

SERMON III.

Who hath blessed us with all blessings.—VER. 3.

III. I COME to the third general head the text was divided into—the matter for which he blesseth God—namely, for his blessing us with all blessings: ‘Who hath blessed us with all blessings.’

Who.—God, as he alone is blessed, styled therefore the Blessed One, *ὁ εὐλογητός*, Mark xiv. 61, so he alone blesseth, and is alone able to do it; and others, when they bless, their blessings are but invocations upon him, that he would bless some other person in what they desire for him. So all particular benedictions, made by parents or others, run in Scripture, as Gen. xlviii. 15, 16; which that saying, once for all other, shews, ‘We bless you in the name of the Lord,’ Ps. cxxix. 8. Yea, when man is made an instrument of conveying good things unto us, yet he cannot make them blessings; for this they have recourse to God. And in so doing, all have thereby acknowledged him the fountain of all blessings and blessedness; and so even Balaam himself confessed to Balak, Num. xxii. 38, and chap. xxiii. 8, 20. ‘I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed,’ Num. xxii. 6.

Who.—I shewed afore, in general, that the apostle blesseth God under the consideration of being the God and Father of Christ, because thereby he becomes our God, and our Father also. I shall add now, how that under each of these considerations or relations it is that he blesseth us.

That which in general I shall premise, as common to the explication of these two particulars last mentioned, is that notion commonly received among the schoolmen, which I gladly took up from them:* That one requisite ingredient to move God to love, and to shew mercy unto us intelligent creatures of the sons of men, is an apprehending our misery, *ut suam*, as his own. And again, *Deus non miseretur nisi propter amorem, in quantum amat nos tanquam aliquid sui*. That God hath mercy on us, by apprehending our misery as his own, *quod fit per unionem affectus*, which is done by an union of affection to us; and God is not executively merciful, but for his love, and is so far merciful to us, as he looks at us, *ut aliquid sui*, as we are something of his own, or something of himself.

This I greedily take hold of, to illustrate and carry on the ground and foundation of the special love he bears to his elect, and as agreeing with what the Scriptures say; both that love is in God, (which no man can deny to be in the nature of God to love, for he loves himself, his Son, &c.) and that love is the ground of mercy, and, by the same reason, special electing love the ground of mercy in God to sinners. Thus, Eph. ii. 4, ‘But God, who is rich in mercy,’ (having in the foregoing verses set forth our sinfulness and misery,) ‘for the great love wherewith he loved us,’ &c. And Aquinas’ *tantum in quantum*, is made the measure of the great and infinite difference of his love to creatures. There is a common love to men as creatures, so he loves every man and thing he hath made; but where he shews

* Aquinas *secunda secundæ* quæst. 30, art. 2, in respon. ad art. prim.

special mercies, as pardon of sin and the like, there is an *in quantum*, by an *how far* he loves, as the foundation of that, a special love. But still the question will be, What should be the ground of a special love in God to some, with such an infinite difference of that love from what it is to others in common? Aquinas resolves that, with this further foundation, to be *aliquid sui*; to make those he specially loves some way his own, and then the consequence of that to be, to look upon their misery as his own; and with that the Scriptures also agree, Isa. lxiii. 9, 'In all their affliction he was afflicted;' the like in Exod. iv. 31.

But then another question, (to drive the matter home to its head,) and that is, What is it in God, or in the creature, makes them to be in so special manner his own, who or what hath put so great a difference? Nothing but election, which follows in the next: 'according as he hath chosen us.' There is Aquinas' *in quantum*, so far as he loved us, so far he hath blessed us, with special blessings appropriate, suitable thereunto. Now the fundamental therefore of all, and of the difference is, he makes us first his own by love, by that special love specially his own. And, which is the head I approach next to, he became our God first, and our Father, and chose us so to be his as none else is. And then we were *aliquid sui*, something of himself and his own indeed, by special propriety. You have this in effect in that 63d of Isa. ver. 8, 9, 'So he was their Saviour,' and so redeemed them. But *in terminis*, in more express words, in the two particular relations specified, he first made himself, and became our God and our Father, and then to be sure we are his own.

1. *God blesseth us, as having first become our God.*—It is true, indeed, that God, as God, is full of blessedness in himself, and that is it which provokes him to communicate blessings to his creatures. God is good and doth good, says the Psalmist, and so God is blessed, (an all-sufficiency of all good,) and so bestoweth blessings; but yet know, that those he communicates himself in blessing unto, he first becomes their God. And then having taken that relation on him, he pours forth all his blessedness and blessings on them, so Ps. lxvii. 6, 'God, even our own God, shall bless us;' and when he is once so become, and hath taken upon him to be our God, he cannot but bless us. There is therefore, besides that emphasis put upon it, a duplicate made of it in the psalm; it is a second time repeated and said, God shall bless us; he cannot but do it, having made himself our God, and our own God to that, 'God, even our own God, shall bless us,' ver. 7. Yea, and they all would not be blessings to us at all, unless God had first become our God, and blessed us with giving himself to us. And whence came that, that he became our God, our own God? Why, by choosing us to be his, which was done by election entirely, both at once together; which is the very import of that speech, 'thine they were,' says Christ; those speeches or clauses, say interpreters, do mutually speak each other: as to say, Thine they were by election, and thou gavest them me; or to say, By election they became thine, thou electedst them. You have the like unto it in the same Isa. lxiii. 8, 'For he (God, namely) said (as within himself of old), Surely they are my people,' and therefore also 'children that will not lie; and so he was their Saviour.' And that which answereth and agrees to this, too, is that other speech of Christ's, Luke xviii. 7, 'His own elect;' and then you have election, by which they are made his own, and all to meet in their being something of his own indeed. This for the first, his becoming our God first, on purpose to bless us. If, therefore, we would have any or all blessings from God, we must first seek of him to be our God; and then, as the Psalmist,

God, even our God, will bless us; he will be sure to do it, upon the same account and for the same end and purpose he became our Father.

2. *God blesseth us under the relation of our Father.*—The first on earth that ever took upon them to bless others, and brought up that custom (or, as I may say, fashion) of blessing, were those that bore the relation of fathers. Their hearts were filled with the greatest love and good-will to their own children, a natural *σπάργη*, did bless them, that is, wish well to them; and their hearts being enlarged to wish them more good than they found themselves able to bestow, they had recourse to God to bless them, and perform their desires, as that which was not in their own power to do. So the patriarchs, who blessed their children and posterity, and were the first of men that brought in this way of expressing their good-will which we call blessing,—as Moses termeth God's blessing, a manifestation of good-will borne to him whom he blesses, Deut. xxxiii. 16, in his blessing from God the several tribes: 'And for the good-will,' says he, 'of him that dwelt in the bush,' (which was Christ appearing to Moses, Exod. iii. 2-5; Acts vii. 32-34,) 'let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren,' (as Joseph was,) and thus singularly he blesseth Joseph, as separate from and above all the other tribes,—and thus God blesseth us out of infinite good-will, and thus it is a natural and a kindly act to come from fathers, and thus God blesseth us. It is the first fruit of good-will—that is, of that natural love and care which parents bear their children, it doth all. Love in fathers is that principle that doth of itself provoke them to wish the greatest good to their children, which if any good be in their own power to give, they give it from that principle; and when they have it not in their own power to bestow, if they are holy men, and have an interest in God the fountain of all good, they use that interest, and invoke God to bestow it; which invoking of God for them we use to call blessing a child, which is as much as in them lies to do.

Now, as Christ says of giving good things unto their children, (and parents' blessing is but a giving their children good things, by invoking of God to bestow them, as it is called in Isaac's blessing, Gen. xxvii. 27,) 'If you then being evil,' says Christ, Matt. vii. 11, that is, are full of self-love, that of itself would tempt you to keep and retain to yourselves, and not willingly to give away any good thing, yet ye know how, says Christ,—that is, you have the hearts and the affections by a natural instinct to spy out the best things for your children, which you judge to be such,—and 'if ye know how to give good things to your children, how much more,' says Christ, 'shall your Father which is in heaven,' who to this very end was pleased to become a Father to you, and has all in heaven to bestow, even that God who is styled the Blessed One in Scripture, who is an ocean of all blessedness, which seeks an outlet for itself to communicate to creatures, whom he hath loved and chosen, and hath been pleased to bear that relation towards us to this great end; he hath done all this to pour out his blessedness by and through that relation towards us, upon us his adopted sons; and who, by what he finds to be natural in himself towards his own natural Son, (whom he blesseth every day for ever, Ps. xlv. 2,) he for his sake and relation to us is further pleased to pour forth all blessings also upon us, having become in Christ a Father to us; and so to bear such a good-will to us in Christ, as members of him, and a spouse to him.

Hath blessed with all blessings.—You see here both the act of grace on God's part bestowing good on us is expressed by 'blessing,' and the things bestowed are called blessings. He gives one and the same denomination or name to either, which argues this expression of blessing to be full and as

adequate as could be chosen forth. I shall endeavour to explicate both the *name* and *thing* itself—what it is to bless, as on God's part, and what is a blessing, and what it is that truly makes and constitutes good things to be blessings to us.

1. *For the word 'blessing,' or to bless.*—It is evident by that extensive comprehensiveness of speech which the Apostle here useth, that the whole, the total, and all particular good things, which he after enumerates, which God ever means to give, or the gospel promises, even all of them are to the utmost spoken of under and by this word of blessing. And it is worth our consideration that it is that original word under which the promise of the covenant of grace was at the first given to Abraham, the father of all the faithful; as which contained all particular good things, as his loins did that seed to whom that promise was made. And this I mention now at first as a fundamental consideration, that will have a great and necessary influence into the explication of the particulars that follow in this verse. The apostle here framing these words with an eye of allusion to, and comparison between those promises given them, and these promises which the gospel here declares; therefore unto that promise given them we shall have recourse again and again, to make our Apostle's meaning here the more manifest. That before me at the present is, that the sum and substance of gospel-promises began then to be set forth and expressed under this blessed word of *blessing*. 'I will bless thee,' said God to Abraham, 'and in thee all the families of the earth shall be blessed,' Gen. xii. 2, 3. And again, because it could not be better expressed by any other word, God doth but double the same, saying, 'In blessing I will bless thee,' Gen. xxii. 17; that is, I will bless thee and bless thee again, which is equivalent to the expression here, 'with all blessings hath he blessed us.' And what doth or can the great God say more? It is enough.

Now, that in God's intentment the whole total of the gospel was expressed to Abraham, and wrapt up in that term of blessing, the avowed explications and interpretations made thereof by the apostles do undeniably declare. Thus, presently after Christ's ascension, in one of the first made sermons, Acts iii., speaking to the Jews, ver. 25, 'Ye are the children of the covenant God made, saying to Abraham, In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed;' which he expounds unto them thus, that first God sent his Son Jesus to bless you, namely the Jews. And yet more expressly, Gal. iii. 8, 'God preached the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.' So that as Abraham's style was 'the blessed of the Lord,' Gen. xiv. 19, and also the children of God are all said to be blessed with faithful Abraham, in the following ver. 9; and again, Heb. vi. 13, 14, 'For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee,' which, ver. 17, is said to contain the whole of his counsel to the heirs of promise, and that to shew the immutability of that his counsel, he confirmed it by an oath.

Hence therefore, although the gospel in most things speaks greater things than the Old Testament, and in higher terms, yet hath it not altered, nor can it better this. Christ himself, that began to preach this gospel in that his first large sermon that is recorded, it is the first word he therein utters, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit,' &c. Matt. v. 2, 3; and because he could not add to this, he does but repeat it over and over, as the general that contained in it the kingdom of heaven, ver. 3; comfort here, ver. 4; inheriting the earth, ver. 5; filling with all good, ver. 6; obtaining mercy, ver. 7;

seeing God, ver. 8 ; adoption and being God's children, ver. 9 ; and if there be any other particular, all are summed up in this word 'blessed.' Each and every particle of our salvation or happiness being blessings, as here, all the gospel can say is but blessing ; which is therefore called in the lump of it, the fulness of the blessing of the gospel, Rom. xv. 29, for it cannot speak beyond what this word reacheth. All that Christ could do when he ascended was but to bless ; and after Christ's ascension, the last book of the gospel, the Revelation, doth continually and throughout use the same style, and at the latter day, when heaven doors are to be set open for the righteous to enter in, their everlasting happiness is uttered by it, Come, ye blessed.

II. *For the thing, or what import this word carries with it.*—As you heard what it was for us to bless God, so now I am to shew what it is for God to bless us. God's blessing us, is his bestowing or communicating all good together with himself, with all hearty good-will, out of love to our persons.

1. *It is a bestowing or communicating of good.*—The Jews defined it in general *accessio boni*, grounded upon Psalm cxv., where what in ver. 12, 13 is expressed by blessing, in ver. 14 is *adjiciat super vos*, God add to you, namely, good or well-being, unto your being, or what is already given you. And the Scripture often useth the word blessing for a gift or present bestowed. Gen. xxxiii., that which Jacob calls his present or gift, ver. 10, he calls his blessing bestowed, ver. 11, 'Take, I pray thee, my blessing which is brought thee.' And, 2 Cor. ix. 5, 6, their bountiful gift to the churches he calls their blessing in the margin ; you have the same, 2 Kings v. 15 ; the like, Lev. xxv. 21. And to be sure, whatever man's blessings are, all God's blessings are the giving and accumulation of good to us, or doing us good. And though the word *eulogia* signifies but his good word to and concerning us, yet God's word is his deed. And *Dei benedicere est benefacere*, for by a bare word of command he blesseth ; Ps. cxxxiii. 3, 'there he commands the blessing,' that blessing of blessings, 'even life for evermore ;' like as it is said, 'he commanded, and they were created,' Ps. cxlviii. 5. So he commands and we are blessed. Alas ! when we creatures bless God, we express but our well-wishes or joyful acclamations to that blessedness is in himself already ; but when God blesseth us, he altogether gives, he communicates.

2. *It is the communication of all good, yea of himself.*—God gives and blesseth like himself when he blesseth. He blesseth 'indeed,' as the phrase is, 1 Chron. iv. 10, and will not bless under giving all. He blesseth 'altogether,' as the phrase is, Num. xxiv. 10 ; therefore in the text here, 'with all blessings.' He cannot bless less, for he is God, and hath all to bestow. Thou art God, says David, and do thou bless me, 1 Chron. xvii. 26, 27. He ureth that, for he knew what it was for God to bless, and that he blesseth as the great God and like himself, both with all that God himself is, and all that God can effect and do for us ; or as he hath created and made all things, he hath all things to bestow ; therefore to make up this total, I have put in both the communication of himself, and all good things with himself.

To this purpose I observe, that in the mention of the evangelical blessings, —Abraham's blessing, as I may call it, —both God's own all-sufficiency in himself, and God's power in his works and to effect all things, are still mentioned ; sometimes the one, sometimes the other, because in blessing us he is considered as both ; he both gives himself and all things else to us, and so we are blessed indeed. Thus to Abraham whom God in blessing blessed, 'I am El-shaddai,' says he, God that am and have all-sufficiency, Gen. xvii. 1. When Isaac would bless Jacob with this blessing of Abraham, he thus speaks, God all-sufficient bless thee, Gen. xxviii. 3, (the same word in both.) And

though in the translation it is restrained to almightiness, yet it also imports God's all-sufficiency and abundance; and so this blessing intends a communication out of that riches and fulness of blessedness which God himself enjoys. This for the first.

Secondly, In other places his titles, that import power and sovereignty in making and possessing all in heaven and earth, are prefixed to his blessing. Thus, when Melchisedec pronounces Abraham blessed, Gen. xiv. 19, he calls him the blessed of God under this title, 'the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth,' who had therefore all things in heaven and earth to bless him withal. And the Jews used the same, Ps. cxv. 15, 'You are the blessed of the Lord, who made heaven and earth,' and so is able to do all things for you, by the same power whereby he made the world. The like Ps. cxxxiv.; these have been inferred out of Abraham's blessing.

Now, that not only God doth bless with all other good things, but above all by communicating himself and his own blessedness unto them, the Scriptures are elsewhere express, when this blessing is spoken of. They shall not only not want any good, as the Psalmist, Ps. xxxiv. 10, 'No good thing will he withhold;' as Ps. lxxxiv., but 'give both grace and glory;' but himself will be a sun unto them; as there, ver. 11, 'The Lord God is a sun and shield.' The sun doth not only enrich the earth with all good things which by its influence it produceth, (called the 'precious fruits brought forth by the sun,' Deut. xxxiii. 14,) but glads and refreshes all with shedding immediately its own wings of light and warmth, which is so pleasant to behold and enjoy. And thus doth God, and Christ the Sun of righteousness, and accordingly it follows there, 'Blessed is the man that trusts in him;' for in being our sun, himself becomes our blessedness. Thus his promise of blessing Abraham, God himself interprets, Gen. xv. 1, 'I am thy exceeding great and abundant reward;' I, that am El-shaddai,* that have infinite paps of sweetness for you to suck; breasts of consolation, as the prophet expresseth it; who am the God of all comforts, as 2 Cor. i. 3, lo, I hold them all forth naked to thee, for thee to draw and fetch comfort from. Thou shalt have all my blessedness to make thee blessed, which the Apostle fitly renders, Eph. iii., 'being filled with all the fulness of God;' and indeed all things else without God or besides God could never make us blessed. The Psalmist, after an enumeration of all sorts of blessings, having pronounced them happy that are in such a case or state, by way of correction adds, as not having uttered wherein the top of blessedness lies; he adds, 'yea, blessed is the people whose God is the Lord,' Ps. cxliv. 15.

And hence the people of God, as sensible wherein their interest of happiness lies, as they are termed the blessed of the Lord, so they are said to bless themselves in the Lord; which is to rejoice and make their boast in him alone, and how happy they are in him, (as Christ in the 16th Psalm doth,) 'The Lord is my portion, and my lines are fallen in a good ground; I have a goodly heritage.' And that promise of blessing to Abraham, to which I still have recourse, runs thus indifferently, either that in thy seed, that is, Christ, (Gal. iii. 16,) they shall be blessed, so Gen. xii. 3, xxviii. 14; or xxii. 18, they shall bless themselves, or *benedictos se reputent*, account themselves

* Some derive his name El-shaddai, 'God all-sufficient,' from שָׁדַי, *mamma*, quasi *πλούμαστος*, having many paps or dugs to suck, (Rivet. Gen. exerc. 87, *ab initio*;) and as God takes the denomination of רַחֵם, that is, 'most merciful,' from רֶחֶם, 'the womb,' and so bowels, so this name of 'all-sufficient' from breasts or paps, (A Lapide on Gen. xvii. 1;) so at once noting out God's fulness, and also his readiness to communicate to

blessed in him—so Junius upon that place—namely in Christ, who is God blessed for ever, Rom. ix., for else they could not bless themselves in him. And thus Isaiah makes it the top of evangelical perfection, which he prophesied of, chap. lxxv. 16; yea, and of the state of the people of God in the new heaven and new earth, wherein righteousness dwells, of which ver. 17, 18, that he who should bless himself in the earth, should bless himself in the God of truth; that is, God and Christ, that is alone the truth and the firm substance of all blessedness and happiness; according to that also of the Psalmist, ‘Whom have I in heaven but thee, and in earth in comparison of thee?’ That as a wicked man is said to bless himself in his life, Ps. xlix. 18, that is, to applaud his own soul’s happiness, (Soul, take thine ease,) in having goods laid up for many years, for to make him, as he judgeth, happy; so the saints bless themselves in their God, their glory, not in riches or wisdom or strength, but they glory in this, that they understand and know God, Jer. ix. 23, 24, and by knowing him are made happy in him. For that is eternal life, John xvii. 3. And so by having God and Christ for their blessedness, they have all things with them, and so are blessed with all blessings. ‘I will be his God,’ that first; then follows, ‘and he shall inherit all things.’

Lastly, God blesseth out of hearty good-will and love to our persons. And this is as the soul or form of blessing, whether ye will take it for the act of blessing in God, or the matter of blessing bestowed upon us. It is the good-will of God that causeth each of these to have the denomination and nature of a blessing.

1. *It is the spring and fountain of that act of blessing*, as that which constitutes it such. To bless is to wish, or, wishing, to bestow all good out of good-will; as when we bless God, it is the good-will we express therein which makes it termed blessing him, and so to differ from praise, as was shewn. So in God’s blessing us, (his blessing us to be sure at least answereth to our blessing of him, and infinitely exceeds it.) In him it is a fatherly act, and so proceeds from mere natural and pure good-will and affection. The Lord first loves, then blesseth; Jehovah thy God will love thee, and so will bless thee, Deut. vii. 12, 13. And so likewise in Ps. v. 12, God’s blessing us is exegetically expressed and explained to be a compassing a man round about with favour and good-will, clasping and accepting him, as with everlasting arms, Deut. xxxiii. 27. Thou Jehovah wilt bless the righteous, thou wilt encompass him round with favour, or favourable acceptance, good-will or gracious good-liking and acceptance, joined with a delight in their persons, and rejoicing to do them good, as the same word (Isa. xl. 1, ‘in whom my soul delights,’ spoken of Christ,) imports. And it is an encompassing round, because that man hath nothing else from God but love and favour coming in upon him on every side and surrounding him, and hence it is that a man is blessed with all blessings. In these terms therefore doth Moses pour forth his prayers of blessing on Joseph’s head, who was separated from his brethren, as the choicest of them all. ‘The good-will of him that dwelt in the bush, let it come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him that was separated from his brethren,’ (Deut. xxxiii. 1, 16, compared.) He invokes the original, the fountain of all blessings; namely the good-will of that God who in the bush had appeared and said, ‘I am the God of Abraham,’ &c., Exod. iii. 2, 6. And surely if God communicates himself to whom he blesseth, his blessing of them must proceed from the deepest good-will; and indeed is the reason why he giveth himself, as in marriage they bestow themselves and all, to whom they bear their special good-will.

And, 2. This good-will of God, accompanying each thing bestowed, is *that*

which maketh a blessing of it, and so to be more than merely gifts bestowed. The Hebrews termed their gifts or presents a blessing. Thus 1 Sam. xxv. 27, Abigail to David, 'This blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my Lord;' also 2 Kings v. 15; whereby they would have it understood by the receiver, that they proceeded from their free and most hearty good-will; and that to be more than the gift. Thou hast given long life to thy king, says David to God, and so blesseth him for that. But because long life in itself was as no blessing to him without God's favour, in another psalm he says, 'Thy loving-kindness is better than life,' and all the privileges of it better than the things bestowed. And therefore after that Jacob had wished his Joseph all the precious things, as he terms them, all the dainties heaven or earth afforded, both which he distinctly mentions, Deut. xxxiii., (read ver. 13, 14 afore,) then after all he prays, as without which these would not prove blessings, the good-will of our God, says he, come upon him, &c., so invoking this fountain of all. Thus take any particular outward mercy which hath the name of a blessing, and it is the blessing of God, that is, his favour accompanying it, that maketh it such. It is the blessing of God, as Solomon says, that maketh rich, Prov. x. 22; and so in all other, otherwise their blessings are turned into curses, as Mal. ii. 2.

Out of good-will, good-will to our persons themselves, it is that he blesseth us, as in our blessing of God we heard it imported pure good-will to himself; so in his blessing us. In that short and fervent prayer of Jabez, 'Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed!' 1 Chron. iv. 10, this passage follows, 'that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!' I observe from thence, that our God who undertakes to bless us, loves us so well, that he is so moved (such is his love to our persons) with the pleas of self-love in us, when concurring with his own glory. For this holy man, in seeking God's blessing on him to be kept from evil, urgeth this to God, 'that it may not grieve me.' Such free and pure good-will doth God bear to us, that he loves we should love ourselves, and is affected with what proceeds from love to ourselves; for this request God granted; so then it is genuine to the nature of a blessing, and indeed to bless another doth naturally and evidently of all acts else imply a pure and candid aim in wishing and desiring another's good, out of a special love unto their persons. Thus much for what this word to bless, as an act of God's, as also what a blessing as the thing bestowed, holds forth to us.

'Us,'—who in and of ourselves are 'by nature children of wrath,' as in chap. ii. 3, and 'cursed children,' 2 Pet. ii. 14, to whom all the curses written and unwritten are due,—are yet rendered blessed in Christ, and blessed not with one sort or kind, but all blessings, termed therefore by way of distinction from other men that remain under the curse, the blessed of the Lord. So Abraham first, Gen. xiv. 19, Melchisedec gives it him as a most royal title for himself and his children to inherit, that it grew to be ordinarily their style and attribute by heathens themselves, who observed the blessing of Jehovah to environ them. Thus Abimelech treats Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 29, 'Thou blessed of the Lord;' yea, this appellation Laban gives Abraham's servant, Gen. xxiv. 31, and so it came to be given to all others of his seed, as Ps. cxv. 15. And as it is their name and denomination, so the end of their calling, even that which they are called unto, unto nothing else but blessing, 1 Pet. iii. 9, 'Ye are thereunto called, that you should inherit a blessing;' in relation to which it is Christ's own compellation, when they are to possess it, 'Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom,' Matt. xxv. 34. Yea, they are not blessed men only, but men of blessedness, as in the Hebrew it is;

made up of nothing else, ordained to nothing else ; yea, to a surplusage flowing over ; such as to be blessings to others with whom they live, and whom they have relation to ; all they come near, says God to Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, and ushers it with a word of command, ' Be thou,' or thou shalt be, ' a blessing, and I will bless them that bless thee ;' which is repeated to Jacob by his father Isaac, and so is true of all the seed, Gen. xxvii. 29, and fulfilled in Joseph, Gen. xxxix. 5, for whose sake God blessed Potiphar and all his house.

MEDITATION.

Oh, then, let your hearts be full of nothing but of blessing, both blessing God and blessing others ; and let no cursing or reviling be found in our mouths, which is the Apostle's inference, 1 Pet. iii. 9.

' Us,'—whose persons he loved with a special love, and out of that love hath chosen from the rest of men, as it follows in the next verse ; thus Ps. xxxiii. 12, 13, ' Blessed are the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance. The Lord looketh from heaven ; he beholdeth all the sons of men ;' that is, whereas he hath all the sons of men afore him, he loved and chose these out to bless, and it is said he loved and blessed them above all people, as Deut. vii. 14. Which discovered itself in the difference put between Jacob and Esau : Jacob have I loved, and out of love blessed him, peremptorily and unchangeably, for he added, ' Yea, and he shall be blessed,' Gen. xxvii. 33, which old Isaac, the father, spake as in the person of God ; whereas Esau with much difficulty obtains a poor pittance of outward blessings for a season.

' Us.'—But these meditations on this word, though quickening, yet that which is more conjunct with the Apostle's intimate scope, and was the main provocation in his thoughts, with this vehemency of spirit to pour forth this offering of blessing to the Lord, was the fresh and recent experience of God's gracious performance of that great promise made to the patriarchs of blessing in Christ both Jew and Gentile of all nations with the fulness of the blessing of the gospel. And that which induceth me to this is, I consider that he writing to the Ephesians, Gentile converts, in whose hearts, as in other nations, the gospel had taken place, he so carrieth his following discourse, setly and intentionally, as still to involve both Jew and Gentile together in the same spiritual privileges, in making his applications sometimes to the one, sometimes to the other, all along his discourse, in this and the following chapters, which hath been the general observation of interpreters, sometimes speaking of the Jew, which himself was : ' we who first trusted in Christ,' ver. 11, 12 ; sometimes of the other, ' ye also,' ver. 13 ; and so chap. ii. throughout ; and accordingly in this general introduction of blessing God, he wraps them both in one and the same ' us ;' and we as in a community partake of all the same benefits, in ver. 4-9. The access of which Gentiles unto the Church, and to be made partakers of the blessing of Abraham according to the promise and prophecy, was but then effected in his days. Oh, blessed be God, says he, and the Father of Christ, that hath thus blessed us ; and blessed are the ears and eyes of us that live in these days wherein we have and see these things fulfilled : the mystery opened and discovered, which in former ages was not made known, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel, as himself, as referring to the things delivered here and the rest of this chapter, speaks, chap. iii. 3, compared with ver. 4-6. This was so vast a prospect, as he falls down at the first and general view and consideration thereof : Blessed be God the Father that hath blessed us, us Jews, and with us, you Gentiles, with the blessings promised Abraham. And so much for the persons blessed.