, and being brought forth in his seventy and second year; and that it comes arrayed in a suit of country cloth, which himself put upon it, being published according to the copy written with his own hand.

That it may be, as it was designed by him, useful for the good of souls, and that God may comfort you under your present sad affliction, and make up the loss of your noble husband, the late Lord High Chancellor of Scotland, is the prayer of,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's most humbly

devoted servant,

ALEXANDER DICKSON.

EDINBURGH, 13th June 1664.

# THERAPEUTICA SACRA.

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## CHAP. I.

### OF CONSCIENCE IN GENERAL.

Seeing our purpose is to speak of the curing of sundry ordinary cases, or diseases concerning Regeneration, by a prudent application and use-making of divine covenants, made about and with man; for his coming to eternal life, it is needful to speak in the entry a little, First, Of the nature of the Conscience, and use thereof in general; Next, Of the cases of the Conscience in general; Thirdly, What Regeneration is, and who is the man regenerate; Fourthly, Of divine Covenants, relating to everlasting happiness; and, Fifthly, Of the ordinary and prudent application of these Covenants in general;—that thereafter we may descend to speak of application thereof in particular cases the more clearly.

As to the First, What Conscience is, it hath pleased God, the Sovereign Lord and Judge of all men, in the creation, to put in man's soul a natural-power or faculty, whereby he might not only understand the revealed will of God (the only Lord of, and Lawgiver to, the Conscience), not only concerning what he should believe and perform, but also, might judge of his own faith and obedience, whether performed, or not performed; yea, and might judge also of the faith and obedience of others, in so far as evidences may be had of their conformity unto, or disagree-

ment from, the revealed rule of faith and manners. This power of the soul of man, whether it be considered only in its natural aptitude and fitness to judge (though not as yet, or for the time, actually judging), or whether it be looked upon as it is putting forth itself in exercise, we call it by the name of *Conscience*.

The word *Conscience* is divers ways taken; for sometimes by it is meant, the natural power of the mind, to judge both of our own and others' conformity to the rule. And in this larger acception we say, Every man hath a Conscience, that is, Every man, whether male or female, whether old or young, whether sleeping or waking, hath a faculty, which may, and sometimes shall, judge of their own and others' behaviour towards God. Sometimes it is taken for that natural power of the mind, putting forth itself actually in exercise, by judging of others. So doth the apostle take it: "I trust," saith he, "we are made manifest in your Consciences," (2 Cor. v. 11). But here, in this treatise, we take Conscience more strictly, as it examineth and judgeth of ourselves; for, in this sense, it is most properly called Conscience, or joint-knowledge; partly, because it supposeth, that God and we know our obedience or disobedience, to the rule prescribed to us by Him;—partly, because Conscience imports, first our knowledge of the rule, and, next, our knowledge of our behaviour in relation to the rule, and our comparing of these two together, and passing of sentence on ourselves answerably.

Conscience, as it doth respect ourselves, is no other thing, in effect, than the understanding power of our souls examining how matters do stand betwixt God and us; comparing His will revealed, with our

state, condition, and carriage, in thoughts, words, or deeds done or omitted, and passing judgment thereupon as the case requires. So that in the court of Conscience (which is God's deputy in us, as it were), these five things are to be considered; 1. The duty of self-examination; 2. The thing we are to examine; 3. The rule whereby we are to examine; 4. The process of the Conscience unto sentence-giving; and, 5. The execution of the sentence so far as the Conscience may.

As to the First, The duty of examination of ourselves, and judging ourselves, it is required of us, lest we be judged of God and chastised with sharp rods (1 Cor. xi. 31, 32), and hereunto we are exhorted: "Commune with your own hearts upon your beds, and be still," (Psal. iv. 4).

As for the Second,—the thing which we are to examine concerning ourselves—it is one of three, or all the three, in their order; to wit, either our Estate; whether we be in the state of nature, under wrath, or not: or whether we be regenerate, and in the state of grace though faith in Jesus Christ, or not. Of this speaketh the apostle (2 Cor. xiii. 5), "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." Or it is our Condition; whether being in the state of grace, our present disposition or inclination of heart and affections be such, as becometh a man reconciled, or not. To this point of examination, Christ doth call the angel of the Church of Ephesus (Rev. ii. 5), "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen;" or, the thing we are to examine, is our deeds, words, and thoughts actually done or omitted; the neglect of which examination is reprov'd, (Jer. viii. 6, and Rev. ii. 19, 20).

The Third thing to be looked unto in the court of Conscience, is the rule whereby we are to examine ourselves in all, or any of the former respects, which is the revealed will of God in holy scripture; wherein is set down to us what we should believe, and what we should do, and what is the reward of the obedience of faith, and what is the punishment of disobedience. And here, if the Conscience be not well informed, and the rule closely cleaved unto, the erring Conscience may swallow down the grossest idolatry, and cry up Diana for a great goddess (Acts xix. 28), and make the murderers of the saints conceive, that in killing them they do God good service, (John xvi. 2).

The Fourth thing is, the judicial process of the Conscience, for giving such a sentence of direction, for what is to be done, or of absolution or condemnation, in the point examined and found done, or not done: which process, if the Conscience be well informed, is after the manner of clear reasoning by way of Syllogism, wherein we lay down the rule given by the supreme lawgiver, in the major, or first proposition. Then we do lay ourselves to the rule in the minor, or second assumed proposition; and from the comparison of ourselves with the rule, we give our sentence in the third room, which is called the conclusion. As for example, if the Conscience be about to give direction for what is to be done, it reasoneth thus:

What God hath appointed to be the only rule of faith and manners, I must take heed to follow it as the rule.

But, the holy scripture God hath appointed to be the only rule of faith and manners.

Therefore, I must take heed to follow the scripture as the only rule.

Or more shortly,—the Lord hath commanded to repent and turn unto him (offering reconciliation in Christ), therefore it is my duty so to do.

But in the process of the Conscience unto conviction or absolution, sometimes more, sometimes fewer reasonings are used.

As for example ; for conviction, the process goeth thus :

That which God hath commanded me, I should have done :

But to repent and turn to him, he hath commanded me.

Therefore, I should have repented and turned to God.

Again, he that hath not obeyed the Lord, in repenting of his evil ways and turning unto God, is under great guiltiness, and worthy of death, by the sentence of the law.

But, “such a one am I,” may every impenitent person say of himself :

And therefore may conclude of himself, “I am under great guiltiness, and worthy of death by the sentence of the law.”

Likewise, in the process of the Conscience, a humble person well informed, may reason thus :

That way of reconciliation which God hath appointed a self-condemned sinner to follow, I am bound to follow :

But this way (and no other) hath God appointed, that the sinner, convinced of sin, and of deserved wrath, should flee to Christ Jesus the Mediator, that by him he may be justified, sanctified, and saved.

Therefore, this way of reconciliation, and no other, I am bound to follow.

Again, whosoever, by the grace of God, in the sense of sin and deserved wrath, is fled unto Christ for righteousness and eternal life, and in Christ's strength is endeavouring to give new obedience to the will of God, is undoubtedly a true believer and a child of God :

But, "such a one am I," may the humbled sinner, fled to Christ, say of himself :

Therefore, I am by the grace of God undoubtedly a true believer and a child of God.

And yet again he may go on, to strengthen his faith and to comfort himself in the Lord thus :

Whosoever in the sense of sin, poverty and weakness, hath fled to Christ the Redeemer, resolved never to part with him ; and hath consecrated himself, in the strength of Christ, to endeavour to give new obedience to the will of God, he is an heir with Isaac of the promised blessings, and may hope to have them perfectly in possession at last.

But "such a one am I," may the humbled sinner, fled to Christ, say of himself :

Therefore, I am an heir of the promised blessings with Isaac, and may hope to have them perfect in possession at last.

Such a process as this doth the Conscience of the regenerate man follow, when he reneweth the acts of his repentance, and sentenceth himself to be worthy of what the law pronounceth against his sin ; and when he reneweth the acts of his faith in Christ, through whom alone he is freed from the deserved curse of the law.

As to the Fifth thing to be observed in the court

of Conscience, which is, the execution of the sentence it hath pronounced; because the Conscience is set over the man by God, as judge-depute, therefore, it goeth about in the name of God, by and by to execute as it may, the sentence justly pronounced by it; and according to the nature of the sentence of condemnation or absolution pronounced by it, it stirreth up divers motions and affections in the heart; some of them sad and sorrowful, some of them joyful and comfortable. The sad and bitter passions that follow upon the sentence of conviction and condemnation justly pronounced, are shame, grief, fear, anxiety, vexation, and such-like; whereby the guilty sinner is either fretted as with a worm, or fired and tormented. Of this we have an example in our first parent Adam, who, being convicted in his conscience of sin and deserved wrath, did flee from the face of God, all amazed and affrighted. "The Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? and he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself," (Gen. iii. 9, 10).

But the Conscience, after it is furnished by the gospel to absolve the penitent believer fled to Christ, doth stir up more sweet and comfortable motions in the heart, such as are peace, comfort, joy, gladness, exultation, confidence, and such like, An example whereof we see in Paul: "Our rejoicing," saith he, "is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world," (2 Cor. i. 12).

So the Conscience, after it is wounded by the man's transgression, doth the part of a judge, citing the man before its tribunal; and the part of an officer,

presenting the man at the bar; and the part of an accuser, challenging the man for his transgression; and the part of the recorder, producing the book of statutes; and the part of sufficient witnesses, proving and convicting him of the deed done.

Again, it doth the part of a judge, pronouncing sentence and condemning the convicted transgressor; and the part of a serjeant and marshal, binding the condemned wretch; and the part of the prison and stocks, pinching and pressing the bound sinner; and the part of the burrio,\* scourging and tormenting him.

But the Conscience, after examination, finding the man either innocent and free of the crime, or forgiven and reconciled to God by Christ, after repentance and faith, embracing the Redeemer, it doth the part of an honest friend, carefully comforting the innocent or penitent; and the part of an advocate, excusing and defending the man against all challenges; and the part of witnesses compurgators; and the part of the judge absolving; and the part of the rewarder.—And so much concerning the nature and use of Conscience, as may suffice our purpose.

## CHAP. II.

### OF CASES OF CONSCIENCE IN GENERAL.

A case of Conscience, taken in a large sense, comprehends every accident which any way affects or qualifieth the Conscience. And in this sense, the persuasion and certainty which the Conscience may have, the soundness, health and strength of the Conscience, may be called cases, and good cases of the Conscience.

\* Executioner.

So also, any effect which the Conscience doth work on the soul, such as are peace of Conscience, comfort and joy in the heart, may be called cases of the Conscience also.

But the cases whereof we are to treat, are the ill cases of the Conscience, whereby it is fallen from the soundness and straightness it should have, which we call by the name of wounds, diseases, and sickness of the Conscience; whereunto, that we may descend to speak more orderly, a two-fold difference is to be observed:

First, we must put difference between a healthy and a sick Conscience. A healthy Conscience is that which, after examination of our ways according to the rule of God's word, doth justly absolve us, and speaketh peace to us toward God. Of such a Conscience it is said by Solomon, "A sound heart is the life of the flesh," (Prov. xiv. 30). By the heart, he meaneth the Conscience, which ordinarily in scripture is called the heart. And he saith, the sound Conscience is the life of the flesh; because the body is so much in better case, that the Conscience be at peace toward God. And this blessing is allowed upon every believer in Christ, in his orderly walking. "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind," (2 Tim. i. 7). A Conscience in this disposition needeth not medicine, but spiritual nourishment, and exercise in all Christian duties.

A sick Conscience we call that which either is senseless of its own evils and dangers, and sitteth down securely, and resteth without a warrant; or, which is justly wounded, and labours under the sense of its pain; or, which is unquiet upon mistakes, and

ignorance of making use of the true remedy. Of such a sick Conscience we are to speak; if possibly, by God's blessing, a word in season may be spoken, to waken a secure Conscience, or to refresh the weary soul; that being recovered from its malady, it may be able to feed upon the bread and water of life, and work the works of God in the strength of Christ.

Secondly, We must put difference between a troubled soul, and a troubled Conscience; for the soul is more largely taken than the Conscience. The soul comprehendeth all the powers and faculties of the man; but the Conscience, as we speak of it, is only one faculty of the mind, judging of the man's moral ill or well-being; and so, all cases of the Conscience are cases of the soul; but all the cases of the soul, are not cases of the Conscience. For, the soul may be troubled, while the Conscience is not troubled at all; yea, a man may have a commendable trouble in his soul, when he seeth God dishonoured, or his church in hazard, whereby his Conscience is so far from being troubled, that such a holy trouble strengthens his Conscience in his address to God, as is in many places of the Psalms to be seen.

Again, A man's mind may be troubled by sundry natural or civil motives, while the Conscience is allowably quiet; as in losses of things temporal, fears, pains, or unexpected inconveniences occurring; yea, there may be passions and perturbations of the mind in persons that are not capable for the time of the exercise of Conscience, as may be seen in young infants, and in the elder sort, in fits of fever, melancholy, and frenzy. And yet further, it is possible that passions, perturbations, and troubles of soul, may be found without any disease of the Conscience; because our

Lord Jesus, in the days of his humiliation, was a man acquainted with sorrows, but was not obnoxious to sin, or any self-challenging, for he knew no sin in himself. He had trouble in his soul, but could not have trouble of Conscience: "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John xii. 27). Of the cases of the soul we speak not here, but of the sinful diseases of the Conscience.

There is also a third difference to be observed between common cases of Conscience, and these that specially concern regeneration. Common cases comprehend all these questions and doubts, wherein the Conscience is seeking light and resolution about the rule of faith and manners, that it may better inform itself about the sense of Scripture, and about the application thereof in the point of direction in faith and practice. These common cases are of as large extent as the bulk of divinity, as large as the doctrine held forth in Scripture concerning faith and manners; for there is not any one article of faith or duty prescribed as a point of piety or righteousness, about which questions may not be moved, and cases propounded, wherein the Conscience may seek satisfaction.

Of this huge great tree, we take but only one branch to speak of, so far as maketh for our purpose concerning regeneration.

## CHAP. III.

OF REGENERATION, WHAT IT IS ; AND THE REGENERATE  
MAN, WHO HE IS.

We speak not here of the regeneration of elect infants dying in their infancy ; God hath his own way of dealing with them ; but of the regeneration of those who are capable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word, which we may thus describe.

Regeneration (being one in effect with effectual calling) is the work of God's invincible power and mere grace, wherein, by his Spirit accompanying his word, he quickeneth a redeemed person lying dead in his sins, and reneweth him in his mind, will, and all the powers of his soul ; convincing him savingly of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and making him heartily to embrace Christ and salvation, and to consecrate himself to the service of God in Christ, all the days of his life.

The main thing we must take heed to in this work, is to give to God entirely the glory of his grace, and power, and wisdom, so that the glory of man's regeneration be neither given to man, nor man made sharer of the glory with God ; but God may have the whole glory of his free grace, because out of his own good will, not for any thing at all foreseen in man, he lets forth his special love on the redeemed in a time acceptable. And the glory of his almighty power, because by his omnipotent and invincible working, he makes the man dead in sins to live, opens his eyes to take up savingly the things of God, takes away the heart of stone, and makes him a new creature, to will and to do his holy will. And the glory of his

wisdom, who dealeth so with his creature, as he doth not destroy, but perfect the natural power of man's will ; making the man regenerated, most freely, deliberately, and heartily to embrace Christ, and to consecrate himself to God's service. The reason why we urge this, is, because Satan, by corrupting the doctrine of regeneration, and persuading men that they are able of themselves, by the common and the natural strength of their own free will, without the special and effectual grace of God, both to convert themselves and others also, doth foster the native pride of men ; hindereth them from emptying and humbling themselves before God ; keepeth them from self-denial ; doth mar the regeneration of them that are deluded with this error, and obscureth what he can, the shining of the glory of God's grace, power, and wisdom, in the conversion of men. For whatsoever praise proud men let go toward God for making men's conversion possible, yet they give the whole glory of actual conversion to the man himself, which Christ ascribeth to God only, and leaveth no more for man to glory in his spiritual regeneration, than he hath to glory in his own natural generation, (John iii. 5-8). And the same doth the apostle teach, (Ephes. ii. 8-10, and Philip. ii. 13). " It is God (saith he) which worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." And therefore it is the duty of all Christ's disciples, but chiefly their duty who are consecrated to God, to preach up the glory of God's free grace, omnipotent power, and unsearchable wisdom ; to live in the sense of their own emptiness, and to depend upon the furniture of grace for grace, out of Christ's fulness ; and zealously to oppose the proud error of man's natural ability for converting himself ;

as they love to see and find the effectual blessing of the ministry of the gospel, and themselves accepted for true disciples, at the day of their meeting with Christ the judge at his second coming.

For opening up of regeneration, these five propositions must be holden. The First is this,—“The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for, they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,” (1 Cor. ii. 14).

The Second is this,—It is the Spirit of God which convinceth man of sin, of true righteousness, and of judgment, (John xvi. 9, 10, 11).

The Third is this,—In the regeneration, conversion, and quickening of a sinner, God, by His invincible power, createth and infuseth a new life, and principles thereof. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,” (Psal. cx. 3, John v. 21, vi. 63).

The Fourth is this,—The invincible grace of God, working regeneration and a man’s conversion, doth not destroy the freedom of man’s will, but makes it truly free, and perfects it. “I will make a covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, and will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts,” (Jer. xxxi. 31).

The Fifth is this,—Albeit a man, in the act of God’s quickening and converting of him, be passive, and in a spiritual sense dead in sins and trespasses, yet, for exercising external means, whereof God maketh use unto his conversion, for fitting him, and preparing him for a gracious change (such as are, hearing of the word, reading it, meditating on it, inquiring after the meaning of it,) the natural man hath a natural power thereunto as to other external actions;

which sufficeth to take away excuse from them who have occasion of using the means, and will not use them. (Matt. xxiii. 37).

For clearing of the first proposition, we must remember, that the object of actual regeneration, conversion, and effectual calling, is the man elected or redeemed by Christ, lying in the state of defection from God, destitute of original righteousness, at enmity with God, bently inclined to all evil, altogether unfit and impotent, yea, even spiritually dead to every spiritual good, and specially to convert, regenerate, or quicken himself. For albeit after the fall of Adam, there are some sparks of common reason remaining, whereby he may confusedly know that which is called spiritual good, acceptable and pleasant unto God, and fit to save his soul; yet the understanding of the unrenewed man judgeth of that good, and of the truth of the Evangel wherein that good is proponed, to be mere foolishness; and doth represent the spiritual object, and sets it before the will, as a thing uncertain or vain: and the will of the unrenewed man, after deliberation and comparison made of objects, some honest, some pleasant, and some profitable in appearance, naturally is inclined to prefer and chioose any seemingly pleasant or profitable thing, whether the object be natural or civil, rather than that which is truly honest, and morally good. But if it fall out that a spiritual good be well, and in fair colours described unto the unrenewed man, yet he seeth it not, but under the notion of a natural good, and as it is clothed with the image of some natural good, and profitable for preserving its standing in a natural being and welfare therein. So did the false prophet Balaam look upon the felicity of the right-

eous in their death, when he did separate eternal life from faith and sanctification, and did rend asunder the means from the end appointed of God, saying, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." (Numb. xxiii. 10).

After this manner the woman of Samaria apprehended the gift and grace of the Holy Ghost, and saving grace offered to her by Christ: "Lord," saith she, "give me of that water, that I may not thirst again, and may not come again to draw water," (John iv. 15). So also did the misbelieving Jews judge of the application of Christ's incarnation and suffering, for their spiritual feeding, (John vi. 33-35); for, "the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned," and the natural man is destitute of the spirit of illumination, (1 Cor. ii. 14.) And the wisdom of the flesh is enmity to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, yea, it cannot be subject unto it, (Rom. viii. 7). The power, therefore, of the natural or unrenewed man, is not fitted for the discerning, and loving of a spiritual good, because he is altogether natural and not spiritual; for a supernatural object requireth a supernatural power of the understanding and will to take it up, and rightly conceive of it. But of this supernatural faculty the unrenewed man is destitute, and in respect of spiritual discerning, he is dead, that he cannot discern spiritual things spiritually.

As for the second proposition anent a man's regeneration, the Lord, that he may break the carnal confidence of the person whom he is to convert, first, sheweth him his duty by the doctrine of the law and covenant of works, making him to see the same by the powerful illumination of the Holy Spirit, and so,

taketh away all pretext of ignorance. Secondly, he sheweth him his guiltiness and deserved damnation wherein he is involved, and so, taketh away all conceit and imagination of his innocency. Thirdly, he doth convince him of his utter inability to satisfy the law, or to deliver himself from the curse thereof, either by way of action and obedience, or by way of suffering, and paying of the penalty of the violated law of God; and so, overturneth all confidence in himself, or in his own works. Whence followeth the elect man's desperation to be delivered by himself, because he seeth himself a sinner, and that all hope of justification by his own deeds or sufferings is cut off. Now, that this is the work of the Holy Spirit, is plain: "When the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall convince the world of sin," (John xvi. 8). And in this condition sundry of God's dear children, for a time, are kept under the bonds of the law, under the spirit of bondage and sad conviction.

As for the third proposition,—the Lord, after He hath laid the sin of his elect child who is to be converted, to his charge, by the doctrine of the law, first, openeth up a light unto him in the doctrine of the gospel, and lets him see that his absolution from sin, and his salvation is possible, and may be had, by flying unto Christ the Redeemer. Secondly, the Lord drawing near the humbled self-condemned soul, deals with him by way of moral persuasion, sweetly inviting him in the preaching of the gospel, to receive the Redeemer, Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God manifested in the flesh, that by receiving of Him as he is offered in the evangel, for remission of sin, renovation of life, and eternal salvation, he may close the covenant of grace and reconciliation with God. Thirdly,

because the fall of Adam hath bereft man of all spiritual and supernatural power, till he be supernaturally quickened and converted by the omnipotent power of God's grace, therefore, the Lord superaddeth unto moral persuasion, effectual operation, and formeth in the soul a spiritual faculty and ability for doing what is pleasant unto God, and tendeth to save himself according to the will of God. This infusion of a new life, sometimes is called the forming of the new creature; sometimes regeneration; sometimes rising from the dead, and vivification, or quickening of the man; sometimes saving grace, and the life of God, and the seed of God; having in it the principle of all saving graces and habits, which are brought forth afterward to acts and exercise.

Meantime, true it is that all men, because of their inborn corruption, have an inclination and bent disposition to resist the Holy Ghost; but when the Lord will actually convert the man, he overcometh and taketh away actual resistance, and doth so break the power of natural rebellion, that it doth not for ever after reign in him. For if God did not take away actual resistance of the man in his conversion, no conversion would certainly follow, and God would be disappointed of his purpose to convert the man, even when he hath put forth his almighty power to work conversion. But God doth so wisely and powerfully stir up this newly infused life of grace, and setteth it so to work, that the understanding and judgment, like a counsellor, and the will, like a commanding emperor, and the active power of the new infused faculty, as an officer, do all bestir themselves to bring forth supernatural operations. Whence it cometh to pass, that the new creature beginneth to look kindly on

Christ the Redeemer, and to desire to be united unto him; and doth stretch forth itself to embrace him heartily, for obtaining in him righteousness and salvation, as he is offered in the gospel. And so, he casts himself over on Christ, with full purpose never to shed from him, but by faith to draw out of him grace for grace, till he be perfected. And here, the man that was merely passive in his quickening and regeneration, beginneth presently to be active in his conversion, and following conversation, for God giveth to him to will and to do of his good pleasure; and he, having obtained by God's effectual operation to will and to do, doth formally will and do the good which is done.

As to the fourth proposition,—when the power of God is put forth invincibly for the converting of a soul, that invincible working is so far from destroying the natural liberty of the will, that it doth indeed preserve it, and sets it right on the right object, and doth perfect it. For, as when God openeth the eyes of a man's understanding that he doth behold the wonders of his law, when he removeth the natural blindness of the mind, and maketh a man see that the gospel is the wisdom and power of God unto salvation, which sometimes he counted to be mere foolishness, he doth no ways destroy the man's judgment or understanding; but doth correct, help, heal, and perfect it;—so, when the Holy Spirit doth powerfully and effectually move and turn the will of the man to embrace the sweet and saving offers of Christ's grace in the gospel, and make him deliberately choose this blessed way of salvation, and to renounce all confidence in his own, or any other's worth or works, he doth not destroy, but perfect the liberty of the will, and raiseth it up from death and its damnable

inclination, and maketh it most joyfully and most freely to make choice of this pearl of price, and bless itself in its choice for ever. Therefore, let no man complain of wrong done to man's free-will, when God stops its way to hell, and wisely, powerfully, graciously and sweetly moveth it to choose the way of life : but rather let men beware to take the glory of actual conversion of men, from God, and either give it wholly to their idol of free-will, or make it sharer of the glory of regeneration with God ; which glory God will not give to another, but reserve wholly to himself ; for all men, in the point and moment of regeneration, are like unto Lazarus in the grave, to whom God by commanding him to arise, gave life and power to arise out of the grave where he lay dead and rotting.

As to the fifth proposition,—we must distinguish the work of regeneration, from the preparation and disposition of the man to be regenerated, whereby he is made more capable of regeneration to be wrought in him. For the material disposition of him, fitting him for regeneration, is neither a part nor a degree of regeneration ; for albeit the Lord be not bound to these preparatory dispositions, yet he will have man bound to make use of these external means which may prepare him ; because by the use of external means (such as are, hearing of the word, catechising and conference), a man may be brought more near unto regeneration, as Christ doth teach us by his speech to that Pharisee, who was instructed in the law, and answered discreetly unto Christ ; “ Thou art not far (saith he) from the kingdom of God,” (Mark xii. 34). This preparatory disposition, in order to regeneration, is like unto the drying of timber to make it sooner

take fire, when it is casten into it. For dryness in the timber, is neither a part nor a degree of kindling or inflammation of it; but only a preparation of the timber to receive inflammation when the fire shall be set to it, or it be put in the fire, possibly, a long time after. In these preparatory exercises then, no man will deny, that the natural man unrenewed, hath a natural power to go and hear a sermon preached, to read the scripture, to be informed by catechising and conference of religion and regeneration, whereof God when he pleaseth may make use in regeneration of the man. Wherefore, whosoever in the preaching of the gospel, are charged and commanded to repent, to believe in Christ, or turn unto God, they are commanded also to use all these external means whereby they may be informed of the duty required, and of the means leading thereunto; in the exercise of which external means, they may meet with sundry common operations and effects of God's Spirit, before they be regenerated or converted, whereof the use may be found not only in, but also after, conversion. And if any man shall refuse, slight, or neglect to follow these preparatory exercises, which may prepare him for conversion, he is inexcusable before God and man, and guilty of rejecting the offer of reconciliation; yea, guilty of resisting the Holy Ghost, of which sin and guiltiness, the holy martyr Stephen chargeth the misbelieving Jews, (Acts vii. 51).

As for the regenerate man, he it is who in the acknowledgment of his sinfulness and deserved misery, and of his utter inability to help himself, doth cast away all confidence in his own parts, and possible righteousness of his own works, and fleeth to Christ offered in the gospel, that in Christ alone he may

have true wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and doth with full purpose of heart consecrate himself, and endeavour, in the strength of Christ, to serve God acceptably all the days of his life.

For the ground of this description, we have the words of the apostle, where putting a difference between the true people of God, and the counterfeit, he saith, "We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh," (Phil. iii. 3). In which description of the regenerate man, the apostle first points forth unto us three special operations of the Spirit of regeneration; then, three duties of the man regenerated.

The first operation of the Spirit of God, the only circumciser of the heart, is the humbling of the man in the sense of his sin, by the doctrine of the law, and cutting off all his confidence in his own worth, wit, free-will, and strength to help himself, so that the man hath no confidence in the flesh.

The second operation, is the infusion of saving faith, making the man humbled to close with Christ in the covenant of reconciliation, and to rest upon Him as the only and sufficient remedy of sin and misery; so that Christ becometh to him the ground of rejoicing and glorifying.

The third operation, is the up-stirring and enabling of the believer in Christ, to endeavour new obedience, and to worship God in the Spirit.

As for the three duties of the man regenerated, the first is, to follow the leading of the Spirit in the point of more and more humbling of himself before God in the sense of his own insufficiency, and eschewing of

all leaning on his own parts, gifts, works, or sufferings, or any thing else beside Christ: he must have "no confidence in the flesh."

The second duty, is to grow in the estimation of Christ's righteousness, and fulness of all graces to be let forth to the believer, enjoying him by faith, and comforting himself in Christ against all difficulties, troubles, and temptations: he must rejoice in Jesus Christ.

The third duty, is to endeavour communion-keeping with God in the course of new obedience in all cases, worshipping and serving God in sincerity of heart: he must be a worshipper of God.

As to the last thing holden forth in the apostle's words, which is the undoubted mark and evidence of the man regenerated and circumcised in heart, it standeth in the constant endeavour to grow in these three duties jointly, so as each of them may advance another; for many failings and short-comings will be found in our new obedience, and worshipping of God in the spirit. But let these failings be made use of to extinguish and abolish all confidence in our own parts and righteousness, and that our daily failings may humble us, and cut us off from all confidence in the flesh.

But let not these failings so discourage us, as to hinder us to put confidence in Christ; but by the contrair, the less ground of confidence we find in ourselves, let us raise so much higher the estimation of remission of sin and imputation of Christ's righteousness, and stir up ourselves by faith to draw more strength and ability out of Christ for enabling us to walk more holily and righteously before God. And having fled to Christ, and comforted ourselves in him,

let us not turn his grace into wantonness ; but the more we believe the grace of Jesus Christ, let us strive, in his strength, so much the more to glorify God in new obedience. And in the circle of these three duties, let us wind ourselves up stairs toward heaven ; for God hath promised, that such “ as wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint,” (Isaiah xl. 31).

In the conjunction of these three duties, the evidence of regeneration is found. If there be not a sincere endeavour after all these three duties, the evidence of regeneration is by so much darkened, and short for probation : for it is not sufficient to prove a man regenerated, that he is driven from all confidence in his own righteousness, and filled with the sense of sin and deserved wrath ; because a man that hath no more than that, may perish in this miserable condition ; as we see in Judas the traitor, whose conscience was burdened with the sense of sin, but did not seek mercy and pardon. Neither is it sufficient to boast of acquaintance with Christ, and profess great respect to him ; because many do cry, “ Lord, Lord !” who neither renounce their confidence in their own righteousness, nor worship God in spirit ; for, of such Christ saith, “ Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God,” (Matt. vii. 21). Neither is it sufficient to pretend the worshipping of God in spirit : for, all they who think to be justified by their own works, do esteem their manner of serving of God, true and spiritual service and worship ; as may be seen in the proud Pharisee glorying before God in his own righteousness, and ac-

knowledging that God was the giver unto him of the holiness and righteousness which he had. "I thank thee, O God," saith he, "that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican," (Luke xviii. 11). For, of this man, Christ saith, he returned to his house unjustified, that is, a man lying still in sin, unreconciled.

Neither is it sufficient to prove a man regenerated, to confess sin and bygone unrighteousness, and to promise and begin to amend his ways and future conversation; for, so much may a Pharisee attain. And there are many that profess themselves Christians, who think to be justified by the merits of their own and other saints' doings and sufferings, and do disdainfully scoff and mock at the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ. How many are they also, who think their bygone sins may be washed away, and be recompensed by their purpose to amend their life in time to come? How many are they, who, being willingly ignorant of the righteousness of God, which is of faith in Jesus Christ, go about to establish their own righteousness, as the Jews did? (Rom. x. 3). And how few are they who follow the example of the apostle, who carefully served God in spirit and truth, but did not lean to his own righteousness, but sought more and more to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which behaved to be made up of his imperfect obedience of the law, but that righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ? (Phil. iii. 9).

But that man, who daily in the sense of his sinfulness and poverty fleeth unto Jesus Christ, that he may be justified by his righteousness, and endeavour-eth by faith in him to bring forth the fruits of new

obedience, and doth not put confidence in these his works when he hath done them, but rejoiceth in Jesus Christ the fountain of holiness and blessedness, that man, I say, undoubtedly is regenerated, and a new creature, for so doth the apostle describe him, (Phil. iii. 3).

#### CHAP. IV.

OF DIVINE COVENANTS ABOUT THE ETERNAL SALVATION OF MEN ; AND IN SPECIAL, OF THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION ; SHEWING THAT THERE IS SUCH A COVENANT, AND WHAT ARE THE ARTICLES THEREOF.

Because the healing of the sicknesses of the Conscience cometh by a right application of divine covenants about our salvation, therefore it is necessary, that some measure of the knowledge thereof be opened up.

A divine covenant we call a contract or paction, wherein God is at least the one party, contracter. Of this sort of covenants about the eternal salvation of men (which sort chiefly belong to our purpose) there are three. The First is, the covenant of redemption past between God, and Christ God, appointed mediator before the world was, in the council of the Trinity. The Second is, the covenant of works, made between God and men, in Adam in his integrity indued with all natural perfections, enabling him to keep it, so long as it pleased him to stand to the condition. The Third is, the covenant of grace and reconciliation through Christ, made between God and believers (with their children) in Christ.

As to the covenant of redemption, for clearing the matter, we must distinguish the sundry acceptations

of the word redemption : For, 1. Sometimes it is taken for the contract and agreement of selling and buying back to eternal salvation, of lost man, looked upon as in the state of sin and misery. In which sense, we are said to be bought by Christ, both souls and bodies : “ Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your Spirit, which are God’s,” (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). And this may be called redemption by paction and agreed bargain. 2. Sometimes redemption is taken for the paying of the price agreed upon. In which sense, Christ is said to have redeemed us, by suffering of the punishment due to us, and ransoming of us : “ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,” (Gal. iii. 13). 3. Sometimes redemption is taken for the begun application of the benefits purchased in the covenant by the price paid : “ In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace,” (Ephes. i. 7.) 4. Sometimes redemption is taken for the perfect and full possession of all the benefits agreed upon between the Father, and Christ His Son the Mediator. In which sense, we are said to be “ sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession,” (Ephes. i. 14) ; and in Ephes. iv. 30, it is said, “ Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption ;” which is the day of judgment, when Christ shall put us in full possession of all the blessedness which He purchased by bargain and payment for us.

In this place, we take redemption in the first sense, for the covenant past between the Father, and Christ his Son, designed Mediator, about our redemption. . .

When we name the Father as the one party, and his Son Christ as the other party in this covenant, we do not seclude the Son and Holy Spirit from being the party offended; but do look upon the Father, Son, and Spirit, one God in three persons, as offended by man's sin; and yet all three contented to take satisfaction to divine justice for man's sin in the person of the Son, as designed mediator, to be incarnate. Whereby the Son is both the party offended as God, one essentially with the Father and Holy Spirit; and the party contracter also, as God, designed mediator personally for redeeming man, who with consent of the Father and Holy Spirit, from all eternity willed and purposed in the fulness of time, to assume the human nature in personal union with himself, and for the elect's sake to become man, and to take the cause of the elect in hand, to bring them back to the friendship of God, and full enjoyment of felicity for evermore.

When therefore we make the Father the one party, and the Son designed Mediator the other party, speaking with the scripture, for the more easy up-taking of the covenant, let us look to one God in three persons, having absolute right and sovereign power according to his own pleasure to dispose of men, looked upon as lying before God (to whom all things are present) in sin and death, drawn on by man's own deserving; and yet for the glory of his grace resolving to save the elect, so as his justice shall be satisfied for them, in and by the second person of the Trinity, the eternal and co-essential Son of the Father.

This covenant of redemption then may be thus described:—It is a bargain, agreed upon between the Father and the Son designed mediator, concerning the elect (lying with the rest of mankind in the state

of sin and death, procured by their own demerit) wisely and powerfully to be converted, sanctified and saved, for the Son of God's satisfaction and obedience (in our nature to be assumed by Him) to be given in due time to the Father, even unto the death of the cross.

In this bargain or agreement, the scripture importeth clearly, a selling and a buying of the elect: "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased by his own blood," (Acts xx. 28.) "Ye are bought with a price," (1 Cor. vi. 20, and 1 Pet. i. 18.) The seller of the elect, is God; the buyer, is God incarnate; the persons bought, are the church of the elect; the price, is the blood of God, to wit, the blood of Christ, who is God and man in one person.

This covenant of redemption, is in effect one with the eternal decree of redemption, wherein the salvation of the elect, and the way how it shall be brought about is fixed, in the purpose of God, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will, as the Apostle sets it down in Ephes. I. unto the 15th verse.

And the decree of redemption is in effect a covenant, one God in three persons agreeing in the decree, that the second person, God the Son, should be incarnate, and give obedience and satisfaction to divine justice for the elect: unto which piece of service the Son willingly submitting himself, the decree becometh a real covenant indeed.

But for further satisfaction, that there is such a covenant between the Father and the Son, as we have said, for redeeming of the elect, scripture giveth us evidence six ways.

The First way is by expressions, which import and presuppose a formal covenant between the parties buying and selling; the Second way is, by styles and

titles given to Christ the Redeemer; the Third is, by expressions relating to an eternal decree for execution and performance of the covenant of redemption; the Fourth is, by representation of this covenant in the Levitical types; the Fifth is, by Christ the Redeemer now incarnate his ratification of the covenant; and the Sixth way is, by holding forth to us the heads and articles agreed upon, wherein the covenant consists.

**THE FIRST PROOF.** As to the expressions, importing a formal covenant, first, (Eph. i. 7), it is called a redemption, or a buying of the elect out of sin and misery by blood: shewing that no remission of sin could be granted by justice, without shedding of blood, and Christ undertook to pay the price, and hath paid it.

Again, the inheritance which the elect have promised unto them, is called a purchase, importing that the disponder of the inheritance to the elect, must have a sufficient price for it; and that the Redeemer hath accepted the condition, and laid down the price craved for it, (Eph. i. 14), and so bought back lost heaven and forfeited blessedness to so many sinners, who otherwise, for sin, might justly have been excluded and debarred therefrom for ever.

A third expression is holden forth, (Acts xx. 28), wherein God disponder, and God Redeemer are agreed, that the elect shall go free, for God the Redeemer's obedience unto the death, who hath now bought them with his blood.

A fourth expression is in plain terms set down by Paul, "Ye are bought with a price," (1 Cor. vi. 20): God the disponder selleth, and God the Redeemer buyeth the elect to be his conquest, both body and

spirit. And Peter more particularly expresseth the price of redemption agreed upon to be not gold or silver, but the blood of the Mediator Christ, the innocent Lamb of God, slain in typical prefigurations from the beginning of the world, and slain in real performance in the fulness of time, (1 Pet. i. 18-21).

A fifth expression is that of our Lord Jesus in the institution of the sacrament of His Supper, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins," (Matt. xxvi. 28).

Here an agreement between the Redeemer, and God disposer, that these MANY, which are the elect, shall have remission of sins, for the Redeemer's ransom of blood paid for them. The purchase of this ransom of blood he maketh over in the covenant of grace and reconciliation to believers in him, and sealeth the bargain with them by the sacrament of his Supper.

**THE SECOND PROOF.** The second evidence of this covenant of redemption past between God, and God the Son Mediator designed, is from such titles and styles as are given to Christ, in relation to the procuring of a covenant of grace and reconciliation between God and us. First, He is called a Mediator of the covenant of reconciliation, interceding for procuring of it, and that not by a simple entreaty, but by giving himself over to the Father, (calling for satisfaction to justice, that reconciliation might go on), for paying a compensatory price, sufficient to satisfy justice for the elect: "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man (to wit, God incarnate), the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all (to wit, elect children), to be testified in due time," (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.)

Another title is given to him by Job (chap. xix. 25), where he is called a Redeemer, a near Kinsman, who before his incarnation had obliged himself to take on human nature, and to pay the price of redemption (represented by slain sacrifices), for the elect his kinsmen.

A third title is held out, in that he is called a surety of a better covenant (Heb. vii. 22), whereby is imported, that God would not pass a covenant of grace and reconciliation to men, except he had a good surety, who would answer for the debt of the party reconciled, and would undertake to make the reconciled stand to his covenant. And Christ undertook the suretyship, and so hath procured and established this covenant of grace, much better than the covenant of works, and better than the old covenant of grace with Israel, as they made use of it. This necessarily imports a covenant between him and the Father's justice, to whom he becometh surety for us: for, what is suretyship, but a voluntary transferring of another's debt upon the surety, obliging him to pay the debt for which he engageth as surety?

A fourth title given to Christ is, that he is a reconciliation by way of permutation; the atonement. "We have by Christ received the atonement, (Rom. v. 11); that is, that which hath pacified the Father's justice, and reconciled him to us, is made over in a gift unto us; for, by Christ's procurement we have God made ours, and Christ pacifying God, put, as it were, in our bosom: for God having sold us to Christ, by taking Christ's satisfaction for ours, he hath come over to us as reconciled, and given us Christ the Reconciler and the Atonement, to be ours. Here is an agreement made between God and Christ, and the

condition of the agreement between the parties for our behoof, clearly imported and presupposed.

The fifth title given to Christ, is this,—he is called the propitiation (1 John ii. 2), whereby God is pacified, not only for the believing Jews, but also for the whole elect world which should believe in him. And if he be the pacifying propitiation, then God hath satisfaction in all that his justice craved from Christ for the elect; and (Rom. iii. 25), he is called a propitiatory sacrifice, wherewith God is so well pleased, that he makes offer of him to us, and sets him forth to us for pacifying our Conscience through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for remission of sins, without breach of justice: wherein, what price God required and was paid by Christ, is insinuated and presupposed; for satisfaction could not be, except the price agreed upon, had been promised and accepted before in covenanting.

**THE THIRD PROOF.** The third evidence, proving that there was a covenant of redemption past before the beginning of the world, is, because the eternal decree of God was fixed about the way of redemption to be fulfilled in time: for “Known unto God were all his works from the beginning.” (Acts xv. 18). And whatsoever God doth in time, he doth it according to the eternal counsel of his own will, (Eph. i. 11). Now, Christ the eternal Son of God, being made man, laid down his life for his sheep: “The Son of man goeth, as it was determined, but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed,” (Luke xxii. 22). And whatsoever Christ suffered, was by the determined counsel of God, (Acts ii. 23). And God the Son, before he was incarnate, declares the decree of the

kingdom promised unto him by the Father, and of the victories which he should have over all his enemies, and of the felicity and multitude of the subjects of his kingdom, that should believe in him. "I will declare the decree" (Psal. ii. 7), saith he. Presupposing therefore the decree of God, of sending his eternal Son into the world, to become a man and to suffer, and thereafter to reign for ever, we must also necessarily presuppose the consent of the Son, making paction with the Father and the Spirit, fixing the decree and agreement about the whole way of redemption, to be brought about in time. For the same person, Christ Jesus, who dwelt among men in the days of his humiliation, was with the Father from eternity, (John i. 14); and as "by him all things were made, which were made" (John i. 2, 3), so, without him nothing was decreed which was decreed, (Prov. viii. 22-32); which also is manifest in the apostle's words, "He saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," (2 Tim. i. 9).

For, as before the beginning of the world, the elect were given to the Son, designed Mediator to be incarnate, and the price agreed upon; so also grace to be given in time to the redeemed by compact, was given from eternity unto Christ, their designed Advocate. Also, (Eph. i. 3, 4, 5), we were elected in Christ unto holiness and salvation, and unto all spiritual blessings, and were predestinated to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ. And "We are redeemed not with gold or silver, but by the precious blood of Christ, who was predestinated before the beginning

of the world," (1 Pet. i. 18, 19, 20). Whereby it is manifest, that the covenant between the Father and the Son, was transacted concerning the incarnation of the Son, and his sufferings, death, and resurrection, and all other things belonging to the salvation of the elect.

THE FOURTH PROOF.—The fourth evidence of the passing of a covenant between the Father and the Son, is holden forth in the typical priesthood of Levi, by the altar and sacrifices, and the rest of the Levitical ceremonies which were prescribed by God. For as these things were testimonies, preachings, declarations, and evidences of a covenant past of old between God the disponder, and the Son the Redeemer, about the way of justifying and saving such as believed in the Messiah by an expiatory sacrifice, to be offered in the fulness of time for the redeemed ; so also they were prefigurations, predictions, prophecies, and pledges, of the Redeemer's paying of the promised price of redemption. And this agreed upon price (because of the perfections of the parties contractors, the Father and the Son) was holden and esteemed as good as paid, from the beginning of the world ; and the agreed upon benefits purchased thereby, to wit, grace and glory, were effectually bestowed on the faithful before Christ's incarnation, as the Psalmist testifies : " The Lord," saith he, " is a sun and shield ; the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," (Psal. lxxxiv. 11) ; and, " Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me into glory," (Psalm lxxiii. 24) ; and that, because the promised price of redemption was of no less worth, to give

righteousness and life eternal to believers in the Messiah to come, than the price now paid is now of worth to give for it, righteousness and life eternal, to these that believe in the Messiah now come, Jesus Christ incarnate. And this donation of saving graces, as remission of sin, and carrying on to life eternal, was sealed unto believers in the covenant of reconciliation, by the appointed sacraments of circumcision and the paschal lamb.

**THE FIFTH PROOF.**—The fifth evidence of a covenant past between the Father and the Son Mediator to be incarnate, is this,—Christ now incarnate, doth ratify all these things which the Father, and himself not yet incarnate, and the Holy Spirit had spoken in the Old Testament, about the salvation of the elect, and the price of their redemption, and of the conditions to be performed on either hand ; and, as it were of new, doth repeat and renew the covenant, which before was past between the Father and Himself, before he was incarnate. For (Luke ii. 49), speaking to Joseph and his mother, when he was about twelve years old, he saith “ Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business ?” And (Matt. iii. 13), he presents himself pledge and surety for sinners before the Father, to be baptized for them with the baptism of affliction, and to fulfil all righteousness, as was agreed upon before (verse 15) ; whereupon the Father doth receive and admit the surety, and his undertaking for payment (verse 17), and, “ Lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased !” And (John v. 39), he standeth to all things which were testified of him in the scriptures, “ Search the scriptures ;

for in them ye think to have eternal life : and they are they that testify of me." And (verse 36) he professeth that all he doth, is with the Father's consent and concurrence ; and that he came into the world, that he might finish what the Father had sent him to do and suffer, which he calls his work that he was about. And more specially, he shews the agreement passed between the Father and him before he came into the world, concerning his incarnation, and the discharge of his mediatory office, and his power to give eternal life to those that believe in him. For the Father sent him to be incarnate (verse 37), and that he with the Father might give " eternal life to whomsoever he will, and might quicken the dead," (verse 21). And that he might exercise judgment, authority was given to him as the Son of man, (verse 27). Yea, he sheweth that it was agreed upon between the Father and him, about all the doctrine which he should teach : " I speak to the world these things" which I have heard of him, (John viii. 26) ; and he sheweth that they were agreed about the price of redemption of the elect, and about his resurrection from the dead, and that his death did fully satisfy the Father : " As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father ; and I lay down my life for the sheep ; therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again, " This commandment have I received of the Father," (John x. 15, 17, 18). He propones, in short, the sum of the covenant past between the Father and himself, speaking to the two disciples going to Emmaus : " O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter in his own

glory ?" (Luke xxiv. 25, 26). But most briefly he sheweth the whole matter, so oft as he calleth the Father his God, and that in respect of the covenant past between God and Him to be incarnate, and now incarnate indeed.

THE SIXTH PROOF.—The sixth evidence of the covenant of redemption past between the Father and the Son, standeth in the heads and articles of the covenant wherein they were agreed.

Now, there are as many articles of the covenant, as there are injunctions, commands, and conditions required on the one hand, and promises to fulfil all on the other hand ; as many predictions as there are of Christ's sufferings, and promises made to the church through and for him. Of these many, we shall touch only at four, whereby the faith of believers in him may be confirmed about their redemption by him, and whereby the erroneous doctrine of them who evacuate the covenant of redemption of the elect, may be refuted ; wherein they teach, that Christ, by his obedience yielded unto the Father, even to the death of the cross, did purchase no more but a possibility of salvation, and no more grace for the elect than for the reprobate ; as if he had not purchased a certainty of salvation to be given to any, but had suspended all the fruit of his sufferings upon the frail, mutable, inconstant and corrupt free-will of men ; so that none can by their doctrine have more certainty of their own salvation, than they have of the certainty and stability of their own fickle mind and will ; and so, no more certainty of their own salvation, than of their own perdition. The order we shall keep in

speaking of the articles of the covenant of redemption, shall be this :

The first article, shall be of the persons redeemed.

The second article, shall be of the price of redemption to be paid by Christ in the fulness of time.

The third article, shall be about the gifts and benefits purchased for, and to be given unto the persons redeemed.

The fourth article of this covenant of redemption past between the Father and the Son, shall be of the means and ways whereby the gifts and benefits purchased, may be wisely, orderly, and effectually applied to the redeemed.

In ranking of these articles, we do not presuppose a priority of one of them before another in order of nature or time ; but we choose to speak of them in order of doctrine, for our more easy understanding of the matter.

For the covenant of redemption past between the Father and the Son, is by way of an eternal decree of the Trinity, comprehending all and whatsoever belongeth to redemption. In the discerning of which decree, there is not a first nor a last, but a joint purpose of God to bring about and accomplish all the heads and articles of the covenant, each in its own due time, order, and way appointed.

*The First Article* of the Covenant of Redemption concerneth the persons redeemed. The redeemed, in Scripture, are pointed forth under sundry expressions. Sometimes they are called the "predestinated;" sometimes the "elect;" sometimes those "whom God foreknew;" sometimes they who are "called according to his purpose;" sometimes "they that were given" to

Christ of the Father; sometimes "Christ's sheep;" sometimes the "Children of God." But whatsoever name they have, the persons are the same, according to that of the apostle: "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified," (Rom. viii. 29, 30.) The number and the names of the persons here spoken of, are the same; and they are called the "predestinated," in regard that God hath appointed them to a certain end, to wit, eternal life, to be brought thereunto effectually by certain means for the glory of God's grace. They are called "elect," (ver. 33), in regard that God, in the purpose of his good pleasure, hath severed them from among the rest of men, lying with them in the state of perdition by their own procurement, and hath designed them to be partakers of eternal salvation. They are called "foreknown," and written in the book of life, in regard God hath comprehended them in his special love, no less distinctly and unchangeably, than if he had their names written in a catalogue or book. And they are called "given unto Christ," in regard the redeeming of them, and bringing them to life, is committed to Christ. But by whatsoever name they are designed, the persons redeemed are still the same.

But whereas the elect, given to Christ, are called "the redeemed," it presupposeth, that they were considered and looked upon as now fallen by their own fault, and lying by their own demerit in sin and misery, enemies to God, and altogether unable to help themselves. For this much doth the notion of redemption,

or buying back again, import; and that it is so, is clear, because the mercy of God, the grace of God, the good-will of God, is put in scripture for the only motive and impulsive cause of redemption. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself," (Eph. i. 7-9.)

The scripture sheweth us that there is an innumerable multitude of redeemed persons, and a sort of universality of them extended unto all nations, and ages, and states of men; so that this huge multitude for whose redemption Christ's blood was shed (Matt. xxvi. 28), is justly called by the name of a world, an elect world (John iii. 16); to be called out of that reprobate world, for which Christ refuseth to intercede (John xvii. 9). The truth of this matter, the redeemed do acknowledge, in their worshipping Christ their Mediator: "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," (Rev. v. 9). These are the "all men" whom God will have saved, and doth save, (1 Tim. ii. 4); these are the "all men" of whom the apostle speaks, (2 Pet. iii. 9). God is patient toward us (to wit, his elect), not willing that any of us should perish, but that we all should come to repentance. And this the apostle giveth for a reason of the Lord's deferring his coming, till all the elect should be brought in, of whom many were not yet converted in the apostle's time, and many were

not yet born; and if Christ should not delay his coming, till they were born, and brought in to reconciliation with God, the number of the elect should be cut short.

In no place of scripture is it said, that all and every man is elect, or every man is given to Christ, or every man is predestinate unto life; in no place of scripture is it said, that Christ hath made paction with the Father for all and every man without exception; but by the contrary it is sure from scripture, that Christ hath merited and procured salvation for all them for whom he entered himself surety. Their sins were laid only on Christ, and in him condemned, satisfied for, and expiated, (Isa. liii.); for these and in their place, he offered himself to satisfy justice; for them he prayed; them only he justifieth and glorifieth: for the sentence of the Apostle (2 Cor. v. 15) standeth firm, "in Christ all are dead" (to the law), for whom and in whose room Christ did die. And therefore for these his people, the law is satisfied; from these, the curse is taken away; to them, heaven and all things necessary to salvation are purchased, and shall infallibly in due time, yea, invincibly, be applied.

Christ hath not sanctified, consecrated, and perfected all and every one, (Heb. x. 14). Only for his sheep predestinated, he laid down his life, (John x. 15, 16, 26). He did not buy with his blood all and every one, but his church, called out, and severed from the world, (Acts xx. 28). He saved not all and every man from his sins, but his own people only; to wit, whom he hath bought with his blood to be his own (Matth. i. 21), whom he hath purchased to be his own peculiar, whom he doth purify, and kindle

with a fervent desire to bring forth good works, (Tit. ii. 14).

Such as Christ hath redeemed, he loveth them infinitely, and counted them dearer to him than his life. But many shall be found to whom Christ shall say, "I never knew you," to wit, with approbation and affection, (Matt. vii. 23).

They for whom Christ hath died, shall some time glory against all condemnation; but so shall not every man be able to glory, (Rom. viii. 34, 35).

Christ never purposed to lay down his life for those, whom going to die, he refuseth to pray for; only for those who are given to him out of the world will he pray, and die, and rise, and will raise them to eternal life, (John xvii. 9).

So far is it from God's purpose and Christ's to redeem all and every man, that he hath not decreed to give every nation so much as the external necessary means for conversion and salvation: "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them," (Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20).

And for this wise and holy course of hiding the mystery of salvation from many, even wise men in the world, Christ Jesus glorifieth and thanketh the Father: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," (Matt. xi. 25).

*The Second Article.*—As to the second article of the covenant of redemption, concerning the price of redemption, and the fitting of the Redeemer for ac-

complishing the work of redemption, God would not have silver or gold, or any corruptible thing, (1 Pet. i. 18). He refuseth all ransom that can come from a mere man, (Psalm xlix. 7, 8). But he would have his own co-eternal and only begotten Son to become a man, to take on the yoke of the law, and to do all his will, that He alone might redeem the elect, who by nature are under the curse of the law. He would have him, the second Adam, to be obedient even to the death of the cross, that by his obedience many might be justified, (Rom. v. 19).

This is clearly confirmed by the apostle (Heb. x. 5-7, 10), commenting upon the 7th and 8th verse of Psalm xl. "In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure:" then said Christ coming into the world, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God,"—by the which will we are sanctified, by the offering up of the blood of Jesus once for all.

By Christ's obedience we understand, not only that which some call his active obedience, nor that which some call his passive obedience; for his active and passive obedience are but two notions of one thing: for his incarnation, subjection to the law, and the whole course of his life was a continued course of suffering; and in all his suffering, he was a free and voluntary agent, fulfilling all which he had undertaken unto the Father, for making out the promised price of redemption, and accomplishing what the Father had given him command to do. His obedience even to the death of the cross, did begin in his emptying himself to take on our nature, and the form of a servant, and did run on till his resurrection and ascension. As for these his sufferings in the end of

his life, which he suffered both in soul and body, they were the completing of his formerly begun and running obedience, but were not his only obedience for us, or his only suffering for us; for he had done and suffered much from his incarnation, before his last passion and death. But the highest degree of his obedience, whereby he bought deliverance unto us from sin and misery, and whereby he bought unto us immortality and eternal blessedness in heaven, was his death on the cross completing our ransom.

Whereas some have said, that one drop of his blood was sufficient to redeem more worlds than one, if there were any more, it is but an inconsiderate speech, and destitute of scriptural authority; for when Christ had suffered all things before the time of his death, it behoved him to be crucified also, (Luke xxiv. 26). But it behoved him not to suffer more than justice required for a ransom, but only as much as was agreed upon; and no less could satisfy. Now, this commandment he received of the Father, that he should lay down his life for his sheep, (John x. 18). For the wisdom of God thought good to testify his own holiness, and hatred of sin, and to testify his love to the elect world, and riches of his grace toward them to whom he would be merciful, by inflicting no less punishment of sin on the Mediator, his own dear Son (taking upon himself full satisfaction to justice for all the sins of all the elect given unto him to redeem), than the death both of his body and soul for a season.

And indeed, it was suitable to his holy and sovereign majesty, that for the ransom of so many thousands and millions of damnable sinners, and saving of them from everlasting torment of body and soul, no less price should be paid by the Son of God, made

man and surety for them, than his sufferings both in his body and soul for a season, as much as should be equivalent to the due deserved punishment of them whom he should redeem. And it became the justice of the infinite majesty offended, to be reconciled with so many rebels, and to bestow upon them heaven and eternal blessedness, for no less price than the sufferings of the eternal Son made man, whose humiliation and voluntary obedience, even to the death of the cross, was of infinite worth and value ;” and therefore he yielded himself to the sufferings agreed upon in the covenant of redemption both in body and soul.

*Of the Sufferings of Christ in his soul.*—Our Lord’s sufferings in his body did not fully satisfy divine justice ; 1. Because as God put a sanction on the law and covenant of works made with us all in Adam, that he and his should be liable to death both of body and soul, (which covenant being broken by sin, all sinners became obnoxious to the death both of body and soul,) so the redeemed behoved to be delivered from the death of both, by the Redeemer’s tasting of death in both kinds, as much as should be sufficient for their redemption. 2. As sin infected the whole man, soul and body, and the curse following on sin, left no part nor power of the man’s soul free ; so justice required that the Redeemer, coming in the room of the persons redeemed, should feel the force of the curse both in body and soul.

OBJECTION. But how can the soul die, seeing it is by the ordinance of God in creation made immortal? *Answer.* The death of the soul is not in all things like to the death of the body ; for, albeit the spiritual substance of the soul be made immortal, and not to be extinguished, yet it is subject to its own sort

of death, which consists in the separation of it from communion with God, in such and such degrees, as justly may be called the death of the soul; from which sort of death, the immortality of the soul not only doth not deliver, but also it doth augment it and perpetuate it, till this death be removed.

OBJECTION. But, seeing the human soul of our Lord could never be separated from the permanent holiness wherewith it was endued in the first infusion of it in the body, and could never be separated from the indissoluble personal union with the second person of the Godhead assuming it, how could his soul be subject to any degrees of death? *Answer.* Albeit the connatural holiness of the soul of Christ could not be removed, nor the personal union of it be dissolved, no, not when the soul was separated from the body, yet it was subject, by Christ's own consent, to be emptied of strength natural; to be deprived for a time of the clearness of vision of its own blessedness, and of the quiet possession of the formerly felt peace, and of the fruition of joy for a time; and so, suffer an eclipse of light and consolation, otherwise shining from his Godhead; and so, in this sort of spiritual death, might undergo some degrees of spiritual death.

*The Degrees of the Suffering of Christ's holy soul.*  
—Among the degrees of the death suffered by Christ in his soul, we may number,

1. That habitual heaviness of spirit, which haunted him all the days of his life, as was foretold by Isaiah (liii. 3), "He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." We hear he wept, but never that he laughed, and but very seldom that he rejoiced.

2. He suffered, in special, sorrow and grief in the observation of the ingratitude of them for whom he

came to lay down his life: "We hid, as it were, our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not," (Isa. liii. 3).

3. The hardness of men's hearts, and the malice of his own covenanted people, and the daily contumelies and spiteful usage he found from day to day, increased his daily grief, as by rivulets the flood is raised in the river: "He was despised and rejected of men," (Isa. liii. 3).

4. He was tempted in all things like unto us; and albeit in them all never tainted with sin (Heb. iv. 15), yet with what a vexation of his most holy soul, we may easily gather, by comparing the holiness of our Lord with the holiness of his servants, to whom nothing is more bitter than the fiery darts of the devil, and his suggestions and solicitations to sin; especially if we consider the variety of temptations, the heinousness of the sins, whereunto that impudent and unclean spirit boldly solicited his holiness (Matt. iv.); and withal, the importunity and pertinacity of the devil, who never ceased, partly by himself, partly by those that were his slaves, and partly by the corruption which he found in Christ's disciples, to pursue, press, and vex the God of glory all the time he lived on earth.

5. The guilt of all the sins, crimes, and vile deeds of the elect, committed from the beginning of the world, was imputed unto him, by accepting of which imputation, albeit he polluted not his conscience, yet he burdened his soul, binding himself to bear their deserved punishment.

Now, when we see that the vilest sinners, as liars, thieves, adulterers, cannot patiently hear themselves called liars or thieves, nor bear the shame of the vileness whereof they are really guilty, with what suffer-

ing of soul, with what clouding of the glory of his holiness, think we, did our Lord take upon his shoulders such a dunghill of all vileness, than which nothing could be more unbeseeming his holy majesty ?

6. Unto all the former degrees of suffering of his soul, the perplexity of his thoughts fell on him, with the admiration and astonishment of soul, when the full cup of wrath was presented unto him, in such a terrible way, as made all the powers of his sense and reason for a time to be at a stand. Which suffering of his soul, while the Evangelist is about to express, he saith, "He began to be sore amazed, and also to be very heavy ;" and to express himself in these words, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death," (Mark xiv. 33, 34).

OBJECTION. But did not this astonishing amazement of Christ's soul, speak some imperfection of the human nature ? *Answer.* It did no ways argue any imperfection, or lack of sanctity in him ; but only a sinless and kindly infirmity, in regard of natural strength, in the days of his flesh. For the mind of a man, by any sudden and vehement commotion arising from a terrible object, may, without sinning, be so taken up, that the swift progress of his mind in discourse may for a while be stopped, and the act of reasoning suspended a while ; all the cogitations of the mind fleeing together to consult, and not being able to extricate themselves in an instant, may stand amazed, and sit down a while, like Job's friends astonished. Now our Lord, taking on our nature and our common sinless infirmities, became like unto us in all things except sin. Daniel's infirmity at the sight of an angel, was not sin, (Dan. x).

OBJECTION. But doth not this astonishing admiration, suddenly lighting upon Christ's soul, prove that

something unforeseen of him did befall him? *Answer.* Not at all; for he knew all things that should befall him, and told his disciples thereof, and was at a point, and resolved in every thing which was to come, before it came. But this astonishing amazement did only shew forth the natural difference between things preconceived in the mind, and these same things presented to sense: for there is in the mind a different impression of the preconceived heat of a burning iron, before it do touch the skin, from that powerful impression which a hot iron thrust into the flesh doth put upon the sense. In regard of which natural difference between foresight and feeling, between resolution and experience, this astonishment befell our Lord; and in this regard, Christ is said to learn experimental obedience by these things which he suffered, (Heb. v. 8).

7. Another degree of the suffering of our Lord's soul, is the interruption, for a time, of the sensible up-taking and feeling of that quiet and peaceable enjoyment of the felicity of the human nature, given (for the point of right) unto it in its personal union with his God-head, in so far, that in the midst of many disciples, Greeks and Jews, looking on him, the vehemency of his trouble did not suffer him to hide his perturbation; for (John xii. 27,) our Lord cried out, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" and (Mark xiv. 34,) made him declare his exceeding heaviness; "My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death." In which words he insinuates, that to his sense, death was at hand; yea, that in no small measure, it had seized on him, and wrapped him up in the sorrows of death, for the time, as in a net, of which he knew he could not be holden still.

OBJECTION. But did not this huge heap of miseries take away from the human nature, the felicity of its union personally with his Godhead? *Answer,* It did indeed hide it for a time, and hinder the sensible feeling of it for a time, as it was necessary, in his deep suffering; but it did not take it away, nor yet eclipse it altogether. For as a corporal inheritance hath a threefold connection with the person owner thereof; so a spiritual inheritance hath a threefold connection with the believer's soul. The first is, of lawful title and right; the next is, of possession of the inheritance according to the lawful right; the third is, an actual fruition and present feeling of the use of the inheritance. The fruition and felt benefit and use, may be marred or suspended, and the possession stand: and the possession may be interrupted and suspended, and the lawful right remain firm. Christ had not only an undoubted right to this felicity standing unto him, by the personal union, but also a fast possession of it, in as far as the personal union was indissoluble. But the actual felt fruition in his human sense and up-taking, was so long interrupted, as the human nature was diverted from this contemplation for its present exercise, and turned to look toward the sad spectacle of imminent and incumbent wrath: especially when, and how long it was, as it were, bound to the feeling of the present stroke, which did fill the soul with sadness and grief, anxiety and vexation, without sin.

8. Neither did the vindictive justice of God, pursuing our sins in our surety, stay here; but in the garden went on to shew unto Christ the cup of wrath, and also to hold it to his head, and to press him to drink it; yea, the very dregs of the agreed upon curse of the law:—was poured into his patient and submissive

mouth, as it were, and bosom, and the most inward part of soul and body, which as a vehement flame, above all human apprehension, so filled both soul and body, that out of all his veins it drew and drove forth a bloody sweat (the like whereof was never heard), as when a pot of oil, boiling up and running over, by a fire set under it, hath yet further the flame increased, by the thrusting of a fiery mass of hot iron into it.

Hence came such a wasting and eating up of all his human strength, and emptying of his natural abilities; such a down-throwing of his mind; such a fainting and swooning of his joy, and so heavy a weight of sorrow on him, that not only he desired that small comfort of his weak disciples watching with him a little, and missed of it, but also stood in need of an angel to comfort him, (Luke xxii. 43).

It is without ground, that some of the learned have denied the cause of this agony to be, the drinking of the cup of wrath holden forth to him by the Father; saying, that the sight of it only, and of the peril he saw we were into, was the cause of this heavy exercise. For the cup was not only shewn unto him, and the huge wrath due to our sin set before him, that he should see it, and tremble at the apprehension of the danger we were in; but it was poured *into* him, and not only *on* him, that he for the sins of his redeemed, should suffer it sensibly, and as it were drink it, that the bitterness thereof might affect all the powers of soul and body. For the scripture testifies, that not only upon the sight and apprehension of this wrath and curse coming on him, the holy human nature did holily abhor it, but also, that he submitted to receive it, upon the consideration of the divine decree and agreement made upon the price to be paid by him;

and that, upon the feeling of this wrath, this agony in his soul, and bloody sweat of his body, was brought on.

OBJECTION. But how could the pouring forth of the Father's wrath upon his innocent and dear Son, consist with his fatherly love to him? *Answer.* Even as the innocence and holiness of Christ could well consist with his taking upon him the punishment of our sins; for even the wrath of a just man, inflicting capital punishment on a condemned person, suppose his own child, can well consist with fatherly affection toward the child suffering punishment. Therefore, it is not to be doubted but those two can well consist in God, in whom affections do not war one with another, nor fight with reason, as it falleth forth among men; for the affections ascribed unto God, are effects rather of his holy will toward us, than properly called affections in him. And these effects of God's will about us, do always tend to our good and blessedness at last, however diverse one from another in themselves.

Among the degrees of the sufferings of Christ's soul, we may number not only the perturbation of his mind and thoughts, but also the perturbation of his affections, and especially his fear; for his human nature was like unto ours in all things except sin, and was indeed afraid when it saw and felt the wrath of God, lest it should have been swallowed up by it. And of this fear the apostle beareth witness, saying, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, and strong cries and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared," (Heb. v. 7.)

Now, albeit this seemeth the saddest passage of all his sufferings, that he was afraid of being swallowed up, yet this his fear is not to be wondered at, nor is

it inconsistent with his holiness ; for when Christ assumed our nature (as hath been said), he assumed also all the common and sinless infirmities, passions, and perturbations of our nature. Now, it is fitting that the creature at the sight of an angry God, should tremble ; for we read, that the rocks and mountains have trembled before God, when he did let forth his terror ; and it is natural to man, at the sight of a terrible object, at the sight of a peril and evil coming upon him, but much more already come upon him (especially if the evil and peril be above all his natural strength), to tremble and fear the worst. And this becometh holy nature very well, to fear present death, off-cutting, perdition, and swallowing up in the danger, when God appeared angry, and was hasting to be avenged on sinners in the person of their Surety. What could the human soul of Christ gather from this terrible sight, but that which sense and reason did teach ? In the mean time, there was no place here for his doubting of the issue, and his escaping from 'being swallowed up ; for natural fear of the human nature, arising from the infirmity of the creature, differs very far from the fear arising from the infirmity of faith in God's faithfulness and power ; and natural fear of the worst can very well stand with the strength of faith to overcome the natural fear. For, as the sensitive appetite may abhor a bitter cup of medicine, and cause all the body tremble for fear to take it, while in the mean time, the man, by reason, is resolved to drink that bitter cup of medicine, because he confidently hopeth to help his health thereby ; so, natural fear in Christ to taste of the cup of wrath, could very well consist with strong faith and assurance to be delivered therefrom. For it is very suitable

that faith should as far overcome the natural apprehension of sense and reason natural, as reason doth overcome sense in drinking a loathsome and bitter cup of medicine.

And to clear this yet further, that extreme fear to be swallowed up of wrath, could well consist in Christ with strong faith to overcome and bear out that terrible wrath,—let it be considered, that as it was needful Christ should be subject to the infirmity of natural strength, that he might suffer death; so it was needful, that he should have strong faith, to enable him to bear out in a holy way, that which he behoved to suffer. For if, on the one hand, Christ had not been weakened, and emptied of all human strength in his flesh, he could not have been humbled enough for us; he could not have suffered so much as justice did exact for satisfaction for us; and on the other hand, if he had not stood firm in faith and love towards God's glory and our salvation, he could not have satisfied justice, nor been still the innocent and spotless Lamb of God, nor have perfected the expiatory sacrifice for us.

OBJECTION. But was he not tempted to doubt by Satan? *Answer.* We grant that he was indeed tempted by Satan to doubt; yea, we shall not stand to grant that he was tempted to desperation; but we altogether deny that he was tainted with sin by temptation in the least degree: for the scripture saith, he was tempted in all things like unto us, but yet without sin in him, or yielding in any sort to any temptation. And seeing by the Evangelist (Matt. iv.), we understand, that he was tempted in the wilderness by the devil, unto the most horrible sins that Satan could devise, and yet was not stained or polluted in

the least degree, with the least measure of yielding to the sinful temptations ; we need not stand to grant that he might be tempted, or that he was tempted unto doubting and desperation ; for this was among the most notable and prime temptations, whereby Satan in his impudent boldness, solicited the Son of God, very God and man in one person, even to doubt of that which Satan knew he was : “ If thou be the Son of God,” saith he. It is true indeed, that we who are sinners by nature, and corrupted in all the powers of our soul, cannot be tempted, tossed, and troubled, but therein our sinful nature in some measure may appear, and be polluted. But the matter was not so with our holy Lord, the God of glory, who was separate from sinners. For our impure nature is like to water in a puddle, which being stirred, doth presently become muddy and foul : but the holy human nature of Christ, was altogether pure, like unto clear and pure fountain water in a glass, which howsoever it be troubled and tossed, remaineth most pure, and free of all muddiness.

OBJECTION. But at least, was there not a conflict in our Lord between his faith, and the temptation to doubting ? *Answer.* We grant not only a conflict of Christ’s human natural strength with the burden of affliction, but also a conflict and wrestling of his faith against the temptation to doubting. For wrestling doth not always argue the infirmity of the wrestler ; for the angel who is called God (Hos. xii.) wrestles with Jacob, and in God was no infirmity. Again, wrestling doth not argue always infirmity, but doth only evidence the wrestler’s power, and the importunate obstinacy of an adversary, who being repulsed and cast down, doth not at first leave the

field, but riseth up again, insists and presseth on, so long as it pleaseth the most powerful party to suffer the adversary to make opposition.

OBJECTION. But you must grant, that in the conflict of Christ's human natural strength, with the affliction and burden of the punishment laid upon him by the Father, he was overcome, and succumbed, and died. *Answer.* Yes, indeed : but we must put a difference between the conflict of natural strength with the burden of affliction, and the conflict between faith and a temptation unto sin. In the conflict of holy human nature in Christ, with the punishment of our sins laid on him, it was not a sin to have his natural strength overpowered, and to lie down under the burden, and to lay down his life and die ; but it was a main part of his obedience ; it was the performance of his promise and undertaking, to yield himself to justice and to die for us, that we might be delivered from death eternal. But in the wrestling of his faith with the temptation unto doubting, it had been a sin to have yielded in the least degree, and that which could not consist with the perfect holiness of the Mediator, surety for sinners.

OBJECTION. But did not the perplexity of his thoughts, and the anxiety of his mind, diminish something of the vigour and constancy of his faith ? *Answer.* It did diminish nothing of the vigour and constancy of his faith ; for there is a great difference between the troubling of the thoughts, and the hesitation or weakening of faith, as there is also a great difference between the perturbations of the mind, and the perturbation of the conscience. For as the mind may be troubled, when, in the consideration of some difficulty, it cannot at first perceive an outgate, mean-

time the conscience remaining sound and quiet; so may the work of the mind's discoursing be interrupted, and at a stay for a time, faith meantime remaining untouched, wholly sound and quiet. For example, upon the sudden receiving of a wound, or upon an unexpected report of some great loss, such as befel Job, the wheels of the reasoning faculty may be at a stand for a time, and the conscience in the mean time be quiet; yea, and faith in the mean time remain strong, as we see in Job's first exercise.

Now, if this may be found in a holy imperfect man in any measure, why shall we not consider rightly of the exercise of the Holy One of Israel, suffering in his human nature the punishment of our sin?

Let us consider but one of the passages of our Lord's exercise, (John xii. 27, 28), "Now (saith he) my soul is troubled:" wherein, behold the perplexity of his mind, smitten with the horror of the curse due to us coming upon him. Then cometh forth, "What shall I say?" wherein, behold reason standing mute and altogether silent, he only lets forth the confession of his perplexity. Presently after this, he subjoineth, "Father, save me from this hour;" wherein, behold holy nature, trembling and shrinking to fall into the wrath of the Father, and according to the principles of holy nature, testifying the simple abhorrency of his soul from such an evil as is the wrath of God his Father, which, had it not been for love to save our souls, he could not have yielded his human nature to endure or bear it. Therefore he, considering that we were but lost for ever, if he should not suffer wrath for us, he repeats the sum of the covenant of redemption agreed upon, "But for this cause came I unto this hour." And last of all, he shuts up his speech and

exercise in the triumphing voice of victorious and untainted faith, "Father, glorify thy name;" and here he resteth: wherewith the Father is so well pleased, as that from heaven he speaketh to the hearing of the multitude standing by, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Among the deepest degrees of the suffering of Christ in his soul, we reckon that desertion, whereof Christ on the cross giveth an account, crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" By which speech, he doth not mean, that then the personal union of the natures was in him dissolved, nor yet that God had withdrawn his sustaining strength and help from the human nature, nor that the love of the Father was taken off him, nor that any point of the perfection of holiness was taken from him; but his true intent is to shew, that God for a time had taken away sensible consolation and felt joy from his human soul, that so justice might in his sufferings be the more fully satisfied. And this is the forsaking of him here given to us to understand. In which desertion, Christ is not to be looked upon simply as he is in his own person, the Son of the Father, in whom he is always well pleased; but as he standeth in the room of sinners, surety and cautioner, paying their debt; in which respect, he behoved to be dealt with as standing in our name, guilty, and paying the debt of being forsaken of God,—which we were bound to suffer fully and for ever, if he had not interposed for us.

The last degree of Christ's sufferings (wherein he may be said to have "descended into hell," so far as scripture in the Old Testament, or the history of Christ's passion in the New, will suffer us to expound that expression), is that curse, wherein the full wrath

of God, and the dregs of that horrible cup, were poured forth upon his holy human nature, while heaven, and earth, and hell, seemed to conspire to take vengeance on him, and fully to punish our sins in the person of him our Surety, by that cursed death of the cross, which was the evidence foretold of the malediction of God lying on him, in so far as was necessary to complete the punishment of loss and feeling both in soul and body. And, therefore, not without ground have orthodox divines taken in Christ's sufferings in his soul, and the detaining of his body in the grave (put in as the close and last part of Christ's sufferings), as the true meaning of that expression, "He descended into hell," not only because these pains which Christ suffered both in body and soul, were due to us in full measure; but also, because that which Christ suffered in the point of torment and vexation, was, in some respect, of the same kind with the torment of the damned. For in the punishment of the damned, we must necessarily distinguish these three things, 1st, The perverse disposition of the mind of the damned in their sufferings; 2d, The duration and perpetuity of their punishment; and 3d, The punishment itself, tormenting soul and body. The first two are not of the essence of punishment, albeit by accident they are turned into a punishment; for the wickedness, vileness, and unworthiness of the damned, who neither will nor can submit themselves to the punishment (and put the case they should submit, are utterly unable to make satisfaction for ever), do make them in a desperate doleful condition for ever; though obstinate sinners do not apprehend nor believe this, but go on in treasuring up wrath against themselves, pleasing themselves in their own dreams, to their own

endless perdition. Of these three, the first two could have no place in Christ. Not the first, because he willingly offered himself a sacrifice for our sins; and upon agreement, paid the ransom fully: not the second, because he could no longer be holden in the sorrows of death, than he had satisfied justice, and finished what was imposed on him; and his infinite excellency made his short sufferings to be of infinite worth, and equivalent to our everlasting suffering.

The third then remaineth, which is the real and sensible tormenting of soul and body, in being made a curse for us, and to feel it so in his real experience. And what need we question hellish pain, where pain and torment, and the curse, with felt wrath from God falleth on, and lieth still, till justice be satisfied? Concerning which, it is as certain, that Christ was seized upon by the dolours of death, as it is certain in scripture, that he could not be holden of the sorrows of death, (Acts ii. 24).

QUESTION. But what interest had Christ's Godhead in his human sufferings, to make them both so short, and so precious and satisfactory to justice for so many sins of so many sinners, especially when we consider that God cannot suffer? *Answer.* Albeit this passion of the human nature, could not so far reach the Godhead of Christ, that it should in a physical sense suffer (which indeed is impossible), yet these sufferings did so affect the person, that it may truly be said, that God suffered, and by his blood bought his people to himself, (Acts xx. 28). For albeit the proper and formal subject of physical suffering, be only the human nature; yet the principal subject of sufferings, both in a physical and moral sense, is Christ's person, God and man, from the

dignity whereof, the worth and excellency of all sort of sufferings, the merit and the satisfactory sufficiency of the price did flow.

And let it be considered also, that albeit Christ, as God, in his Godhead could not suffer in a physical sense; yet, in a moral sense he might suffer, and did suffer. For inasmuch as he, being in the form of God, and without robbery equal to God, did demit his person to assume human nature, and empty himself so far as to hide his glory, and take on the shape of a servant, and expose himself willingly to all the contradiction of sinners which he was to meet with, and to all railings, revilings, contempt, despisings, and calumnies,—shall it seem nothing, and not enter in the count of our Lord's payment for our debt?

OBJECTION. But how could so low a down-throwing of the Son of man, or of the human nature assumed by Christ, consist with the majesty of the person of the Son of God? *Answer.* We must distinguish in Christ these things which are proper to either of the two natures, from these things which are ascribed to his person, in respect of either of the natures, or both the natures; for infirmity, physical suffering, or mortality, are proper to the human nature. The glory of power, and grace, and mercy, and super-excellent majesty, and such like, are proper to the deity; but the sufferings of the human nature, are so far from diminishing the glory of the divine nature, that they do manifest the same, and make it appear more clearly; for by how much the human nature was weakened, depressed, and despised, for our sake; by so much the love of Christ, God and man in one person, toward man, and his mercy, and

power, and grace to man, do shine in the eyes of those that judiciously look upon him.

OBJECTION. But seeing Christ's satisfaction for sinners doth not stand in any one part of his doings and sufferings, but in the whole and entire precious pearl, and complete price of his whole obedience from his incarnation, even to his death on the cross, how cometh it to pass, that in scripture, the whole expiation of our sins is ascribed so oft to his passion, and particularly to his blood? *Answer.* This cometh to pass, 1. Because the certainty and verity of his assumed human nature, and the certainty of his real suffering, and the fulfilling of all the Levitical sacrifices, did most evidently appear unto sense in the effusion of his blood. 2. Because the expression of his sufferings both in soul and body, appeared in the effusion of his blood; for in the garden, while his body was not as yet touched or hurt by man, from the mere pains of his soul drops of blood fell down out of all his body to the earth. 3. Because his bloodshedding and death, was the last act of completing the payment of the ransom to the Father for us, which payment began in his humble incarnation, and went on through all his life, and was completed in his bloodshed and death, whereof our Lord gave intimation on the cross, when he cried as triumphantly victorious, "It is finished!"

*The Use of this Article of the Covenant of Redemption.* We have at some length spoken of the price of redemption, and of Christ's defraying of the debt by his passion, 1. That hereby the demerit of our sins may the more clearly be seen. 2. That the sublimity and excellency of divine majesty offended by

sin may appear. 3. That we may behold the severity of God's justice till he have satisfaction and reparation in some sort of the injuries done to him. 4. That the admirable largeness of God's mercy may be acknowledged and wondered at.

For in the price of redemption paid, as in a mirror, we may see how greatly the Lord hateth sin; how great his love is to the world, in sending his Son Christ amongst us; how heavy the wrath of God shall lie upon them that flee not to Christ's satisfaction for their delivery; how great the dignity and excellency of the Lord our Redeemer is, for whose sake reconciliation is granted to all that take hold of the offer of grace through him; how great the obligation of believers is to love God, and serve him; and how greatly the glory of all the attributes of God doth shine in the work of redemption.

By this doctrine, it appeareth, how vain and wicked the devices of superstitious men are, who, for pacifying of God's wrath, have appointed penances, and pilgrimages, and self-scourgings, and soul-masses, and purgatory, and such like other abominations, whereof the word of God hath not spoken, but forbidden all the inventions of men, as unworthy conceits, to bring about men's salvation; which inventions tend only to derogate from the dignity of the price of Christ's ransom, and to cry down the fulness and perfection of the price paid by our blessed Redeemer Jesus Christ, and to set up other saviours in his room.

Hence also it is manifest, how fit a high priest is appointed over us, who is touched with our infirmities and temptations; by whom we may have so solid consolation in all the pangs of our tormented consciences; and in whom we have a solid foundation laid down to

all that flee to him, for settling our faith and hope in the son of God; who hath of set purpose, with the Father's consent, suffered so many and great evils, that he might redeem us.

And hereby we may perceive also, how well divine justice is satisfied, and with what warrant the consciences of the weak believers may be quieted, who so use to exaggerate the grievousness and the multitude of their sins, that they forget to put a right estimation upon the satisfaction made by Christ, for all that come unto God through him.

*The third Article.*—The third article of the covenant of redemption, past between the Father and the Son, concerneth the benefits, gifts and graces to be given unto the redeemed; all which gifts and graces are summarily comprehended in that one gift of God, spoken of (John iv. 10), which gift is Christ, who is freely offered unto, and given to, the elect believer for righteousness and eternal life, according to what was said: "For unto us a child is born, a son is given, on whose shoulders the government is laid; whose name is called Jehovah, the Wonderful, Counsellor, the strong God, the eternal Father and Prince of Peace," (Isa. ix. 6, and 2 Pet. i. 3); "Who according to his divine power, hath given unto us all things which pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to virtue and glory."

The benefits which are appointed for the redeemed, are so conveyed and brought unto them, that first, they are Christ's riches which he hath purchased unto the elect; and being resolved to die, that the purchase might be made fast to his people, he hath made his latter will and testament once and again, and left in legacy to all that believe in him, all things which be-

long to righteousness and salvation ; and these benefits, in an acceptable time, he effectually applieth and puts them in possession thereof. Of which gifts, we shall name chiefly three. The first is regeneration, or turning of the man towards himself ; the second is the gift of saving faith ; the third is perseverance. In which three gifts, the patrons and magnifiers of the power of man's free will, do what in them lieth to obscure the glory of God's free grace, by glorying, that without the special grace of God they can convert themselves or not, as they please ; so that when God intends their conversion, and useth all means for their conversion, they are able to resist all his gracious operation, and make void his purpose and endeavour. But this covenant of redemption past between the Father and the Son mediator and redeemer, doth decide the question, and give them the lie : " For only they whom God did foreknow, did he predestinate to be conform to the image of his son ; and whom he did predestinate them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified, (Rom. viii. 29).

*Concerning these three gifts.*—It is agreed between God and Christ, that the elect shall be converted invincibly and infallibly, and that saving faith shall be bestowed on them, and that they shall persevere in the obedience of faith so as they shall not totally and finally fall away from God's grace.

It is promised to Christ, that " in the day of his power, his people shall be willing," (Psal. cx. 3). For albeit the native corruption of their will, opposeth itself, and resisteth the Holy Spirit, when he is using the means to convert them ; yet in an acceptable time, the invincible power of God's free

grace toward them, so taketh away all actual resistance, that the man, unwilling of himself, is made most freely and heartily willing to be reconciled to God. For God can both preserve the natural liberty of the will, and take from it that crookedness and frowardness that is in it. He can infuse and create in the man a right spirit, and new habits of grace, and can bring forth these habits unto exercise, making the redeemed man not only able to will, but also actually to will and to do what is pleasant to him. We are taught, that "faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast," (Phil. ii. 13, and Ephes. ii. 8). And this gift of saving faith, is bestowed only on the elect; and therefore it is called, the "faith of the elect" (Tit. i. 1), and only they believe in Jesus Christ, "that are ordained unto eternal life," (Acts xiii. 48); yea, every one cometh to Christ, who is given to him of the Father (John vi. 37), and no man cometh to Christ, save he whom the Father draweth, (John vi. 44). But they that are not redeemed, do not come to Christ for righteousness and life, (John x. 26). "Ye believe not," saith Christ to some Jews, "because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

As for perseverance, the Father promiseth to the Son, that the work of grace shall be firm in all the redeemed ones, or in his elect seed. "As for me (saith the Lord to Christ), this is my covenant with them; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," (Isa. lix. 21); and

(Jer. xxxii. 40) "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

And a special command is given unto Christ, for preserving all unto eternal life who come unto him: "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day:" (John vi. 39) which Christ undertakes that he will faithfully perform, while he saith, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," (John x. 28). But we insist not too long in this argument (whereof the orthodox divines have written abundantly, in their disputations against the foresaid error), because the adversaries take their pretended argument from the instability of men's will, in the matter of perseverance; and from the freedom and power of man's changeable will, in the matter of conversion and saving faith; and from the manner of God's speaking to the mixed multitude of both, called and not chosen. And to them that are both called and chosen, we shall content ourselves, for clearing this covenant betwixt the Father and the Son mediator and redeemer, to make the matter fast concerning the elect, founding their conversion, faith, repentance, perseverance and salvation, upon the unchangeable covenant of redemption, fixed upon the settled agreement between God, and God the Son mediator and redeemer, as shall be proven from five places of scripture.

*The first Proof* is from verse 13 of Isa. lii. to the end of chap. liii., where we have, first, the two parties contractors, God the Father, and Christ: for the

Father brings forth his confederated Son to be incarnate by covenant, his servant, whom he employs in the whole work of redemption, as the meritorious cause and accomplisher of it. "Behold my servant," saith God the Father by his Spirit, speaking by the prophet, (chap. lii. 13). Next, both parties are sure of the event of the paction, and of the accomplishing of the whole work gloriously: "Behold (saith he) my servant shall deal prudently and prosperously, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high," (verse 13). Thirdly, He tells the proper price which Christ the Son shall pay for the redemption of his people, agreed upon by paction, to wit, the abasing and humbling of the Son incarnate unto the ignominious death of the cross; that "His visage shall be marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men," verse 14; and more particularly, chap. liii. 2, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," (ver. 3.) "He was wounded for our transgressions," (ver. 5.) "He shall make his soul an offering for sin," (ver. 10).

Fourthly, Christ the Son of God incarnate, is assured and confirmed of the sweet fruit of his passion, in the conversion of many nations, whom he should sprinkle with the blood of the covenant, and sanctify by the water of his Holy Spirit: "He shall sprinkle many nations," (chap. lii. 15).

Fifthly, God and Christ are agreed and well pleased in the conversion of so many as are elected, and given to Christ, to have in him the right of adoption: "He shall see his seed," (chap. liii. 10), that is, he shall

regenerate the elect, and make them his children, and see them so, to his satisfaction.

*Sixthly*, No meritorious nor impulsive cause is found in the persons redeemed, for which the punishment due to them should be transferred upon the Mediator Christ, our redeemer; for they should be found in themselves but despisers of Christ, because of his sufferings: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted," (chap. liii. 4).

*Seventhly*, No sin nor meritorious cause of punishment is found in Christ the redeemer, for which he should be smitten: "He was wounded for our transgressions—he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth," (chap. liii. 5, 9).

*Eighthly*, Peace and reconciliation, and healing of our sinful and miserable sicknesses, and deliverance from wrath, are purchased by the price of his blood: "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed," (chap. liii. 5).

*Ninthly*, These sufferings Christ did not endure unwittingly, or unwillingly, but by consent, by covenant deliberately: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth," (chap. liii. 7).

*Tenthly*, The cause of this covenant, whereby the price is called for, and yielded unto, and paid, is only the free grace of God and his good pleasure: "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief," (chap. liii. 10).

*Eleventhly*, It is agreed between the Father and the Son, that our sins should be imputed unto him, and his

righteousness imputed unto us ; and that the redeemed should believe in him, and so be justified : “ He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied ; by his knowledge,” or faith in him, “ shall my righteous servant justify many : for he shall bear their iniquities,” (chap. liii. 11).

*Twelfthly*, It is agreed between the parties, that those for whom Christ should lay down his life, he should stand Intercessor also, for bringing unto them all the purchased graces and blessings : “ He bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors,” (chap. liii. 12). The rest of the world beside the elect, he interceded not for, (John xvii. 9, 10).

Hence it followeth, 1stly, that God and Christ did not bargain for the redemption of all and every man ; no, not for the redemption, conversion, and salvation of all and every man to whom the gospel was to be preached. For many were to be called, who were not chosen, to whom the gift of saving faith was not to be given, nor the power of God to salvation was never to be revealed. And this is the observation which the evangelist makes upon Isa. l. 53 : “ But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him : that the saying of the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report ? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ?” (John xii. 37) ; therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, “ He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts,” (Isa. vi. 9, 10).

2dly, It followeth hence, that election and redemption were not for the foreseen faith or works of the elect redeemed, but of the mere grace and good will of God, and all done for them and in them, contrary

to their deservings: For it is said, "All we like sheep have gone astray; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," (Isa liii. 6).

3dly, It followeth hence, that it was agreed upon, that saving grace, and conversion, and sanctification, should infallibly and invincibly come to pass, and be given to the redeemed: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently and prosperously," (Isa. lii. 13); and, "He shall sprinkle many nations," (ver. 15); and, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many," (Isa. liii. 11).

4thly, Hence it followeth, that the agreement is past for their final perseverance and full salvation: For "With his stripes we are healed," (Isa. liii. 5). Now our healing, is our full salvation from our sin and misery, or our deadly sicknesses; and, "The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand," (Isa. liii. 10). The pleasure of the Lord is partly our sanctification (1 Thess. iv. 3), partly our salvation and glorification: "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day," (John vi. 39). And to this purpose powerfully doth his intercession serve, from which the apostle concludes, that believers shall be perfectly saved: "Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them," (Heb. vii. 25).

*The Second Proof* is from Isa. lix. 20, 21, where, *First*, We have the parties agreeing pointed at: The Lord Jehovah saith, and of the redeemer, he saith, that heshall come to Zion as redeemer. *Next*, We have the kind of agreement between the parties; God on the

one hand, and the redeemer with the redeemed, for whom, and in whose name, he makes the agreement; "This is my covenant with them," but first with Christ, as the words following do shew. *Thirdly*, We have the party redeemed, Zion and Jacob that turn from transgression, which is the mark of true believers in Christ, and of the elect, for whom this grace is appointed, as "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," (Rom. xi. 7); and, "All this Israel shall be saved," (ver. 26), as it is written. *Fourthly*, We have the kind of their delivery, which shall be not only by price paying, but also by powerful and "effectual working," as the original imports, (Rom. xi. 26; and Isa. lix. 20). *Fifthly*, The benefits bestowed upon the elect, are comprehended under the designation of the "redeemed;" they are to be turned from their iniquity by effectual conversion; by granting them faith in Christ, repentance and reconciliation. *Sixthly*, It is shewn how these graces shall be brought to pass, to wit, by application thereof by the word and Spirit of Christ; from which, sanctification, salvation, and the perpetuation of all graces unto salvation, do flow and follow on them. "My Spirit that is in thee," saith the Lord to the Redeemer incarnate, "and my word which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed."

These articles of the covenant of redemption make expressly, First, Against universal redemption of all and every man: Because Christ, as is shewed before, makes his bargain for the elect, and leaves the rest in blindness; and is a redeemer of none, but of those to whom he is a deliverer actually, from

whom he turneth away iniquity and ungodliness; which benefits befall none but the elect and the redeemed.

Next, They make against election for faith and foreseen works: Because when Christ cometh to call in the Jews, he finds nothing commendable in them, but impiety, and transgression, and defection, and whatsoever might provoke him to reject them; they are turned from transgression.

3dly, They make against a mere possible and contingent conversion: For invincible grace is promised here; for the word and the Spirit of Christ shall take up a dwelling in them, and not depart from them.

4thly, They make against the doctrine of the apostasy of the saints, and uncertainty of their perseverance; because here it is promised to Christ, that from the heart and mouth of his seed, the word and Spirit of Christ shall never depart.

*The Third Proof* is from John vi., from ver. 37 to 45, where, *first*, is set down the party contractors in the covenant of redemption; for the elect are given over into the hand of Christ by the Father: "All that the Father giveth to me, cometh to me," (ver. 37).

*Secondly*, Upon the Father's giving of the elect unto Christ, followeth, in due time, the conversion and saving faith of the redeemed: "All that the Father giveth me, cometh to me," saith Christ.

*Thirdly*, The redeemed are committed unto Christ, as to their leading on, preservation, and perfecting of their salvation: "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

*Fourthly*, It is agreed by what means the faith of the redeemed shall be formed in them;—which are, the revealed sight of Christ the Son of God in the word; the powerful drawing of the illuminated soul unto Christ; which powerful draught overcometh all opposition and resistance, because it is omnipotent and invincible; for, “No man cometh to Christ, but he whom the Father draweth,” (ver. 44); and that, by making them savingly, and in a lively manner see the Son, and believe on him, (ver. 40).

Hence followeth, 1st, That it is false doctrine to teach, that there is an universal redemption unto life, of all and every man; because not all, but only some are given, and made to come to Christ; the rest that are not given, come not.

2dly, It followeth, that election is of mere free grace; because men come not unto Christ that they may be given, but they are given unto Christ, that they may be brought and come unto him.

3dly, By this agreement, the powerful conversion of the redeemed, and their powerful preservation unto eternal life, is as certain, as the power, and constancy, and obedience of Christ unto the Father, is firm and certain: “This is the will of him that sent me, that of what he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day,” (ver. 39).

*The Fourth Proof* is John x. from verse 14 to 30, where we see that the Lord Jesus, the true pastor of Israel, before he was incarnate (Psa. xxiii.), continueth in that same office now, being incarnate, and gives his people to understand this, when he saith, “I am the good Shepherd.”

*Secondly*, The care and custody of all the redeemed, both converted and unconverted, was put upon Christ:

“I know my sheep, and I am known of mine; and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring in, and they shall hear my voice,” (ver. 14, 16).

*Thirdly*, The price of their redemption is clearly agreed upon: “As the Father knows me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep,” (ver. 15).

*Fourthly*, The Father accepts the price, and is satisfied and well pleased with it: “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again,” (ver. 17, 18).

*Fifthly*, All the redeemed are infallibly converted, but they that are not redeemed are not converted: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me,” (ver. 27); and, “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep,” (ver. 26).

*Sixthly*, Albeit the redeemed and converted shall not want enemies, who shall go about to mar their perseverance and salvation, yet shall they not prevail: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand,” (ver. 28).

Hence followeth, first, That the doctrine of universal redemption of all and every man unto life is false; because only the redemption of the elect sheep is agreed upon, for whom he layeth down his life (ver. 15), and the rest are not redeemed, nor ordained to life; for these he speaks to (ver. 26), they were not of his sheep, but remained unbelievers.

2dly, It followeth, that the election of men is not for faith or works foreseen; but on the contrary, faith is ordained to be given unto the redeemed,

because they are elected and given over unto Christ, to convert and save them: "Other sheep I have, and them I must bring in, and they shall hear my voice," (ver. 16).

3dly, It followeth, that the conversion of the elect doth not depend on their will, but upon Christ's undertaking to make them believe, and upon his omnipotency: "Other sheep I have, and them I must bring in, and they shall hear my voice," (ver. 16).

4thly, It followeth, that albeit the redeemed believers be in themselves witless as sheep, and weak, and ready to be destroyed, and compassed about with many enemies, as sheep among wolves, yet because of the omnipotency of the Father and of the Son, that have taken the care and custody of them, they shall persevere. And it is impossible they should perish, or not persevere: "I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and none can take them out of my Father's hand," (John x. 28, 29).

*The Fifth Proof.* The fifth place is, Psalm xl. explicated by the apostle, (Heb. x. 5-7); where, *First*, the Spirit of God expounds the covenant whereof we are speaking; and brings in the parties, God and Christ, as speaking one to another, and, as it were, in our sight and audience repeating the terms thereof. The price of redemption is first spoken of, for expiation of sin, not to be given without blood, without better blood than the blood of beasts, (Heb. x. 4).

*Secondly*, All satisfactions by men, and whatsoever price can be paid by mere man, are rejected: "Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldest not," (verse 5).

*Thirdly*, Nothing except only the incarnation of the

Son the Mediator, his obedience and suffering to the death, could satisfy divine justice : “ But a body hast thou prepared me,” (verse 5).

*Fourthly*, The Mediator Christ offers himself pledge and surety of his own accord, and takes the condition: “ Then said I, Lo I come,” to wit, as surety, to pay the ransom, and “ to do thy will,” (Heb. x. 7).

*Fifthly*, Christ the surety not only condescends upon the price, but also upon the persons to be redeemed, and their sanctification : “ By which will we are sanctified, by the offering of the body of Christ once for all :” and this price is now actually paid, (Heb. x. 10).

*Sixthly*, The price being paid, the Mediator goeth about the application of the purchased benefits, by his intercession : “ This man after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool,” (Heb. x. 12, 13).

Hence followeth, first, That there is no universal redemption of all and every man unto life, “ Because by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,” (Heb. x. 14). Therefore they were never redeemed, who are never sanctified ; and only they are perfected, who are redeemed. .

2dly, It followeth, that not for any thing in man, neither foreseen faith or works, are men elected and redeemed ; because all is rejected that mere man can do, that the mere grace of God may appear in Christ’s undertaking for men of his own accord : “ Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldest not ; then said I, Behold, I come,” (Heb. x. 5, 7).

3dly, By Christ’s death, purchase is made of the infallible conversion and sanctification of the redeemed, and of their perseverance unto perfection :

“ By one offering of Christ he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,” (Heb. x. 14). And therefore the redeemed cannot but be converted, cannot but be sanctified, cannot but persevere unto perfection, and that for ever, (Heb. x. 12, 13, 14).

The use of this article is, 1st, That all those who hear the gospel, and have in any sort embraced it, should in the acknowledgment of their natural corruption and perverse wickedness, humble themselves before God, and pray for, and expect grace according to the promises offered in the gospel.

2dly, That they who are already sensible of their sins and ill deservings, may not turn away or be discouraged, but so much the rather flee to Christ, in whom, relief from sin and misery is promised to such.

3dly, That they who have fixed their eye on the Son, resolving to cleave unto him, should acknowledge the powerful draught of God’s almighty hand, who hath caused them to come to Christ; and should, upon the begun work of grace, conceive lively hope of salvation, and study to purify their souls in this hope.

4thly, That they who find the instability and inconstancy of their own free will, and have experience of their own heart deceiving them frequently, after they have engaged themselves by promises and vows to take better heed to their ways, should not cast away their confidence in Christ, because of their own infirmity; but that they should lean less to their own strength, and lay hold on Christ’s power, fidelity, and constancy so much the more, to help the weak at such a dead lift. The apostle, looking to Christ’s engagement in the covenant, for those who in any measure of sincerity adhere unto him, hath said, “ Christ

shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful by whom ye are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord," (1 Cor. i. 8, 9).

5thly, Let us not take the guiding of our own free will; but let so many as are fled to Christ, give him the glory of the inclining of our hearts to his testimonies, and to his obedience in any measure; and know, that every spiritual motion floweth from his purchase, and application of what is bestowed on us. And when we find his hand withdrawing, and our heart inclining to what is not right, let us run to him to right it, in hope to be helped by his grace, to fight against whatsoever adversary of our salvation.

*The Fourth Article.*—As to the Fourth Article of the Covenant of Redemption, it concerneth the means and manner how the elect shall be called forth from the perishing world, and be effectually called and turned unto God, so as the world, among whom the elect live, shall not have cause of stumbling justly; for he hath taken a most wise course so to execute the degree of election and redemption, as he shall be sure to bring in his own to himself, and not to open up his counsel in particular to the discouraging of any, as is told by the Father: "My servant shall deal prudently and prosper," (Isa. lii. 13). The chief mean appointed is the preaching of the gospel to all nations, commanding all men, where the gospel is by God's providence preached, to repent and believe in the name of Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he hath commanded them, (Acts xvii. 30, and 1 John iii. 23); and they who refuse to obey, are without excuse.

Another mean is, the bringing of so many as pro-

fess their acceptation of the offer of grace by Christ Jesus, them and their children into the bond of an express solemn covenant, that they shall submit themselves to the doctrine and government of Christ, and teach their children so to do, as Abraham the father of believers did: "Make disciples of all nations," or, "Make all nations disciples to me," (Gen. xviii. 19, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

A Third mean is, the sealing of the covenant by the sacrament of baptism; make all nations disciples to me, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

A Fourth mean is, the gathering them into all lawful and possible communion with others his disciples, that by their church-fellowship one with another, they may be edified under their officers, appointed in Christ's testament to feed, govern, and lead them on in the obedience of all the commands which Christ hath commanded his people in his testament; by which means he goeth about his work, and doth call, effectually sanctify and save, his own redeemed ones, leaving all others without excuse.

Concerning all these, and other means, and manner also of executing his decree, it is agreed upon between the Father and his Son Christ, as his Holy Spirit hath revealed it to us in scripture. All which may be taken up in two heads: the one is, The agreement about the doctrine, and directions given to his church; the other is, About actions, operations, and all effects to be brought about for making his word good.

Concerning his doctrine, Christ saith, "I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who hath sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and

what I should speak ; and I know that his commandment is life everlasting ; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak," (John xii. 49, 50).

Concerning actions and operations, and the execution of the decrees, it is agreed also between the Father and the Son. "If I judge, my judgment is true ; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. He that sent me is with me ; the Father hath not left me alone ; for I do always those things that please him," (John viii. 16 and 29). "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, (without the consent of the Father,) but the will of him that sent me," (John vi. 38).

In a word, the consent and agreement of the Father and the Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is such, that the Son doth nothing by his Spirit, but that which the Father doth work by the same Spirit from the beginning of the world: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," (John v. 17) ; "For by Christ were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers ; all things were created by him and for him," (Col. i. 16) ; "He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first efficient, and the last end of all things," (Rev. i. 8) : because, for the glory of Christ, the creation, the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, were made, and had, and shall have their full execution, all for the glory of God in Christ, by whom all things were made and do subsist.

## CHAP. V

## OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

We have spoken of the first divine covenant, wherein God and God Incarnate are the parties: it followeth to speak of the next divine covenant, to wit, the covenant of works between God and man, Adam and his posterity, made in man's integrity. In which covenant, God only is the one party of the covenant, and man created with all natural perfections, is the other party. In this covenant, man's continuing in a happy life is promised, upon condition of perfect personal obedience, to be done by him out of his own natural strength bestowed upon him, as the apostle teacheth us, "The law is not by faith, but the man who shall do these things shall live by them," (Gal. iii. 12). And unto this law or covenant of works, is added a threatening of death, in case man should transgress; the sense whereof is told by the apostle, "Cursed is every one who doth not abide in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them," (Gal. iii. 10).

*The Difference between the Law and the Covenant of Works.*—The word *law* is sometimes taken for the matter or substance of the law of nature, written in the hearts of our first parents by creation; the work of which law is to be found in the hearts of their posterity unto this day. And in this sense the word law is taken by the apostle: "The Gentiles," saith he, "shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness," (Rom. ii. 15). Sometimes the word is taken for the formal covenant

of works, as (Gal. iii. 10), "As many as are of the works of the law," that is, under the covenant of works, "are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them."

The law, as it is taken for the covenant of works, differeth from the law of nature, written by creation in the hearts of our first parents; first, because the law of nature, written in the heart of man, in order both of nature and time, went before the covenant made for keeping that law; because the covenant for keeping that law, was not made till after man's creation, and after his bringing into the garden to dress it, and to keep it, (Gen. ii. 16, 17).

*Secondly*, God, by virtue of the law written in man's heart, did not oblige himself to perpetuate man's happy life; for albeit man had kept that law most accurately, God was free to dispose of him as he saw fit, before he made the covenant with him; but so soon as he made the covenant, he obliged himself to preserve him in a happy life, so long as he should go on in obedience to his law and commands, according to the tenor of the covenant, "Do this and live."

*Thirdly*, Death was the natural wages and merit of sin, albeit there had no covenant been made at all; for sin against God deserveth, of its own nature, death of soul and body, by the rule of simple justice, whether the sinner had consented to the punishment or not. But man, by entering in the covenant, actually gave a formal voluntary consent that death should seize upon him, if he should sin, as Evah beareth witness in her conference with the serpent, while she doth repeat the condition put upon the breaking of

the particular command given by God, and accepted by man, (Gen. iii. 3).

*Fourthly*, When the covenant of works is abolished so far, as it can neither justify nor condemn the man that is fled to Christ, and entered in another posterior covenant of grace, the natural obligation of the man standeth still, for taking direction from, and giving obedience to the law; for it remaineth still the rule of a man's walking, and it is impossible that a mere man should be exempted from the authority of God over him, and from subjection due by nature to his Creator; for upon this account that man is a reasonable creature, understanding God's will about his behaviour toward God, he is always bound for ever to love God with all his mind, heart, and strength, and his neighbour as himself. Neither can the natural merit of sin be taken away, nor death deserved be eschewed, but by forgiveness of it for Christ's merits.

The covenant then was superadded unto the law, in the deep wisdom of God; for this way of dealing with man by a covenant, was, of its own nature, a most fit mean unto man's felicity, and unto the glory of God.

*How the Covenant of God with Man was a means to Man's felicity.*—The covenant of God with man tended of its own nature to man's good and happiness,

*First*, Because a singular respect and honour was put upon man, when he was made a confederate friend of God: for if it be an honour to a mean and poor man to be joined with a king or prince in a formal bond of mutual friendship, how much greater honour is it unto man, to be joined in a bond of mutual love and friendship with God?

*Secondly*, Before the making of the covenant, man had no promise made to him by God ; but so soon as the covenant was made, the Lord did freely oblige himself to give, and made to man a right to ask, and to expect of God, with a ground of certainty, to obtain of him such things, as without promise past he could not ask, or at least he could not certainly expect to have granted unto him.

*Thirdly*, Before the making of the covenant, nothing hindered the Lord, if he had pleased, to command man to return to dust, whereof he was ; but after the covenant, it pleased God, by his own free promise, to oblige himself to perpetuate man's happiness wherein he was made, so long as he should go on in obedience.

*Fourthly*, By the making of the covenant, a door was opened, and a fair entry to a higher degree of felicity than he possessed by his creation ; for when a natural life and earthly felicity were given to Adam to enjoy upon the earth, God, by the covenant, made paction with him, upon condition of perfect obedience, to give him a life and felicity supernatural, opposite unto death bodily and spiritual, which was threatened unto him if he should transgress the command.

*Fifthly*, Adam, by the covenant, had a sort of help to make him keep the law written in his heart more carefully and cautiously, and a prop to make him stand more fixed ; for on the one hand, he was advertised and forewarned of the danger of sinning, that he might beware to offend God ; and on the other hand, he was encouraged and allowed to serve God more cheerfully, and to perform due obedience to God the more diligently. For in the covenant, the greatest reward that could be thought upon was set

before him, and promised unto him ; to wit, eternal life upon his obedience, and the greatest punishment threatened if he should disobey ; both which served greatly to move him to be constant in his obedience.

*How God's covenanting with Man served for God's glory.*—In God's covenanting with man, his glory did notably shine, and shew forth itself to man. *First*, The goodness and bounty of God did manifest itself therein ; for, in making a covenant with man, the Lord demitted himself, and in a manner humbled himself to deal with man, for the standing of mutual friendship between himself and man for ever : And when we consider this, as the Psalmist saith, “ What is man that thou art mindful of him ? and the son of man that thou visitest him ? ” (Psa. viii. 4), so may we say, What is man, or the son of man, that thou shouldst enter in covenant with him ?

*Secondly*, By covenanting with man, God did shew his wonderful moderation : for God is sovereign monarch and absolute emperor over his own creature, to make of it what he pleaseth ; yet, in covenanting with man, he did sweetly temper his supremacy, seeking, as it were, to reign with man's consent. And when because of his sovereign authority and absolute right and interest, he might have put upon man harder commands and conditions of the covenant, and these also altogether righteous and just, he choosed to use such moderation, that he would require nothing of man, except that which man should, and behoved in reason, judge both a just and an easy yoke, and in accepting the condition of the covenant, acknowledge it to be such.

*Thirdly*, The Lord declared his wisdom in covenanting with man, because, when he had made man

a reasonable creature, he choosed to draw forth a free and voluntary service, most suitable to his reasonable nature, and that in a most sweet way ; to wit, not only by giving unto man a most equitable law, but also by setting before the man, by way of paction, the highest reward that he could be capable of, even life everlasting.

*Fourthly*, In covenanting with man, God did most wisely and holily have a respect to the glory of both his own sovereignty and holiness ; because after he had made man by nature good and holy (albeit mutable and subject to change, if the man pleased to essay another way) he took course to help the mutability of his free will, not only by setting a reward of obedience before him, but also by a threatening of punishment, if he should transgress ; and so on the one hand and the other to hedge him in, and guard him against all temptation unto sin, that neither he should be forced by any external power to sin, nor by any counsel or suggestion, or moral suasion (whereunto only man was exposed in the trial of his obedience) should have so strong motives to draw him to disobedience, as the promise of God, and the threatening should have force in all reason, to keep him fast to his due and loyal obedience. Thus was Adam forewarned and forearmed against whatsoever, without himself, might assault him. For what reward for disobedience could be offered unto him, so great as the favour of God, and everlasting life in the fellowship of God promised to him, if he continued fast in obedience ? And what terror could be so great to affright and scare him from sin, as the threatening of death, bodily and spiritual, if he transgressed ?

QUESTION. But the profane curiosity of man dareth

to ask a reason, why God did not make man both good by nature, and immutably good also? *Answer.* It is indeed proud curiosity to inquire for reasons of God's holy will, which hath its own most sufficient reason in itself, and may satisfy all his subjects, who will not devilishly prefer their own wisdom and counsel to his. But we shall content ourselves soberly to answer the question thus: to be both originally, or by nature good, and unchangeably good also, beseemeth God himself only, as his property and prerogative, which it became his majesty to reserve to himself as the fountain of all goodness, and not to communicate this glory either to man or angel in their creation, that the due distance between God, and the natural perfections of the creature, should not only be provided for, but made manifest to the creature also. It is true, Christ's human nature was so sanctified in his conception, that there was no possibility that sin should be in it; but let us consider, that Christ's person, which did assume the human nature into personal union with his Godhead, is not a creature; and to assume the human nature into a personal union with his divine nature, is the proper privilege of God over all, blessed for ever. And what the human nature of Christ hath of holiness, it hath it not of itself, but of grace, from the second person of the Godhead, who did assume it. And the angels that stood, when the mutability of angelical nature was manifested in the fall of many of them, did stand by the grace of free confirmation of them in their station.

*Fifthly,* God in covenanting with man, made way for the demonstration of his most holy justice in the execution of punishment, which was not only the natural wages and deserved reward of sin, but also,

by paction and covenant appointed by mutual consent of parties, if man, so much obliged to God, should break so equitable and easy a command, as was given to try him by, being forewarned of his danger.

*Sixthly*, This way of covenanting with man, was a most holy and fit mean to manifest the vanity and instability of the most perfect creature, except in the exercise of all its abilities and habits, it do acknowledge God, and in every thing, less and more, constantly employ him, and depend upon him.

*Last of all*, this was a most holy mean to bring forth to light the grace and mercy of God in Christ, providing a remedy for fallen man before he fell, and to open up the decree and covenant of redemption in due time, to be brought about by Christ, to the glory of God in Christ, by whom, and “for whom all things were made,” (Col. i. 16).

QUESTION. Had this covenant of works no mediator, no surety engaged for Adam and all his posterity? *Answer*. No mediator was in this covenant; for the party on the one hand was God, and on the other hand was Adam and Eve, our common parents, standing upon the ground of their natural abilities, representing and comprehending all their natural offspring; and according to the condition of the covenant, in their own name and name of their posterity, promising obedience, and receiving the condition of life if they continued, and of death in case they failed, (Gen. ii. 17). In whose sin we all have sinned, (Rom. v. 12).

Now, the necessity of a mediator, did not appear in this covenant so long as it stood, that afterward, in the making of another covenant, it might more

timeously appear : *First*, because man being created holy according to the image of God, was the friend of God while he had not sinned ; and again, his service, while he stood in obedience, was very pleasant and acceptable to God, because so long, freely and sincerely he served God according to the command and rule written in his heart.

QUESTION. After that this covenant was broken, was it not abolished altogether, seeing it could not now be any longer perfectly obeyed, nor save us who are sinners ? *Answer*. Albeit this covenant, being broken on man's part, did become weak, and utterly unable to produce justification by works, or eternal life to us by our inherent righteousness ; yet, on God's part, the bond of this covenant doth stand firm and strong against all men by nature, for their condemnation who are not reconciled to God. Therefore all that are not renewed and made friends with God by another covenant of faith in God incarnate (the seed of the woman, who destroyeth the work of the devil) do lie bound under the bond of this covenant of works, as Christ testifies, " He that believeth on me, is not condemned ; but he that believeth not, is condemned already," (John iii. 18) ; to wit, by the force of the covenant of works violated by them ; and are not delivered from the curse by Christ the Son of God, till they fly to him. And this doth the apostle confess, speaking of himself and other elect Jews before their regeneration, " We also were children of wrath, even as others," (Eph. ii. 3) : for whosoever is not reconciled to God by Christ, against him doth the sentence of the law, and curse for violation of the covenant, stand in force ; for sinning against the co-

venant, doth not loose the man from the covenant, neither from the obligation to obey it, nor from the punishment of breaking it.

OBJECTION. But seeing a man is utterly unable to obey the law, or to keep that covenant, doth not his utter inability excuse him, and dissolve the bond? *Answer.* No ways : because that inability is the fruit of our sin, and is drawn on by ourselves ; nor doth God lose his right to crave the debt due to him, because the bankrupt is not able to pay what he oweth. For even among men, such as have misspent their patrimony, are not absolved of their debt because they are not able to pay the debt ; yea, even the children of the misspender of his goods, do stand debtors, so long as the debt is neither paid nor forgiven.

The covenant of works therefore being broken, the obligation standeth, to make us give obedience so much the more in time to come ; and because of the curse pronounced for the breaking of the covenant in time past, the obligation to underlie the punishment for bygone sins doth stand ; and so, both the obligation to underlie the punishment, and the obligation to give obedience, do stand together, while a man is not absolved from the covenant of works, by entering in a new covenant, whereby the debt is paid and the sinner absolved.

Whosoever then conceive, that they may be justified from by-gone sins by their own obedience in time to come, either by way of doing or of suffering, they but deceive themselves, dreaming they can do impossibilities ; for the punishment to be suffered for sin by the sinner, is the curse everlasting of soul and body, seeing a mere creature cannot for ever satisfy for his rebellion, how long soever we presuppose his duration

under suffering. And for obedience, by way of doing perfectly what the Lord doth crave, it is utterly impossible, because we are carnal, sold under sin, and cannot satisfy the law; and because we cannot satisfy the law, the law becometh weak, and unable to justify and save us, (Rom. viii. 3).

*How the Covenant of Works may be called the Covenant of Nature.* Albeit the law written by nature in men's heart, differeth from the covenant for performance of the law, as hath been shewn before; yet, the covenant of works made with Adam before he fell, tying him to keep that law, may be called the covenant of nature,

*First,* Because the covenant of works is grounded upon the law of nature, and doth exact nothing of man, save that which God might require of him according to the law of nature.

*Secondly,* Because when the covenant of works was made with Adam, it was made with all his natural posterity which was to spring from him by natural generation; and so, the obligation thereof did pass upon all his natural posterity by the law of nature, which maketh the child begotten to bear the image of the begetters.

*Thirdly,* That the covenant of works may justly be called the covenant of nature, appeareth, by the force of the conscience being wakened from its sleepy security; for it challengeth for sin according to that covenant, and pronounceth the sentence of God's wrath against the sinner. For the conscience doth acknowledge the judgment of God, "That they which commit such things are worthy of death," (Rom. i. 32).

*Fourthly,* Because the conscience naturally inclineth a man to seek justification by his own works, if it can

any way find pretence for it; as we may see in the Pharisee, who in his speech to God, doth judge himself a holy man, because he is not amongst the worst of men, and hath many good works above others to reckon forth and lay before God, (Luke xviii. 11).

*Fifthly*, The inclination of man's heart to expect a reward for every good work he doth, whether it be in some part real, or only apparently such, testifieth so much. Micah so reasoneth: "Now know I the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest," (Judg. xvii. 13). And how miserably the conscience may be deluded in this case, when men do dote upon their own well deserving, appeareth in Leah; for Leah saith, "God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband," (Gen. xxx. 18).

*Sixthly*, This point is also made manifest, by the natural ignorance of righteousness by faith, and affectation to be justified by works, which the apostle finds fault with in the Israelites: "They sought righteousness not by faith, but as it were by works," (Rom. ix. 32): and, "Being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness (to wit, righteousness by works, according to the tenor of the covenant of works), they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God," (Rom. x. 3).

*Seventhly*, The same course followed by Papists and other erroneous teachers, testifieth the natural inclination of men to seek righteousness by works, according to the tenor of the covenant of works, and not by faith in Christ Jesus, that righteousness may come by grace only; and so are some men's hearts glued to this error, that they do transform justification by faith, into justification by one work instead of all, as if the

work of faith were the man's righteousness, and not Christ himself laid hold on by faith ;—not considering, that to the man that renounceth all confidence in any work of his own, and flieth to Christ by faith, "Christ is made of God unto that man, wisdom and righteousness," (1 Cor. i. 30).

*Last of all,* This natural inclination, even of the regenerate, to seek righteousness by works, doth prove the covenant of works to be naturally ingrafted into all men's hearts, as appeareth in the Galatians, who being instructed in the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, without the works of the law, did easily, upon a tentation offered, look back with liking to the way of justification by works ; for which the apostle reproveth them : "Tell me," saith he, "ye that desire to be under the law," or covenant of works, (Gal. iv. 21) ; and verse 9, "But now, after ye have known God," or rather, are known of God, "how turn ye again to weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage?"

OBJECTION. But the Galatians, as it seemeth, did not reject justification by faith ; but did join with it justification by the works of the law, thinking that the safest way was to join both together. *Answer.* The inconsistency of these two ways of justification, the apostle sheweth, (Rom. xi. 6). For justification by grace is no more by works, otherwise grace is no more grace ; and what justification is by works, is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work. And therefore, the apostle makes the joining of these two ways of justification, to be nothing else but a plain seeking of justification by the covenant of works, which cutteth a man off from any benefit by Christ, (Gal. v. 2) ; and whosoever seeketh to be justified by

the law, or covenant of works, is fallen from grace, (verse 4).

For further clearing this matter, we may distinguish two sorts of the covenant of works: The one is true, genuine, and of God's institution, which God made with all men in Adam, for perfect obedience unto God's law, out of man's own natural abilities. There is another counterfeit, bastard covenant of works, of man's own devising, which a sinner, lying in his sins, (unable to do what the law commands, or to suffer what the law, being broken, binds upon him,) of his own head deviseth, upon other conditions than God hath set; and will have God to take his devised covenant, instead of perfect obedience to the law, that so he may be justified. Such was the covenant which the carnal Israelites made with God in the wilderness, and which their posterity did follow, turning the covenant of grace, whereunto God was calling them, into a covenant of works of their own framing. For the grace which was offered to them in Christ, under the veil of Levitical types, figures, and ceremonies, they turned into an external service of performance only of bare and dead ceremonies, and into a ministry of the letter and death. For they did not take up Christ to be the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believes in him; but did think, that both the moral and ceremonial law was given unto them of God, to the intent that they should do the external works of the moral law so far as they could; and when they transgressed the moral law, they should flee to the ceremonial law, and make amends for their faults, by satisfying for their sin by the external sacrifice of some clean beast offered to God, or by the washing of their body and their clothes. Such also is

the covenant, which now a-days many make with God, cutting short, with the old Pharisees, the sense of the precepts of the law, by extending it no further than they may keep the same, that so, they may make their own inherent righteousness the longer, and conform unto their own clipped rule of righteousness. And this they do, by denying themselves to be guilty of original sin after baptism, and by extenuating and diminishing many faults, as but light and venial, as they call them; and by devising satisfactions for expiating the sins of the living, by penances and pilgrimages, and of the dead by their sufferings in their imaginary purgatory, that so they may be justified by their works and sufferings. Such also is their covenant, who seek justification by deceased saints' merits, hoping they may so have absolution from sin, and obtain life eternal. And all these sorts of covenants of men's framing, we call bastard covenants of works, because God will not admit any other covenant of works, than that which requireth perfect personal obedience. And therefore, so many as seek to be justified by works, do stand under the obligation of perfect personal obedience, under pain of death, and will be found not only utterly unable to do any good work, but also to be without Christ, and to be fallen from grace, as the apostle doth teach us, (Gal. v. 3, 4).

**OBJECTION.** Seeing God doth abhor these bastard covenants of works, and doth well know, that men are so far from performance of the due obedience of the law, that they are utterly unable, before they be reconciled through faith in Christ, to do so much as one acceptable work, as the Psalmist teacheth (Psal. xiv. 1-3), why doth the Lord exact perfect obedience unto the law from sinners? Who doth he press so

urgently the slaves of sin, to perform the duties required in the true covenant of works? *Answer.* The Lord justly doth abhor and reject these bastard covenants, because they evacuate and make void both the the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, which is by faith in Christ; and he doth press all men to perform perfect obedience to all the commands whereunto they are naturally obliged, to the end that proud men, conceited of their own natural abilities, may find by experience, that they are unable to perform the condition of the covenant of works, and may acknowledge the same, and so despair of righteousness by their works, and be forced to fly to Christ, and to the covenant of grace through him, that they may be freed from that covenant; and being justified by faith in Christ, may be enabled to begin new obedience to the law, in the strength of Christ's furniture; for "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth," (Rom. x. 4). And the law entered, that men might by the law see and acknowledge that the offence did abound, and then might perceive, that the riches of grace by Christ did superabound, (Rom. v. 20, 21): "The end of the command, is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned," (1 Tim. i. 5).

This was the end of the promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai, that a stiff-necked people, trusting in their own abilities, might be made sensible of their imperfection by the repetition of the law. And to this also God superadded the external yoke of the ceremonial law, which neither they, nor their posterity were able to bear (Acts xv. 10), that the people perceiving their manifold pollutions and guiltiness, wherein they were daily involved by breaking of God's

law, might, in the sense of the burden lying on them, and of their damnable estate under it, fly to Christ the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, as he was represented and offered to their sight in the sacrifices and burnt-offerings.

Of this end of pressing the law upon proud men, we have an example (Matt. xix. 16–22), in the conference of Christ with the young conceited rich man, who in the opinion of his own inherent righteousness, and of his abilities, was hugely swelled, as if he had already for time by-gone satisfied the whole law; and that he was able and ready to do any good work which could be prescribed unto him, for obtaining of eternal life: whose proud conceit, that Christ might humble and bring down, he craveth nothing but that he would keep the commands. And when the young man denied that he had broken the law, he proveth him guilty of gross and vile idolatry, from this, that he put a higher estimation on his riches, than on remission of sin, and did love them more than heaven and fellowship with God in eternal life.

In all this, let it be considered, that albeit men's confidence in their works doth displease God, yet good works do not displease him, but they are so far pleasant unto him, that there is no moral motive which may serve to stir up in his people, an endeavour to follow after good works, which the Lord doth not make use of; partly, by setting before them the reward if they obey; partly, by setting punishments before their eyes if they obey not: yea, and the very observation of external moral duties and obedience, such as may be discharged by the unregenerate man (albeit God in relation to justification do esteem it

polluted and vile), yet he doth sometimes reward their external works, by giving them external and temporal benefits for their encouragement. For even Ahab's temporary humiliation, the Lord so far accepted, that thereupon he took occasion to delay to take vengeance upon him, (1 Kings xxi. 27, 28, 29); likewise the Lord useth to recompence the civil justice of pagans with a temporal reward, yea, and to reward the outward diligence of every man in every lawful occupation, with some answerable outward reward.

The very Pharisees, who for the raising to themselves a fame and higher estimation for holiness, did take a great deal of pains, in prayers in the streets and market places, and other exercises of religion, wanted not an answerable reward; "verily (saith Christ), they have their reward," (Matt. vi. 2).

In this course the Lord doth keep, that he may entertain and foster the civil society of men among themselves; and that his people, looking on this bounty of God, may be stirred up the more to bring forth the fruits of faith, in hope of a merciful promised better reward of grace in the life to come, beside what they may have in this life.









