

SERMON X.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.—VER. 10.

THESE words contain the whole of God's everlasting purposes of grace (sever them from those of creation and providence) toward all or any, either in heaven or earth, whom he regards or loves.

This is his comprehensive scope; and that both the coherence of them with the former, and the matter itself, when opened, will discover and declare. *First*, the coherence these words have with the whole he had been discoursing of from ver. 3 until now. From ver. 3 unto ver. 7, he had been enumerating the particular purposes of God's grace to us men in Christ,—the things on earth,—how from everlasting he had chosen, predestinated, and graciously accepted us in his Son Christ. And then, from ver. 7 to this, how he had redeemed us, forgives us, and calls us according to the same rich grace in Christ. Which done and said of us men, whom this epistle was wholly wrote to and concerned, he then brings forth the whole of God's design in the utmost extent of it, so to glorify this grace and this Christ. 'To gather in him,'—not *us* only, you and us men, the things on earth, but all things that are in heaven also,—'in him I say;' and it is as if he had said, 'For a conclusion of these particulars, I will give you the total sum of all in comprehensive words.'

That particular account begun concerning us men, occasioned and drew out this general conclusion and glorious *coronis*.

The words immediately before, 'he purposed in himself,' there are two known variations of them, yet so as either stream falls into this scope.

1. Some copies, and those more ancient, have not that word 'which.' They render it not, '*which* he purposed in himself,' but simply thus, 'he purposed in himself.' And so those words before them, ver. 9, 'having made known the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure,' they give a full period to his former sentence, ver. 8, and then these words, 'He purposed in himself,' begin anew, and do of right belong to this 10th verse, and are to be cut off from the 9th verse. And so the scope runs naturally to shew, as hath been said—

2. What was the whole, and all, and utmost, of what he purposed in himself—namely this, to gather all in Christ, the good angels, as well as us men, thereby to shew the fulness of Christ's glory. For, secondly, if that word 'which' prove to be that which fell from Paul's pen, (as most copies,) yet still the current empties itself into the same meaning: for whereas, in the 9th verse, he had set out the rich grace of God shewn to the Ephesians, as also himself in particular,—that he had called them unto Christ by the knowledge of his will, 'making known to them the mystery of his will;' which grace of gathering them personally first unto Christ he attributes unto the

good pleasure of his will, as it follows, ‘according to his good pleasure,’ κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν, ἣν—that is, according to that, even that same good pleasure which, or out of which, he had purposed to gather universally all of them he loved in heaven or earth in his one Christ,—so as comfort yourselves, and adore that grace, which herein is the very same unto you which it is unto any or all of angels and men. And what love can be supposed greater? Yea, and this is your privilege, to be taken into that general account and number of that general assembly, consisting of a universal ‘company of angels,’ &c., the privilege of which the Apostle doth so celebrate, Heb. xii. What shall I say more? You have the bottom of God’s heart, the centre and circumference of his decrees of grace, the greatest birth the heart of God was ever big with; so great, as God having been in travail with it from everlasting, as became so great a design, had also appointed a ‘fulness of time,’ a centre of time, for the delivery or discovery of it; which began when Christ was first revealed, ‘seen of angels,’ things in heaven—‘believed on in the world,’ both of Jews and Gentiles, which shall be gathered together in that last and general assembly in heaven. This is the coherence and general scope.

There are two eminent phrases to be opened:—

First, What is meant by ‘all things in heaven, in earth.’

Secondly, What the import and signification of this word, of ‘gathering together in one,’ ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, by which the Apostle undertakes to express the ultimate and most perfect design of God toward all his elect. What it signifies and extends itself unto I shall, for a clearer view of what I am to deliver—

First, Explain what is meant by ‘all things.’ And then—

Secondly, Set forth the particular heads I mean to treat on.

Thirdly, After that, I will give the import of that other phrase, ‘gathering together in one;’ the reason of doing which latter after the other will easily appear, because the variety of the signification of that phrase will be found to fall in with all these heads.

First, What is meant by ‘all things.’

It expresseth those two sorts of intellectual creatures who are here set out and distinguished by their original countries they belong unto, the places of their habitation, heaven and earth. The Hebrews are wont thus to express them, as in the Second Commandment—

1. ‘Thou shalt not make the likeness of things in heaven above;’ whereby are meant angels, who sometimes took shapes;

2. ‘Nor of things on the earth beneath,’

3. ‘Nor under the earth;’ devils, who appeared in the shapes of hairy ones, satyrs, &c. You have the very same, Phil. ii. 10.

Now of this third dominion of God’s,—viz., that of devils, or of those in hell under the earth,—of this sin was the sole founder. But God only took out his original dominions, heaven and earth, for the subjects of this his choice. Those under the earth are left out, as they are said ‘to be without;’ there is no gathering thence. But two colonies he hath singled out of earth and heaven.

Secondly, These are two sorts of intelligent creatures, angels in heaven, and men on earth. Beza and others would have the souls of elect men, that were in heaven when Christ died and ascended, to be the ‘things in heaven,’ but without any instance of any scripture where they are so termed; and also that parallel place, Col. i. 18–20, that Christ is the head of the body, by whom God hath reconciled ‘all things to himself, whether things

in earth, or things in heaven ;' the phrase is clearly interpreted by ver. 16, ' By him all things were created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth ;' as being distinguished by the places which by their creation they belong unto.

If, secondly, you ask, Why the persons of angels and men are meant by *things*?

Resp.—It is ordinary in Scripture so to express it : Gal. iii. 32, God hath shut up ' all things under sin,' τὰ πάντα ; which is elsewhere expressed, Rom. xi. 32, τοῖς πάντας, as meaning persons.

If, thirdly, why *all*? The answer is, the apostle intends all whom God cares for ; and indeed those only *are*, whom God's favour gives being unto : ' Of him ye are in Christ Jesus,' 1 Cor. i. 30. Again, secondly, *all* ; that is, all sorts in either. (1.) In heaven, there are several ranks of angels, which Col. i. 16 warrants, ' thrones and dominions ;' as you see among peers, dukes, marquises, earls, although they are all of the same house ; so here. Here are archangels, angels ; the Scripture mentions both. (2.) On earth there are several ranks of men. Now God affects to have of all, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, of all nations, countries, families, conditions, that shall be made happy by him.

Secondly, The heads of the ensuing discourse.

The eminent particulars contained in this total of God's purposes of grace, the subjects of my discourse, are—

First, The utmost of that thing itself which God intended to bring all his unto. It is an union with himself, and a collection of all things to himself.

Secondly, His setting forth and singling out the person of Christ, the great *Him* here ; ' in him,' I say, in whose very person he first purposed to gather up all sorts of things, and thereby to fit him to become a head or centre, in which he might gather all whom he loved.

Thirdly, That he hath taken his elect out of all sorts of persons that were in heaven or are in earth, and united them in Christ, as in, and through, and under one common head.

Fourthly, That to illustrate his grace, and the glory of his Christ the more, he ordained a first and second gathering or union of all these ; and the first being slippery and failing, he ordained a firm and everlasting union at last, in and through his Son.

Fifthly, The manner of his effecting this, ' by Christ.' And so you have the heads to be treated on.

Thirdly, Let us consider the import and extent of this great word, ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, and the several significations of it, which the Holy Ghost singled out on purpose to express this whole of God's design, and the several particulars forementioned therein.

I shall but give you what is collected from approved interpreters and critics, of which it is too large to give the account.

I. In general, it imports to join many things in one, and to bring them to an unity. This sense our translators favoured, rendering it simply thus, ' a gathering together in one.' And this general sense of the word falls fitly in with the first of those heads mentioned, viz., That God's utmost design was an union with himself.

II. Particularly. This more general contains many more particular significations under it :—

1. It is a similitude taken from arithmetic, and signifies a summing up many lesser broken numbers and accounts in one total sum, as merchants do. Thus the tale or total sum of bricks to be gathered by the Israelites,

Exod. v. 18, is rendered by the Septuagint, κεφάλαιον, which is a phrase akin to that of κεφαλή, the head. The Grecians placed the total sum of any account at the top, as we on the contrary at the bottom of it; and whereas we call it *pes computi*, discomputation, the foot of the account, they termed it κεφάλαιον, the head or top.

2. The word is a similitude from rhetoric,—that is, to sum or gather up many particulars, which have been largely and particularly dilated on, into one word or sentence, which is the brief or compendium of them all. Thus Rom. xiii. 9, having rehearsed many particular commandments, Thou shalt not steal, murder, &c., he concludes, ‘And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended’ (it is the same word that is here) ‘in this one saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ And these two significations do correspond with the second head, and fitly serve to express how that in the very person of Christ are summed so many particulars as in one sum, or one brief sentence.

3. It is a similitude taken from politics, as when we would express many nations or persons united under one prince, as their head. Thus Chrysostom understood it, and many since. And so in the natural body, ἀποκεφαλῶσαι is, ‘to cut off the head,’ *truncare caput*; opposite to which is this word here, ‘to gather under one head.’ And this signification suits and serves the third head, namely, that *all things*, all sorts of angels and men, are gathered up under Christ, as their head and natural prince.

Lastly, there is an ἀνὰ added, ‘to gather again a second time,’ to redeem or collect things or persons that were scattered asunder, as the dead bones in Ezekiel, which being disjointed came together miraculously again, and made up one body under one head.

And this serves fitly to the two last heads proposed, so as not one of them can be spared. You have the heads of my subject cut out, and the words opened as holding them forth. Now to give you the story of all these. For the first head:—

HEAD I.

That the great God purposed and designed an union with himself of those whom in a special manner he had set himself to love; and that this union is the deepest and furthest design of his heart, of any he hath toward them, or the whole creation. The full demonstration of his manifold wisdom and power moved him to make a variety of persons, things, yea, of worlds; but then his goodness and his love moved him to reduce out of that variety an *all* out of every sort, as a pledge of his respect to all, unto an unity again, and that with himself; and this union is the top perfection of all his works, as that, John xvii. 23, ‘I in them, and they in me, that they may be made perfect in one.’ It is the perfection of the creature, whereof the unity of the three Persons is the pattern, and the perfection of God’s design.

HEAD II.

The next thing to be considered is, *what medium, means, or corner-stone and foundation it was which God laid and designed, in and by whom most efficaciously and harmoniously to accomplish this designed union between himself and all things in both worlds.* For the whole creation was at that distance from God, as God would have them know and retain the sense and remembrance of it, even when this union should be in its height and perfection; and to that end neither admits the generality, the *all* here, to an immediate union with himself; and those he doth admit but in and through another, and him the

text names and holds up with the greatest eminence, ‘in him, in him I say;’ thereby shewing that it was this great He, and he alone, that was or could have been the foundation of this work.

Him, whom God hath made both Lord and Christ, and to that end singled forth and made up, and constituted him such a person as should be the centre, the compound of all things which he meant in and by him to unite.

And herein let us adore the infinite wisdom of God, to find out and contrive such a kind of person to be his instrument therein; remembering all along that we are not at present speaking of redemption, but only of union.

Now, to set forth this in general, let us consider, that if there were a general counsel of all sorts of intelligent natures, called by God, and commissioned to choose out a head to this *all* of themselves, they would certainly pitch upon such a one, if such a one could be found out by them, in whom all the interest and concerns of them all do meet. Now this hath God done for us, without us, in this choice of his Christ and our Lord. For what can, or could be supposed more harmonious than that, when God meant to unite the variety of all sorts in one head, he should ordain that one head in his person to be the sum of all their natures and conditions, and yet a person of himself, and distinct from them, and independent of them; and so Christ mystical, the Church, and Christ personal, who were to be espoused together, might suit and match, and alike consist of all things, to the end they might be like in all things as near as possible might be?

And this collection of *all* in the very person of Christ takes up two of those fore-mentioned significations of this word, ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι. First, the casting up of divers numbers in one total sum; secondly, the epitomising or summing up a variety of dilated discourses into one sentence.

Let us run through the divided numbers which ‘all things, in heaven or earth,’ are parted into.

The *first* great and more general division of all things is, *God and the creature*, and to cast up or bring in these two into one sum or total was the hardest piece of arithmetic that ever was. And yet none of us creatures had ever come into this after-account or second union with God under Christ, if God himself had not come into and made one of this first account and highest union, that is, *of God and a creature making one Person*.

Deny Christ to be God, and deny him to be head, and dissolve all our union with God, as also reconciliation unto God, the foundation of all is taken away. The mutable creature could never fix unto God, but by this sure and immutable foundation.

Secondly, Come we then to creatures. Among them there is another division; for as God hath made two worlds, so two possessors of them—the angels, the intellectual natures of the world above; and us men on earth, the lower world. It is true, that because the redemption of men was in his eye, as well as this of union of all things, therefore ‘he took not the nature of angels;’ and besides, therein there was a more special respect and inclination had unto men, rather than unto the angels, as Heb. ii. shews. Yet withal it must also be affirmed that, in order to the fetching in of this general union of all things both in earth and heaven, this was the only way to comprehend and grasp both and all,—to take into one person with him one individual nature of man, rather than any other. And hereby, and by this alone, he hath summed up all in heaven and earth in his person. Not only

because in the nature of man, as in a little world, all things are summed up in both worlds; man having a spirit, which like the angels can subsist alone, out of the body, and live in their world, *i. e.*, in heaven; but he hath a body also, which consists of all sorts of creatures here below. The heathens observed, and their poets feigned, a piece of everything else went to make up man. Whereas, had he taken the nature of angels, then the 'all things on earth' had been quite left out of this account; for though man hath a spirit like that of the angelical nature, yet that spirit being ordained to dwell in a body, and that body being a part of man, and constitutive of him as such; (and therefore Christ proves the resurrection of the body of Abraham by this, that else it is not Abraham, the man Abraham, unless soul and body be joined.) But upon a further ground we shall see it was that in taking of man's nature he took in angels also, that is, *the condition of angels*.

It is true, had he been no more but an earthly man, as Adam his type, this design of taking in all had fallen short. But the person who assumes and takes into his person this individual nature of man being God, the Son of God, that man whom he so assumes is instantly a heavenly man, as to his condition, 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48. And although the substance of his nature is the same as ours, yet the state is heavenly, and to be *ἄγγελοι*, as angels; yea, 'far above all principalities and powers,' Eph. i.; yea, 'higher than the heavens,' Heb. vii. 25. It is not his right only to be in heaven, but he is Lord of it, 'the Lord from heaven,' as 1 Cor. xv. 47, and other scriptures speak, as John iii. 13, and is spoken as if, as he is man, he had first been actually in heaven, because it was a real condescension in him to take our nature with its frailty, by which he became for a little while 'lower than the angels,' Heb. ii. His natural due was that heavenly state, and to be as glorious as he is now. Here then is in an instant all in heaven and earth met, and all their interest. For though man could say, He hath our nature; yet the angels could withal instantly reply, But he is our countryman; by right we should have him here, and there he must in the end be, and live for ever. None of his creatures could say, We have a King and Head in whom ye have no share or alliance unto.

You know how sharp the contention grew between the men of Judah and the ten tribes, 2 Sam. xix., about David their king. 'He is nigh akin to us,' say the men of Judah, ver. 42, 'flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone.' They of Judah plead, as he was David; so ver. 9, 'But he hath saved us out of the hands of our enemies, and delivered us out of the hands of the Philistines.' As he was king, say the ten tribes. And thereupon the men of Israel answered, 'We have ten parts in the king, and we have also more right in David than ye.' But, my brethren, here neither things on earth, neither things in heaven, need either of them to complain or quarrel about the like in Christ; for God hath summed up all in their King, Jesus, that so he might become their catholic King and universal Head. He is flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, and by birth akin to us, might man say, which the angels cannot. But this they can truly reply instead of it, But he is a heavenly man, and that by right of inheritance from a higher birth, which his person had from everlasting. Heaven is his country; his court is for ever to be there; his throne is there erected; and by birthright he is to sit at God's right hand. He is a spiritual man, 1 Cor. xv. 46; yea, and 'a quickening spirit' unto us, and to you the sons of men also: yea, and you men, if you will enjoy your King and his presence for ever, you must

come up or be brought where we are, even as Christ prays they may, John xvii., 'be where I am, and see my glory;' and 'I have given it them.' So, then, neither can they say, 'they have no part in Jesse.'

Yea, here I may add that, in taking man's nature there was this further advantage: there was a gratification to all kinds of creatures else; they can all say, We have something of every one of us in him. Man's nature being the epitome of all, the centre of both worlds, higher and lower,—the elements, vegetatives, sensitive creatures,—man is the little idea of all species or kinds of things; and this great idea, the Son of God and the image of God, they married together; and a happy match it must needs prove, which brings God and all creatures thus into one person.

Thirdly, Come we to 'things on earth,' the sons of men. Amongst them we find one famous division of Jew and Gentile; and that Christ might be a meet head to both, God hath summed up both Jew and Gentile in him. And yet as touching the former, between men and angels, the election was that 'he took not the nature of angels,' Heb. ii. (which you have seen removed :) so here, that which follows, that he 'took on him the seed of Abraham,' serves wholly to exclude us Gentiles from having any portion in his person.

But the answer is as ready. It is true that, immediately and more eminently, he came of the Jewish race, Rom. ix. 5, 'Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came.' And as in that other division between angels and men, the portion that man hath in him preponderates; so it is here on the Jews' side also, yet withal not to the utter exclusion of the Gentiles. For, to allude to that speech of the ten tribes, concerning David, we Gentiles have ten parts in him. There were ten patriarchs that were his ancestors and ours, and came to us and the Jews, before this division of Abraham's seed was brought up in the world; and two thousand years or more before Abraham was styled the Father of the Faithful, and the Promised Seed, Eve was called the Mother of all Living: and so, that both Jew and Gentile had the first promise of the seed that should break the serpent's head, to be her seed. Yea, and after that division made from Abraham, you have two Gentiles mentioned in his very genealogy, Rahab and Ruth, as his great-grandmothers. So it was he would have some of the Gentiles' blood run in his veins, as well as that of the Jews.

Thus you have now seen, 1. God's most deep and comprehensive design to be the union of all things with himself. 2. The fulness of fulness in the person whom he singles forth to be the means or effector of it; and therein two of the forementioned significations of the word ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι taken up therein.

HEAD III.

We come now to the persons gathered. The third head proposed was, *That God out of all sorts of persons, both in heaven and in earth, hath designed to collect a body and select company to union with himself, and through Christ as their Head.* Which the third particular import of this word gives warrant to; it signifies, 'gathering together as in one head.'

As he is an arithmetical head, so he is a political head. He is a Prince, and a Lord, and a Head to all things in heaven and in earth, and they are made all one, in being reduced to him as to a head. 'He hath given him to be the head over all things to the church,' Eph. i. 22. So that, my brethren, this is the second mystery I am to unfold to you, That as in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ there is God, and angels, and men, Jew and Gentile,

summed up in him ; he partakes in his person of all these : so his body, if you will so call it, or rather his family, whereof he is head,—(for I do not know that the angels are called members of his body, that is peculiarly the privilege of the saints),—but they are all gathered into one commonwealth, into one city, into one family, both angels and men, unto him as their head. And that same universal Church, that shall appear at the latter day when the fulness of time is out, when the glass is run ; for then he will have them all about him, and they will all be under one head ; and so that family of his, which shall all come unto him, will have a conformity to his person. Christ mystical will have a conformity to Christ personal ; as Christ personal was summed up of all, so will that whole family of his, that whole commonwealth of his, whereof he is the head, be summed up of all too, both angels and men, Jew and Gentile, all sorts of men ; all things in heaven, and all things in earth, shall all be gathered in one *in him*.

And this is that same great *μυστήριον*, as the Apostle calleth it, Eph. iii. 9 : ‘To make all men see,’ saith he, ‘what is the fellowship of the mystery,’—and the angels come in there too, at the 10th verse, for by the preaching of the gospel they have a fellowship with him as well as the Jew and Gentile,—‘to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.’ This is that great association of all the creatures, whereby they are all, though they are two several kingdoms, as England and Scotland are, yet all united ; there is an association under one monarch, so under one Christ, that they come all to have relation to one as their head, and all make up a family, and a commonwealth, and a kingdom too.

There are two things here to be treated of.

(1.) That the good angels, as well as men, are united and come into this society under Christ as a head, which alone I need insist upon ; for of men there is no question.

(2.) That all of each—that is, all sorts of angels and all sorts of men—are taken in to make up this body or society.

(1.) Angels, as well as men ; which I explain by these particulars :—

First, When I say they are ‘gathered in one in Christ,’ I mean not as a redeemer, but simply as a head. The difference of these two I shall in another section give the account of. I observe that, Rev. v. 9, 11, 12, when the two first rounds, or rings, gathered about the Lamb and the throne, the first and nearest is of men, of angels the second ; and both celebrating the Lamb that was slain.

This in general, *That Christ is head both to angels and men*.

(2.) The second branch, That all sorts of each, both angels and men, were gathered unto him, as in that one head.

[1.] All sorts of angels. There are several ranks of angels, which Col. i. 16 doth give us the heraldry of : ‘All things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions,’ (there are things in heaven,) ‘principalities or powers.’ 1. Thrones speaks kingly power to be among them, Dan. x. 13, ‘Lo, Michael, one of the chief princes,’ as he is there called, which is spoken of a good angel ; for it is Michael. 2. There are dominions, viceroys, as it were ranks, and orders under them ; and this order in hell is kept, by which their kingdom is governed ; there is one that is the Prince of Devils, even as under a king there are dukes, and marquises, and earls, &c. And these good angels are all of one house, consisting of the original peers of heaven. And this distinction of angels, for we presume not to give any more ranks

of them, (as the counterfeit Dionysius and, from him, the Papists do;) we elsewhere find in Scripture that some are called archangels. One at least, Jude 9, who was a mere created angel, as is evident by this, that he 'durst not bring a railing accusation;' which must not be applied unto the second Person as God, as some have done. Likewise, 1 Thess. iv. 16, it is said, 'The Lord shall descend with the voice of an archangel;' which archangel is distinct from the Lord himself. The angels then are of several ranks, and there are of all sorts of them in heaven.

[2.] Men on earth. Christ hath a body of men, made up of all on earth, an elect of all sorts.

The first division of things on earth is into Jew and Gentile, in common; that the Church of men consists of both these, is known to all.

Secondly, Among the Gentiles there are many nations; and, Gen. xviii. 18, the promise is to Abraham, that in him (*i.e.*, in Christ) all the nations of the earth should be blessed, and it is repeated again in chap. xxii. It is not only that Christ should sprinkle 'many nations' with his blood, Isa. lii. 15; but the first promise saith, 'all nations.' Ps. lxxxvi. 9, 'All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.' Christ therefore gave commission that the gospel should be preached to all nations; and so it shall be before the end of the world.

Then, thirdly, in every several nation there are many kindreds, families, or fatherhoods, as Peter speaks of them, Acts iii. 25, out of Gen. xii. 3, 'In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed;' and that is twice said, as well as the other of nations. And if you will hear the whole Church of the New Testament sum up all in their own names, Rev. v. 9, 'Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.' He multiplies words enough, even as lawyers use to do, that he might be sure to comprehend all.

Fourthly, There are other divisions. Sinners of all sorts; several ranks, kinds, and degrees of sinners. And God will save out of all these sorts, but of one; and they are such of the sons of men as join issue with the serpent, and sin the devil's sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost, and are in the state of the devils while they are upon earth; and therefore are not to be reckoned with things on earth. But of all sorts of sinners our Saviour Christ hath said, Matt. xii. 31, that they shall be forgiven. 'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.' He doth not say that all manner of sins *may*, but he saith that all *shall* be forgiven in one or other. And he through whose hands all pardons run, it is he saith this. God hath ordered his elect, take the whole body and bulk of them, to fall into all sorts or sins, one or other of them; so as there is no sort, kind, or degree of sin, no way of sinning, manner of sinning, or aggravation of sin, but in some or other it shall be pardoned, and he doth it to glorify his grace in Christ, in whom he gathers them; and this was the mystery of that sheet which Peter saw coming down from heaven, tied at the four corners, as pointing to all the four quarters of the world; 'in which there were all manner of unclean creatures; four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air,' Acts x. 11, 12. It imports all sorts of sinners, all the world over, the most venomous creatures, as many creeping things are; of those should the Church catholic consist.

Lastly, There is another division of the outward ranks of men; and out of all doth God take some. 1 Tim. ii. 1, he exhorts that prayers and thanks

may be made for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority. He takes up kings, and of all sorts and ranks that are in authority else ; yea, and out of all men ; and therefore he would have thanks given for all sorts, as well as prayers made. You know your calling, brethren, not many wise, not many noble ; yet some. I am a debtor to the wise, and to the weak, saith Paul ; and God takes fools as well as wise men. The fools shall not err therein, Isa. xxxv. 8 ; though they be natural fools, he can come at their hearts.

And so you have the third head in general mentioned, and the third signification of the word ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι filled up and made good.

HEAD IV.

That God, to illustrate the glory of his grace, and of his Christ, purposed a second gathering after a first, both of men and angels. This the word ‘to gather again’ implies ; *recolligere*. This ἀνά, as Bishop Andrews on this text, must not be lost ; it is an addition of infinite importance, to amplify the glory of God in this purpose of his. It imports—

1. A first and second gathering of these ‘all things,’ or a double union of these creatures to God ; whereof the first being slippery and failing, he ordained the last firm and fixed in Christ, never to be broken or dissolved again. The first was not firm enough, but soon and easily dissoluble.

2. This ἀνά, or again, imports a miserable scattering of the first gathering to fall out between the first and second gathering ; a dissolution of all first, on purpose decreed and permitted by God, to make this second gathering, and oneness with himself, and unity one with another, which was the ultimate aim of his design, more illustrious.

3. A third thing is the way, and manner, and means of doing it ; it is *in Christ*.

The first serves to magnify his grace in Christ, the Head, to angels, who are *all things* in heaven. And the second to magnify his grace to the sons of men, the *all things* in earth, both as a Head and Redeemer. And all put together contains the whole counsel of God unto both. God united man and angels to himself in their first creation, and one to another. The elect angels stood in need of a second union, or gathering of them in Christ, as a head ; to put them out of danger and possibility of being scattered, as their fellows had been ; and therein lies their obligation. And elect men having all run into an actual riot and rebellion, and were separated from God, and scattered from one another, needed a gathering together again ; and both in and through Christ, to fix either for ever for a perpetual hazard of departing. And the opening these things, and being added to the former, bring in an infinite revenue of glory unto God and Christ ; and do give us indeed an account of the whole counsel of God : and still he renders it more and more complete.

For the first branch. There was an union of man and angels to God by the mere law of creation, and covenant of nature or works. And though the angels—for I speak of them now in common, and so of the *elect angels*, in the general condition with them that are fallen in their first creation—were created in heaven, and man upon earth, yet the same law of nature, and the same terms and tie of union, were alike enjoyed ; and thereby they had an union and communion with God ; but merely by their graces, and the exercise of them, according to the covenant of works. So, as long as that held, their union held, but not a moment longer.

For though the law of creation that was common both to men and angels

had this meet dueness in it, as was said, that God should create them in that estate, and afford them help suitable thereunto; yet no law of nature or creation, either to angels or men, had a promise that God should keep them and preserve them in that estate from falling. They were as glasses without a bottom, which soon fell and broke; which by the event was made good, by the fall both of men and some angels: which shews the weakness and the slipperiness of this first union in either of them.

As concerning the ANGELS, if God would assure them to himself from the possibility of falling, they must be headed in Christ, or by Christ; they must be gathered by a gathering together in Christ as a head a second time, and then all is in sure hands. If therefore the query be, Wherein should the grace vouchsafed to them lie, so as they had need of Christ to interpose, and to make this second gathering of them, whereas they never had fallen actually?—for it may be thought needless—the necessity lay in this:—

First, If it were no more but the weakness and slipperiness of their first union: therefore, if there were no more, it was necessary they should be fixed in him by an immutable relation to him who is the Rock of Ages, and then they are in sure hands. For Christ is as sure and immutably fixed as the Son of God himself, by personal union with the Son of God; and they, if they be chosen in him, and accepted in him, and have a relation unto him as to their head, are made as immutable as Christ is. Job iv. 18, 'Behold, he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly.' The Lord foresaw that if he kept to the laws that the condition of works required, and unto the dues of it, he could be sure of none; and he plainly saith he could put no confidence. And indeed he had little reason; for you know how all on earth served him, and how great a part of heaven (in the event) did serve him. Those morning stars fell. And this in Job is spoken of the good angels, his servants and courtiers he had about him. And all my creatures may serve me so, if they be left unto their first condition, to the law of their creation. And if they stand a thousand years, yet what Grotius dreams may be now, (upon those words, Gal. i. 8, 'If an angel from heaven, &c., let him be accursed;') as if angels might still fall; though that be false now since their confirmation in grace by Christ, yet it was true once; and he chargeth them with folly, because he saw their aptness to folly. He saw the possibility of it, and therefore could have no settled contentment in any of them in that estate, nor perfectly love them; but loved them *tanquam aliquando osurus*, as those whom he might one day hate, which prejudgeth perfect love; and therefore upon a foresight of their creature condition, he vouchsafed a second gathering of them in Christ, so to fix them. And hence arose *quædam similtas*, I will not say a grudge against them, for they had no sin; yet a kind of displicency with them, as mere creatures, if alone and apart considered. And then his charging them with folly might, and did arise, because he is so holy a God; and he is so infinitely holy, as that though in justice he hath nothing against them,—for he knows they are creatures, and whereof they are made,—yet still they are not of that holiness he would be pleased in, as Calvin doth interpret it. Upon all these grounds his grace first fixed them in Christ the Rock of Ages, as in their head, and a firm union with him as in that relation; for if he became and undertook to be a head to them, he would not lose his members.

And, secondly, thereby he pleased himself in them through him in whom only he is well pleased; which saying reaches the angels as well as men, even all intelligent creatures he is any way pleased withal; and he is pleased with the relation they bear to his person. Yea, thirdly, to take away all distaste

aforsaid, they needed a kind of reconciliation, *reconciliatio analogica*, as learned Davenant. It was not a reconciliation by a price, so as to purchase their peace for sin actually committed; they needed not that. Reconciliation is a larger word; there is a reconciliation preventive of them that have any aptness or possibility to fall out, so as to make them fast friends for ever, and to make them sure unto himself, and to take away all occasion of jealousies; and so they were, as Bernard saith, *suo modo redempti*. Fourthly, I shall add this further, mercy does not lie only in pardoning, but in preventing. It cost Christ's blood to keep us from the sin we might have committed, as well as to obtain forgiveness for the sins we have committed; and therefore the Apostle saith he hath redeemed us from our vain conversation, even which we might have fallen into. God knows our thoughts afar off: and what they would be of ourselves. *Angelica natura egebat misericordia Dei, ne posset errare*, so saith Ambrose. So you have seen the need the angels had of their second gathering, and that by Christ.

I shall for the opening of this, do these three things

1. Prove it by other scriptures.

2. Explain it; and that by two things—

(1.) What fellowship and association angels and elect have, and shall have, one among another.

(2.) What communion, and fellowship, and relation angels have to Christ, as to a head.

3. Give some cautions, that you may not be mistaken in the point.

1. First, *For the proof of it*. There are many places brought, but the truth is, I know none come home to it so much, and therefore I will but name it, as that, Col. ii. 10, 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily; and you are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.' By principalities and powers, in the usual phrase of Scripture, is still meant the angels: Eph. i. 21, 'He hath raised him up,' speaking of Christ, 'and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities and powers, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.' Now, saith he, what need you go out of Christ? you are complete in him. Why are we complete in him? Here is his reason: if the angels are complete in him, that are the highest creatures, that stand at God's right hand, and in his presence,—if he be their head, then you may very well be complete in him, you poor men that live on earth. 'You are complete in him, who is the head of all principalities and powers.'

I will give you some general expressions that will prove it and explain it. First, the angels and men do make up one family unto God, whereof Christ is the head, or the *pater-familias*; as you know it is the ordinary expression in all languages to call the master of the family the head of the family; so is Jesus Christ to angels and men, that make up one family to God. And, my brethren, so it falleth out, that the very text hinteth this to be the Apostle's meaning, for that which we translate, 'in the dispensation of the fulness of time,' is in the original *ἐν οἰκονομίᾳ*, the household dispensation, the family dispensation, as many read the words. That is, he hath gathered them all in one for a family dispensation, for a family government of them, into one family, so to order and govern them, and dispense to both, to angels and men, as to one family, now to be dispensed in these last times.

That which fitteth this interpretation, is that in the third of the Ephesians, ver. 15, 'Of whom,' saith he, 'the whole family in heaven and earth is

named.' He had named Christ just before ; saith he, ver. 14, 'Unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom (of Jesus Christ, namely) the whole family, (he takes all in, both angels and men,) in heaven and in earth is named.' They all hold of him. You know he that is the head of a family, they have all their name from him ; as that of the Turks, they call the Ottoman family, because Ottoman was the first of them. It is spoken there by the Apostle in opposition to the Jews ; for the Jews boasted that all God's family was in Abraham's house, in Abraham's children. No, saith he ; not only is the family of God not restrained unto Abraham's children, but it is diffused and dispersed over all the earth, and not only so, but it reacheth to heaven, too ; and all on earth, and all in heaven, make but one family to God—angels and all. For, otherwise, when the Apostle wrote this, there were few in heaven but Jews, and so he had not spoken so appositely to what the Jews intended, who would arrogate all to themselves. No, saith he, though God hath appointed Abraham, and erected a family in him, peculiar to the Jews, yet all in earth hold of Christ, and all in heaven, too, and all are named of him. He is the foundation of both families, and they make all but one family : 'The whole family in heaven and in earth.' I will not stand to open to you the meaning of the word 'named' any further ; his meaning is general, universal. He had said two great things of Christ just before : he had said, in the 9th verse, that 'God created all things by Jesus Christ ;' he had said, in the 11th verse, that 'God purposed all things in Jesus Christ ;' now he telleth you that 'things both in heaven and earth,' that whole family, angels and men, (he bringeth it in here at the 15th verse, to honour Christ,) are all 'named of him.' They all hold of him, he owneth them all, and they all own him, and they have their being of him, as the word *named* oftentimes signifieth.

Again, another expression is, as they are called one family, whereof he is the head, so they are one city, both angels and men. They make one Jerusalem, saints on earth and angels in heaven, whereof Jesus Christ is the governor, and the king and head, a political head. For this, see Heb. xii. 22, 'You are come unto Mount Sion,' which was the place of worship before, 'and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.' Here are the generals. Now who are the inhabitants of this city ? Who are the citizens ? Who are the worshippers in Mount Sion together ? It followeth, 'to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and company of the first-born.' All these make up one city to God, they make up one heavenly Jerusalem, they make up one company of worshippers, as you shall see afterward. Now, because when a man is converted, he cometh to all these ; that is, he entereth into an association with all these, he is made free of the company of all these ; therefore they are said to be gathered in one in Christ.

My brethren, the angels are part of the worshippers of Christ as well as we ; as they are part of his family, as they are part of his city, whereof he is the King and Lord, so they are part of his worshippers ; and, as you shall see anon, we, with all them, worship God and him together, both here, and shall do so hereafter. They are worshippers of him, and in that sense make a part of the Church ; for *ecclesia colentium*, a church is properly for worship. If they be therefore part of the worshippers of Christ, they come under his Church, they are a part of it ; particular churches are ordained for worship, and so is the general Church for a worship to be performed to Christ. And it is the proper expression of the members of a church, what they are designed unto—they are worshippers. Now, in Heb. i. 6, you shall find that

the angels are all worshippers of Jesus Christ, 'And again, when he bringeth his first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him,' speaking of Christ. I will not stand to open the phrase, whether it be at his first coming or his second, for some read the words thus—so Cameron doth, and to me it certainly seemeth the meaning—'When he bringeth his Son again into the world,' so the word *εἰσαγάγη* better beareth it; the second time, when he cometh to judge the world, then the angels of God shall worship him, together with all saints, and all the elect, before all the world. I will not further open the place; I only allege it for this, that they are worshippers of Christ.

See but the reason of this head; you have seen Scripture for it. *First*, it is due to Christ. If that man Christ shall be the Son of God and the heir of all things, it is his due that he should be the head of the best of God's creatures, of angels that are saved as well as men, that he should be the head of God's family. The eldest, you know, were the head of the family. Are the angels a part of God's family? Will you shut them out? No; they are a part of God's family as well as you, (how, you shall see afterward.) If they be, then the eldest son, the heir of all, is the head of that family, and so of the angels, by the law of nature. It is Christ's due, and therefore they all hold and depend upon him.

Secondly, That all, thus gathered together to one head, to make up one family, and one city and church to God, it was for the infinite glory and splendour of this church. What could be greater than that all in heaven and all in earth should be united one day in one to worship God, and all to bow at the name of Christ, as the apostle telleth us, Phil. ii. ? God appointed his Church to be all in one place; he would have them all up to heaven; and therefore he appointed them all one happiness. He hath appointed them to be all one city, therefore they shall have one head, they shall be united all together in one. He loves not scattering and distraction, to have two companies of worshippers at last, for God is one. It is therefore for their perfection, it is therefore for their greater splendour, as you shall see in the observations that I shall raise.

Thirdly, Men and angels were capable of this union, to be knit together thus under one head. Why? For we agree both in an intellectual nature; we have the same understanding, and will, and affections as they have, (take us as we are souls;) we are capable of the same common happiness that they have, to see God and to see Christ; we shall one day, after the resurrection, be made like unto them—so the expression is, Matt. xxii. 30. If we be brought up to the same condition with them, shall have the same happiness, shall live in the same place, why should we not have the same Head, and be joined all together, that as God is the head of Christ, Christ may be the head of all, both angels and men?

Last of all, By this is made up a most complete parallel opposition with Satan, who is the head of wicked men and of the devils. So God ordaineth it; he made two heads, and all the world falls to one of them. The devil, you know, that great devil, is the head of the evil angels; therefore, Matt. xii. 24, he is called the prince of the devils. He is the head of all wicked men; therefore, John xii. 31, he is called the prince of this world. And when the world is at an end, let that devil take all his angels and wicked men, and he as a head is tormented with them for ever; they are cast into the fire with the devil and his angels, you know it is said of wicked men. Answerably, as this great devil, whom God setteth up against Christ, is the great—I cannot call him Antichrist, because he is no way for Christ—but

he is the great one that opposeth Christ, whom God setteth up against him to share the world with him. As he is the head of all that are wicked on earth, and of all in hell, so is Christ opposite, the head of all that are godly on earth, and of all in heaven; and though the devil is not of the same nature with men, yet he is the head of wicked men, he is the prince of the world, and he rules effectually in the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2. So likewise, though Jesus Christ is not of the same nature or substance with the angels, yet he is the head of angels, of all principalities and powers, and rules as effectually, nay, ten thousand times more effectually, for Satan is not such a head as Christ is. And when Jesus Christ hath taken up his all, the devil will take all the rest. Christ is made the head of all things in heaven and in earth; he takes out his saints, and the devil takes all the rest; they share the world between them. So you have the thing proved both by Scripture and by reason.

2. The second thing, then, that I am to do is this, to *explain this association between men and angels, under one Christ.*

(1.) And, first, as I said, I shall explain the association between men and angels one amongst another, what the fellowship is between angels and men, as making up one family to God. And then, secondly, what communion, what relation, what union and communion, the angels have with Christ, as with a head. This I must explain.

First, *Men and angels, amongst themselves, have this fellowship under Christ their head, that they are all worshippers of God and Christ together.* They are so in this world, and they shall be so more completely and fully in the world to come, when that fulness of the dispensation of all time shall take place at the latter day. First, I say, there is an association in worship in this world between angels and saints. Little do we think it, but the angels fill our churches as well as men, and are present at all our congregations and assemblies. Because we are to be with them hereafter, and to worship God together with them, therefore they come down and are present at the worship of God here with us. I could give you many proofs for it; I will but name one or two.

What was the reason that the tabernacle and temple at Jerusalem was all full of cherubim? Read Exod. xxv. 19; there were to be two cherubim over the mercy-seat, in the Holy of Holies. Read Exod. xxvi. 1; all the curtains that were to be for the tabernacle, they were all to have cherubim wrought in them. Cherubim are angels. Go from thence to the temple of Solomon, 1 Kings vi. 23, there you have cherubim again, at the mercy-seat too; and then, ver. 29, all the walls of the house round about were carved with carved figures of cherubim, with angels still; nay, the very doors for the entering into the Holy of Holies, and the doors of the temple, had cherubim carved upon them. All this betokened that angels still filled the temple as well as men; and therefore, 1 Cor. xi. 10, (surely it is the meaning of it,) he biddeth women to be modest, to be veiled, to shew subjection, not only because of men, but because of the angels—so the text is there—that are present at their Christian assemblies. He instanceth in the least misdemeanour, and argueth from the lesser to the greater, to make this a motive, that men should behave themselves religiously and holily in the churches of Christ, because the angels are present. If, saith he, you are not to suffer the angels to espy in you the least immodesty, then much more, any other misbehaviour.

In Rev. v. 11, you have the Church of Christ described, and there you have twenty-four elders and four beasts, which are the people and officers of

congregations, and they sing a new song unto Christ, ver. 9, 'Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld,' saith he, 'and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne.' Angels are round about the throne; they are present at the courts of God's house; still they are worshippers, you see, together with us on earth.

Secondly, *They do delight to hear Christ preached, because Christ is their Head, and therefore are present.* The text is express, Eph. iii. 10; he sheweth there the end why to him was committed, and so to others, the preaching of the gospel: 'To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.' They do not know it out of the Scripture simply, but as it is opened in the church, by the ministers of the church, for the good of the church, so they come to know it; and they delight to do so, for so you have it, 1 Pet. i. 12. Saith he, speaking of the fathers before in the Old Testament, 'It was revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you' (he speaks in general) 'by them that preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.' The angels are present, and they are glad to hear Christ laid open and preached unto men, to hear their Head spoken of. They are worshippers together with us of Christ.

Then, thirdly, *Here on earth they have joy when any poor soul is converted.* As they come to church, so they observe who is wrought upon. When they see a poor soul go home and humble himself, fall down upon his knees and become a new creature, news is presently carried up to heaven; for the text saith, Luke xv. 10, that 'there is joy in the presence of the angels of God'—that is, in the court of heaven, amongst them all, so the word signifieth, ἐνώπιον, in the face of all the angels; it is the same word used, Luke xii. 8, 'him shall the Son of man confess before the angels of God,' he will own him in his court, and confess him in the presence, in the face of all the angels; so there is joy amongst the angels, they rejoice before God—'over one sinner that is converted,' over a poor soul that is gathered unto Christ their Head.

This association, my brethren, we have with them, besides all the services they do us, which I cannot stand to repeat and reckon up unto you; for all the angels are our fellow-servants; so that angel calleth himself, Rev. xxii. 9. And Jacob's ladder that touched heaven, the angels ascended and descended upon it; and Christ himself, John i. 51, interprets it that he is the ladder; they all come down upon him and ascend upon him, for the service of men. He is their head, their ruler, their governor.

But as we have in this world this association with them, so in the world to come we shall all worship God with one worship, both angels and men together. Such he there in Heb. xii. the place I quoted before; 'you are come to the Mount Zion,'—so he calleth the Church, which consisteth both of angels and men, as I observed before. Mount Zion, you know, was the place of God's worship. What is his meaning, then, when he saith, 'you are come to the Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem?' You are all come, saith he, to the place of worship whither angels are come up; for all the tribes came up there, to that Mount Zion, to worship God—the mount where all the angels are, and where all the souls of just men made perfect shall come up in their succession, and all to worship God. It is called Mount Zion,

because it is the place of God's worship. And that which we translate the company of angels, *μυσταίον*, it is the solemn assembly of angels; so the word signifieth, such an assembly as was at a solemn feast of the Jews, whither all the people came up. The men that dwelt at Jerusalem, he compareth them to the angels, for that is their standing seat and dwelling; and we that are upon earth, he compareth to the tribes that came up to the solemn assembly, to the solemn feast. And he calleth them the general assembly, for there God will have all his children about him. So that both angels and we one day shall be common worshippers, live in one kingdom together; we shall be as angels; so Matt. xxii. 30.

We are beholden to the man Christ for doing this, for he hath blessed us with heavenly blessings, as the third verse hath it. We shall live in one city, in one place. I will give you but one scripture for it, and so I will end. It is Zech. iii. 7. There our Saviour Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, makes this promise to Joshua the high priest, and to Zerubbabel, 'If thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my charge,'—in my house, my material house, while thou art here below, I will give thee a better house than this,—'I will give thee places to walk amongst these that stand by,'—I will give thee a place amongst the angels; for they were they that stood by, and appeared upon the speckled horses, as chap. i.,—I will give thee a better house, a better temple; thou shalt live with angels, and dwell with them, and worship with them; thou shalt be raised up to a heavenly court, even to holy angels, if thou wilt keep my courts here below. Thus you see what an association men and angels have amongst themselves, both in this world, and in the world to come.

(2.) Well, let us see what communion they have with Christ as a Head. First, some say that Jesus Christ is a head to them only *by way of eminency and external government*, because he is the principal and the head of all power, he hath all power in him; therefore, because he governeth them and ruleth them externally as a king doth his subjects, in that respect only they say he is a head.

But, my brethren, he is a head in a nearer relation to them than so. Why? For, first, so he is to all creatures in respect of government; all creatures are subject to him.

Again, secondly, the angels are a part of his family, as I shewed before. Now, though he that is master of the family be a lord to all the things in the house, and the master of them all, yet he is a head only to the persons, for he hath a more near relation to the persons in the family than he hath to all the goods. God ruleth all the world, he ruleth all the goods belonging to this family in heaven and in earth, and they are all subject unto him; but he is a head of the persons in this family, of which angels are a part as well as men.

Thirdly, this were to make Christ the head of the angels, as the Papists do make the Pope head of the Church, but by external government; certainly he is more than so. Nay, it were to make Jesus Christ head of the angels in heaven, as the devil is head of evil angels and wicked men, by ruling of them only externally. Certainly he is more than so, when they are made part of the family, when the Scripture saith that he is the head of all principalities and powers. Therefore—

In the *second* place, he is a head to them *by way of secret influence of grace and glory*. If Jesus Christ be a head, it is fit that he should do something for them, that they should be beholden to him, that he should not only have that headship by virtue of his dignity and excellency, but that they should have some benefit, some influence arising to them from Christ, if that thus

he shall be advanced to be a head over them ; for God will never advance Christ to be a head over any but they shall have benefit by him.

First, they had their creation by him, Col. i. 15, 16. The apostle telleth us there that all things, whether visible or invisible, are created by him. 'By him,' saith he, 'were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,' here is the same enumeration, 'visible and invisible,' here is angels and men, 'whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him.'

Yea, and, my brethren, they were virtually created by him as supposed to take man's nature ; for of him, as supposed to take man's nature, doth the Apostle there speak : 'who is the image,' saith he, 'of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature,' which can be ascribed to Christ no way but as he is God-man, and so all the rest likewise ; but I will not stand upon that.

In the second place, he is the common principle of their grace, as well as their being. Eph. i. 23, it is said, that Christ 'fillet all in all,' speaking of him as he is a head, and as he hath a body ; it is the same phrase that is used of God after the day of judgment : 1 Cor. xv. 28, he saith, that God will be 'all in all.' God is all in angels, and all in men then ; so is Jesus Christ—he is that universal principle of all grace.

And there is this reason for it ; for whatsoever hath anything by way of participation, it is reducible to something that hath it *per se*, of itself. The angels have grace, but they have it by participation ; therefore they are reduced, as well as men, to something, to some head, to *aliquid primum*, which hath grace in him *per se*. That only Christ hath ; he only is of himself beloved ; he only is the sun, the Church is the moon, and the angels are the stars. They are the 'morning stars,' as they are called, Job xxxviii. He enlighteneth both the moon and stars. But, however, this may be certainly said, that they were kept from falling by virtue of Jesus Christ to come. In the same first of the Colossians, having reckoned up all things in heaven and in earth, as created by him, he addeth, 'and by him all things consist.' Angels and men are all kept by him ; the station they have is in and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And there is this great reason for it : because to stand in grace and not to fall, is a supernatural gift, more than was due to the angels, as creatures, though they were never so excellent. The devils fell, the other angels stood ; what put the difference ? It must be some supernatural grace. Now Christ is the fountain of all grace, the great beloved, the universal principle. Job iv. 18, it is said there that God 'charged his angels with folly,' he put no confidence in his servants. The good angels had a possible folly in them, though they had not an actual folly ; they might have sinned, yea, it was impossible, being but creatures, but that they should have a possibility to sin of themselves, take them as creatures. They were indeed a house of stone, whereas man is but a house of clay : 'how much less,' saith he, ver. 19, 'we that dwell in houses of clay ?' But though they were as a house of stone, yet that stood upon a quagmire, the shocky weak will of a creature. And so they were apt to fall without propping. Now, what hath underpropped these creatures that they stand ? What putteth the difference ? It is because they are united, they are headed in Christ, they belong to him. Only Christ of all creatures could not sin ; for if that man could have sinned, there had been a person in the Trinity wanting. The second Person must have come down from heaven himself, if that man could have sinned, for he was united to it ; and as the blood is called the 'blood of God,' so the sin would have been the *sin of God*, which would have been blas-

phemy to imagine. He only could not sin. And the angels, as they stand now, it may be said of them that they are impeccable; they cannot sin, and they shall never sin to all eternity, because they are underpropped by this corner-stone, that is the basis of all parts of the family both in heaven and in earth. It is Jesus Christ that underprops them; both things visible and invisible, things in heaven and things in earth.

Now, my brethren, if they had had no grace from him at first, or had none now, but that which they had only by a covenant of creation; yet, notwithstanding, to have this privilege annexed to their grace, that they should never fall as the devils did, and be out of all danger of sinning as they did; this is an infinite privilege, it is worth their acknowledging Christ their Head, if they had no more by him. It is said of glass, that if it could be made a metal that would not break, it were worth all the gold and silver in the world; and therefore it is reported of an emperor that put a man to death for making of glass that could not be broken, as being an invention that would spoil all the gold and silver in the world. My brethren, the angels are glorious vessels, but they are as glass. What doth Christ now? He makes them that they cannot fall, they cannot be broken, and this is more than all their grace; and this they have from Christ, as he is their head, and as they belong unto him.

Lastly, They have a happiness in Christ, in *seeing of him* as well as we. I take that to be part of the meaning of that 1 Tim. iii. 16. I have often wondered at the expression there; I shall give you what I think to be the meaning of it. Speaking of Christ, and of the great mystery of godliness in him, saith he, 'God, who was manifested in the flesh,'—and there was more of God manifested in the flesh in the person of Christ, than there is in all creatures that were made, or possibly could be made,—'justified in the Spirit,' which was spoken of his resurrection, 'seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.' Here are two principles, faith and vision. Here is faith attributed to men; they cleave to Christ their head by faith, 'believed on in the world.' The angels cleave unto him by vision, 'seen of angels;' admiring him with infinite joy, looking upon him as their Head. They saw more of God manifested in that man Christ Jesus, than they had seen in heaven before. We cleave to him by faith; they cleave to him by sense: that which we shall have, for we shall see him one day as he is, that the angels do, and are made happy in him; the same eternal life that we have, they have, 'and this is eternal life, to know God, and to know Jesus Christ,' John xvii. 3. Their happiness lieth, as our happiness, in seeing God incarnate, in seeing God in the flesh, in seeing God face to face, and his Christ for ever.—And so much for the association which the angels and the elect have, and shall have, one among another, and what communion and relation they have with and to Christ, as a Head.

3. I will give you but a caution or two, which is the *third* thing I am to do, and so I will conclude.

The first caution is this, That Jesus Christ is only a Head to them, he is not a Redeemer. The expression here, ver. 7, is not, that he redeemed angels and men. No, saith he, 'in whom *we* have redemption,' we only; but both they and we are gathered to him, as a Head, as the word here signifieth. You know I told you, that there are two sorts of benefits we have by Christ, the one founded upon our relation to his person, the other founded upon his merit and redemption. Now, the benefits that angels have by him are not founded so much upon his redemption, (how far it is, I shall discourse upon

the third thing when I handle this, 'hath gathered together all things to himself;') but the benefits they have by him are founded upon their relation to his person. That is the first caution.

The second caution is this, That it is certain that Jesus Christ is so a head unto men, as he is not unto angels. Though he is a head both to them and to us, and all, both angels and men, are gathered together in one head in him, yet he is so a head to us as not to them. You shall see a wonderful privilege that we have in this same first of the Ephesians, ver. 21. This chapter holds forth this unto us; for there the Apostle telleth us that God hath advanced Christ 'far above all principality and power, and might and dominion,' meaning angels, 'and hath put all things under his feet, and hath given him to be the head over all things to the church.' Here the Church, and his headship of the Church, is a distinct thing from that relation he beareth to angels, as here it is mentioned: he hath a superiority over angels for the good of the Church; he is so a Head to his Church as not to angels. I know they are mentioned as well as men in that verse. But how are they mentioned? Not that he is the head of them as he is of men, that is not the scope of it; but the scope of this place is only this, that he that is above principalities and powers is the Head of the Church; he beareth a more special relation to them than he doth to principalities and powers, and is above them in order to his headship of the Church. Hence it is that the angels are not called the *members of Christ*; you have not such an expression in the whole Book of God. As God is said to be the 'head of Christ,' 1 Cor. xi. 3, having an influence into Christ, yet Christ is not a member of God. So, though the angels are said to come unto Christ as a head, and he is their head, yet members of him nowhere you read it; for that is peculiar only to the saints, to the elect here on earth, to the sons of men.

I will give you more things wherein we differ from them. Jesus Christ is not a Common Person representing them as he represented us, as he did while he was here below. We obeyed in him, we died with him, we rose with him. Not so the angels; he did not act their part, he was not a Common Person to them; therefore they are nowhere said to be elected in him: but we are said to be elected in him, and he did sustain a Common Person while he was here below.

Thirdly, We are brethren to Christ, and so not the angels; you have nowhere that said. I will give you a scripture or two for it; one is that in Heb. ii., and the scripture is exceeding express. The Apostle there goeth to prove that Jesus Christ took the same nature with us. How doth he prove it? 'Because,' saith he, ver. 11, 'he calleth us brethren, saying,'—he takes a place out of Ps. xxii. 22,—'I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church I will sing praise unto thee.' And at ver. 14, 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.' And ver. 16, 'For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham.' So that the place is clear and express, that therefore we are brethren to Christ, and Christ to us, he having the same nature with us; therefore the angels are nowhere said to be adopted sons to God, as men are said to be, as not having relation to Christ, as to a husband, and in that relation being sons of God. To give you another scripture for this, Rev. xix. 10; you shall find there that the angel indeed calleth himself *fellow-servant* with John, but he doth not call himself *brother*; nay, he doth not call himself brother, though he mentioneth the saints as John's brethren, 'I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren.' The like you have, Rev. xxii. 9, 'I am thy fellow-

servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book.' The saints of God are brethren one to another, and unto Jesus Christ. The angels are but their fellow-servants.

Much less are they the spouse of Christ, much less have they the relation of a wife to him as a husband; this is proper to the headship of Christ over believers: Eph. v. 23, 'The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church, and the Saviour of the body.' He is not a Saviour of the angels in a way of redemption, for he speaks of the Church which hath 'spots and wrinkles' in it, as ver. 27. The Church is the queen, the angels are but his guard round about his throne, Rev. v. 11.

I will give you one caution more. Though they have not these relations to Christ, yet they have the relation of servants, and servants are a part of the family. The family, you know, is usually made up of servants, and sons, and the wife. Now the relation of sons and the relation of wife, this the sons of men bear unto God and unto Christ, and of being brethren too unto him; but the angels are but servants sent out. They are his angels, and indeed in that respect he is called their father and their head, as the master is called the father of the servants, 2 Kings v. 13. So I have expressed to you what association the angels have with Jesus Christ, and one with another.

I will make some uses of what hath been delivered, and give you some observations, and so end this great point.

Obs. 1.—You heard how that all things are the elect of angels and men, which God summeth up in Christ. The first observation then is this, See what reckoning God putteth upon things he calleth his elect children, angels and men, *all things*; he looks upon all things else as nothing, they are of no esteem, they have no value with him. They are God's *all* that belong to Christ, both angels and men, and the rest are the devil's, as I said; therefore you know the Scripture calleth souls that are damned, *lost*; they *are not*: 'The men whom thou rememberest no more,' Ps. lxxxviii. 5. God makes no reckoning of them, he accounts them not. The things in heaven and in earth that belong to Christ are the 'all things;' they are the choice of all, they are the first-fruits, as they are called, James i. 18.

Let us therefore, if we would have a being, get into Christ; let us gather ourselves to that Head. You are lost else, you are of no reckoning with God, nor shall not be to all eternity.

Obs. 2.—A second observation is this. Have we this association with angels? Shall we be as angels hereafter? Let us live as angels now. We must live with angels for ever, we must be made like to them, we are come with them unto one Head, Christ. Be as angels now.

And, my brethren, let it be one motive to you to keep you from sinning. If men were by, you would not sin. Think with yourselves. Angels may be by while I am sinning, whom I am gathered unto, and with whom I must live for ever. 1 Tim. v. 21; what is the meaning there, 'I charge thee before God, and his elect angels?' He chargeth him that he should not in the execution and exercise of government in the Church be partial, 'I charge thee before God,' he seeth thee; 'and before the Lord Jesus Christ,' he sees thee; and 'the elect angels,' some or other of them see thee too. What is the reason of this? If that angels did not see and were not witnesses, many of them, or some of them, of men's carriages, why should this charge be laid upon Timothy? 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.'

Obs. 3.—Observe again, in the third place, from what hath been delivered, That the saints are nearer unto Christ than angels are, as I told you before ; he is so a head to men as he is not to them. Both their union and ours with God is by Christ ; now, if we be more united to Christ than they are, then we are more nearly united to God too ; more nearly united to Christ we are, for he is our brother, he hath our nature, he hath more of ours, he hath done more for us ; we are sons by adoption in him, he is our husband. To which of all the angels was it said that Christ is their husband ? Of which of all the angels is it said that Christ is their Saviour ? The Church of God is the queen ; the angels are our guardians. We belong to one family, we are worshippers together ; yet you shall find in Rev. v. 11, where the Church is described, that the angels are farther off from the throne than the four-and-twenty elders ; and the like you have Rev. vii. 9-11.

SERMON XL

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.—VER. 10.

THE coherence of these words I have formerly shewed you to be a relation unto what is said just before, 'He had purposed in himself.' What was it he purposed in himself but this, as the words may be truly read, 'to gather together in one all things in Christ?' I told you my thoughts were, that the Apostle did here, having spoken of God's decrees, of election in Christ, and redemption in Christ, &c., in the conclusion of the doctrinal part of his discourse, give you the sum of all God's purposes in himself, both towards Christ and us; and he expresseth it in this, that it was to 'gather all things in one in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.'

The great thing to be opened (which I have made entrance into) is, what is meant here by *gathering together in one*, which seemeth to be the adequate design and project of God's heart towards Christ and us for ever, and comprehensively to contain all under it.

That by 'all things in heaven,' and 'all things on earth,' angels and men are meant, I shewed the last time. I told you the word ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι implieth, first, a summing up of many numbers into one. I gave you an account of this.

God, intending to sum up all things in heaven and in earth in Christ, summeth up first all things in heaven and in earth in Christ's person, as the foundation of the other summing up of a mystical body too.

All sorts of divisions God summed up in Christ. God and the creature first, he cast them up into one sum; for he made God and the creature one Person.

He takes, in the second place,—whereas he had two reasonable creatures, angels and men,—the nature of a man and uniteth it unto God, and the condition of an angel; for that is his due too. That man (if he be united unto God) is called The heavenly man; he is not an earthly man, nor to be an earthly man, though for our sins he took frail flesh; but that which is his due is to be a man, and like an angel for condition. He summeth up the condition of things in heaven, and the nature of men on earth, in his own person.

Then come down to earth, and there you have Jew and Gentile; he summed up both in Christ, for Christ came of both. Jew and Gentile, all the world, Christ and all, had the very same great-grandfathers, those ten men that were from Adam to Noah. Thus he summed up all in his person.

When he had done, he summeth up of all a body to him answerable to his person; or rather a church, a city of the living God, a family to him, as the Scripture expresseth it. He takes of all things in heaven, and of all things in earth, and he makes them up unto Christ, as a Head, one body.

That Christ was the Head of angels, I shewed in the last discourse. That there is an association between angels and the saints, I shewed likewise ; and this under Christ as a Head. All these particulars I have largely opened ; I shall not stand to repeat them. Only there is one thing which I added not in the last discourse, concerning that of angels, and that is this, Why it is said *all things in heaven* ? You know, when we say all things on earth, it is all sorts of men, all ranks of men upon earth. Are there any several sorts of angels in heaven ?

My brethren, for certain there are several ranks of them ; what they are we cannot define, but that there are several ranks of them, that known place, and many others might be brought, Col. i. 16, 'By him 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.' The angels are called principalities and powers ; that we have an express place for in this first chapter of the Ephesians, ver. 21, 'He set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.' He expresseth these several ranks of angels, for there is *acies ordinata* of them, by the ranks that are here on earth, by way of similitude, so to convey it to our apprehensions. Some, he saith, are *thrones*. Thrones importeth kingly power, as we read in Dan. x. 13, 'He was the first of the princes,' speaking of one of the angels ; and likewise we read of an archangel. Some, he saith, are *dominions*, which are as viceroys ; and *principalities*, which among men were governors of provinces ; and *powers*, which were ordinary lower magistrates. He expresseth it by these ranks, not that there are but four, or how many we know not, but he conveyeth what is in heaven to us by what is on earth. Now, of all these sorts of angels, he hath taken some, (as perhaps of all these angels some fell, as of all sorts of things in earth some are gathered to Satan,) but of all sorts of things on earth, he gathereth some to Christ, and so in heaven too. —So much for that.

Now I must come to shew, that he hath gathered all things on earth *to Him*. That which I handled in the last discourse was but the gathering to a *Head*, as the word signifieth, of all things in heaven, with things on earth. Now, God hath taken all sorts of men on earth, and meaneth to make out of them a body unto Christ. And therefore he expresseth it by the word *τὰ πάντα*, all things ; because he takes all sorts of things and conditions whatsoever ; therefore he expresseth it, I say, rather by things than by persons, as implying all conditions of men.

The first great division upon earth, what is it ? It is both of Jew and Gentile. He will take of both these. I shall not need to prove it, for I shall meet with it again and again in opening of this place. In the very next words to my text, which therefore argueth that to be his meaning, he speaks of the calling of the Jews first, at the 12th verse, 'That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ ;' there is the Jews. 'In whom ye also trusted,' ver. 13, 'after that ye heard the word of truth ;' there is the Gentile. It is a thing I must often speak to, therefore I will speak little to it now.

Come to the Gentiles. They are divided, we know, into many nations, which God hath made here upon earth. God takes, first and last, of all the nations upon the earth, to make up a body to his Son Christ. In Gen xviii. 18, there is a promise made to Abraham, that in his seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. The like you have, chap. xxii., repeated again ;

for you have two places for it. And in Prov. viii. it is said, the delights of Christ were in the habitable parts of his earth, so the expression is, ver. 31. Wherever God hath earth inhabited, there Jesus Christ hath some from everlasting whom he did delight in, and shall do to everlasting.

Then come to nations; and there you have several kindreds. Now go, take all the kindreds of men that continue from the beginning of the world unto the end; God will take of all families and kindreds too. You shall find that the promise made to Abraham, as it runneth that *all nations* shall be blessed in him, so it runneth that *all families* of the earth shall be blessed in him too, and, as Peter interpreteth it, 'all fatherhoods;' so the expression is, Acts iii. 25. In Gen. xii. 3, 'In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' The like you have in Gen. xxviii. 14. Twice it is said that all *nations* shall be blessed in Abraham, and in his seed; and twice it is said, all *families* shall be blessed—that is, all kindreds shall be blessed in him and his seed.

Then there are other divisions besides. There are several sorts and ranks of sinners. God hath excepted but one; and what is that one? Those that on earth become the serpent's seed, and so join issues with hell; those that sin against the Holy Ghost, and have the venom of this sin in their spirits, of revenge against God, such as the devil hath: except those, God takes of all sorts. It is a known place, Matt. xii. 31: He, through whose hands all the pardons of the world go, Jesus Christ, that stands at the sealing of them, saith, that 'all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.' He doth not only say, it *may be* forgiven, but he expressly saith, it *shall be* forgiven. God hath so ordered it, that as all mankind shall fall into all sorts of sin, so shall some of his elect do, some into some, and some into another; that you can instance in no sin, or way of sinning, or aggravation of sinning, which shall not be pardoned to some of the sons of men.

Then go, take all ranks, (there are other divisions yet,) take all ranks of poor and rich, kings and nobles, wise and fools; God takes of all these. He takes of fools, as he saith, Isa. xxxv. 8, 'Though fools, they shall not err' in that way. Natural fools, God takes some of them, and teacheth them to know Christ. 'Pray,' saith he, 'for kings, and all in authority,' 1 Tim. ii. 2; for God would have all men to be saved, all sorts of ranks.

Obs. 1.—See now, my brethren, of whom the Church universal consisteth, and see the glory and splendour of it: all things in heaven, and all things on earth; all nations, all families, all kindreds; whatsoever divisions you can make. You have it, Rev. v. 9, and likewise Rev. vii., where the Church universal is represented, perhaps under a particular way; yet, I say, you shall find it represented there. First, in the fifth chapter, the four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders, they cry unto Christ, they give glory unto him; 'for,' say they, 'thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every kindred,'—there is families,—'and tongue, and people, and nation.' And all things in heaven come in too, ver. 11, 'And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne.' You have the like words, chap. vii. 9, 'I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.' And ver. 11, 'All the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders.' The angels come in too. Men are nearer the throne; for if you observe it, the angels do stand about the elders. Men are nearer, because, as I said before, they have a nearer relation to Christ; he is in such a way a head to them as he is not to angels.

This, my brethren, is the glory and the splendour of this universal Church,

of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. And what should this teach us, by way of use and observation, but to long for that day when we shall all meet thus together; when God will bring men out of all parts of the earth, where thou shalt meet with some of thy kindred, some of thy nation, some that have been just such sinners as thou art? What a glorious day will that be! We account it a glorious day when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and Jew and Gentile shall make up one sheepfold, and Christ be one shepherd; and it will be a glorious day indeed. But the day that is to come, when Christ shall have all his children about him; when God-man, in whom all things are summed up in his person for excellency; and when men and angels and all shall be gathered up to him, that have been from the beginning of the world to the end of it, when that general assembly shall be full and complete, and he shall not want, no not the least joint, the least member; what a glorious day will this be, when God hath all his sons about him! He forbearth now opening the fulness of his glory, because he hath not all his sons about him: but when he hath them all about him, then he will bring forth all his riches, all the treasures of his glory. As you know Ahasuerus did, when he had the princes of the provinces before him in his great palace, Esth. i. 2. He was king of a hundred and twenty-seven provinces; and the text saith, 'He sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace; and he made a feast to all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him.' It seems it was a great occasion; whether to shew the greatness of his glory, or for what other end he calleth them up, they were all before him; and then he makes a feast, such a feast as never was read of. So, when God shall have all the princes of the earth, the first-born, before him; when men shall 'come from the east, and from the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in his kingdom;' then will God feast, then will he bring forth all his glory, and empty himself for ever.

Obs. 2.—Therefore, my brethren, long for this day, and let your hearts seek to be one of this number, not to be left out of this *all*. For your encouragement herein consider this, which is a second observation, That no condition can be said to be any hindrance to you from being in Christ. Thou canst object nothing against thyself, neither poverty, nor folly, nor want of memory and understanding, nor weakness, nor sinfulness,—I say there is nothing at all thou canst object against thyself, which may hinder thy salvation. Why? Because God takes all sorts of things on earth. Thou canst say nothing of thyself, but that there are some whom God hath saved just like thee. 'There is no difference,' saith he, Rom. iii. 22; he 'justifieth freely by his grace.' There is no difference; take a beggar and a king, they have the same shadow in the sun. Sins, my brethren, make no difference, the greatness or the smallness of them, to hinder salvation. Mountains bear no proportion, more than mole-hills, to the heavens, they are so high. If one were in the heavens, the earth would seem as a round globe; mountains would not be seen more than mole-hills are.

Obs. 3.—Again, in the third place, you may see here the infinite goodness of God to all, that he takes of all sorts of things, of all sorts of ranks; of angels in heaven, he takes of all things there; of all sorts of things on earth, in all their several varieties. This is a great respect God hath to his creation, in that he will do so. He created and made all things, and he made them all by Jesus Christ, and therefore he shall have the first-fruits of every one, and of every sort of thing. I take it to be part of the meaning, though not all, of that Eph. iii., where, speaking of this mystery, 'that all

men,' saith he, ver. 9, 'should see the fellowship of the mystery,' (having spoken of the calling of the Jew and Gentile before, ver. 8,) that mystery 'which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.' What cometh in afterward?—'who created all things by Jesus Christ.' He made all things by him, saith he, and therefore he will save of all sorts by him. He hath respect to the whole creation; he will have some of all sorts in it. Therefore, Acts x. 34, when they saw that God did save the Gentiles as well as Jews, what conclusion do they make out of it? 'Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.' And there is another reason intimated in the next verse following, ver. 36, 'The word,' saith he, 'which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; he is Lord of all.' Is he Lord of all? He will save of all sorts by him.

God, as he hateth nothing that he hath made, as it is his creature; so he will shew the freeness of his grace by saving all varieties of his creatures. For therein lieth the freeness of his grace, that no condition shall hinder. I conclude with that which the Apostle concludeth (Rom. xi.) all the doctrinal part of his epistle. He had shewed that Jews and Gentiles were both corrupt, in chap. ii. and iii. He had shewed that God would save both of Jew and Gentile, in chap. ix., x., and xi. How concludeth he? Ver. 30 of that 11th chapter, 'As you in time past' (speaking to the Gentiles, they take their turns) 'have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also' (speaking of the Jews) 'now not believed, that through your mercy they also might obtain mercy,' that both they and you might have mercy together; 'for God hath concluded' (it is translated *them*, but the word πάντα is) 'all,' Jew and Gentile, 'in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' And upon this he doth, as we all should do: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!' (and mercy too;) 'how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!'

So much now for that part of gathering a body out of all sorts of things on earth and things in heaven. I have shewed you, in opening these words, first, that God hath summed up all in Christ, he cast up all as into one number in his person; which was the first signification of the words. He gathereth all things, both in heaven and on earth, as a church, as a family to him, as unto one head; that the word likewise signifieth.

There is a *third thing* that is to be added to the signification of this word; there is ἀνά, that he doth this again; there is a gathering together under one head again the second time; so the word signifieth. This same ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, (as I remember Bishop Andrews in a sermon upon this text hath it,) saith he, the force of it is not only to signify a collection, a gathering of all; but it is a re-collection. It is true, our translators took not notice of it, they translate it simply, 'gather together in one;' but all know that the word signifieth *again*; 'to gather together again under one head.'

Now this gathering together again may import two things. *First*, a gathering a second time of all things in heaven and in earth. *Secondly*, it doth imply a scattering first; that he doth after his first gathering of them scatter all a-pieces as it were, severeth them one from another, and from himself. They are like members *disjecta*, like members rent and separated from their head; and then he gathereth them all together again, ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι importeth *recollecionem*; they were scattered from Christ, and so gathered again to him, as to a head.

Against this interpretation there is this great rub in the way—that the angels, the things in heaven, never were scattered; why should they be said to be gathered together again, with all things on earth, unto Christ as a head? Therefore interpreters have been exceeding shy of interpreting ‘all things in heaven’ to be meant of angels. I must first remove this rub; it is the main difficulty.

There are two interpretations that may help to remove it. The first is this, that although both things in heaven and things on earth were not both scattered, yet if things on earth were, it may be said to be a gathering together of all; take them altogether *in sensu composito*, though not *in sensu diviso*. Some explain it by this similitude. Suppose two nations were united under one monarch, and one of them falls off, and turn all rebels unto him, and rend themselves away from that other nation with which they were at peace and union under that one head. As when those seven provinces revolted from the Spaniard, there were ten remained still firm unto him. If ever these seventeen, the seven and the ten, unite themselves together again, and subject themselves, as before, to him as their head and monarch, and lay down hostility against him, it might be said that here is a gathering of them all, a reducing of them all to their former obedience, though but one part fell off. This is a similitude that one giveth of it to explain it. The like you find in Calvin. Suppose you find, saith he, a house, a great part whereof were fallen down, and some stood still; if that part that is fallen be built up again, the whole house is said to be rebuilt. So it is here. And this is the first interpretation to reconcile this difficulty: that because men were scattered, that part of the house on earth, the family on earth, were scattered from him, which were once joined unto him, unto one head, unto Christ, (God united all, angels and men unto him,) yet now being gathered together again, all is said to be gathered together in one unto him.

There is a second, which I do find that both Calvin and others have, and is more hard to explain. I will do it as clearly and as briefly as I can. I shall express my meaning perhaps in somewhat a differing way from theirs, yet it comes all to one. And it is this. That even of the angels themselves there is a double knitting of them unto God. First, a common, that they and the devils (created once holy) had, and that Adam in innocency, and all mankind in him, had in common together. And the other is a special union unto God, and that by Christ. So that though there was not an actual scattering of them from that first union of theirs, but even that also held and continued firm; yet it was prevented by a further union, by a gathering of them in one in Christ as their head, unto God, that did fix them for ever to stand firm unto him.

I may express it unto you well thus: that God, to magnify his grace the more,—both his glorifying grace to angels and men, and supernatural grace to stand for ever, which is a supernatural grace,—did ordain, to exalt this grace, two several knittings, two unions and communions of his creatures, (made holy at first,) to himself: whereof the first was not sure nor steadfast, nor would not perhaps have held to eternity. They would have dropped off one after another, if God had let things go on so; there would have been a perpetual hazard of the angels departing and scattering from him. The things on earth actually fell from him, the other were in danger; and therefore God, to make all fast and sure, ordaineth a second union, and a gathering together again in Christ.

To explain both these knittings to God;—it will, as I said it would, contain

the whole design of God, both of creation and the instauration of the creature in Christ, and redemption and whatever else ;—to explain, I say, this double knitting to God, this knitting the first time, and knitting again, I shall do these two things :—I shall, *first*, shew you what union at first in common the good angels, and those that are now bad, and man, and all had with God. And then, *secondly*, the necessity of a further union for their perpetual and everlasting standing in grace, and their enjoying their full glory in heaven.

For the first, To shew what this same first union and gathering of all creatures both in heaven and on earth in common was.—It was by their creation and the covenant thereof ; that covenant that passeth between God merely as a Creator, unto them as his creatures, which was common both to good angels that stand, and them that fell, and man in his innocency, who also fell. Now, my brethren, this you must know, that although man was created on earth, and the angels created in heaven, in a higher condition of knowing and enjoying God ; yet so as, take them merely as creatures, and as a covenant shall pass between God the Creator and them, they are both under the same law of nature, so as they may fall from their condition as well as man ; and there was no law, either of nature or justice, between God and the creature, could any way oblige God to uphold and to maintain them. Thus slippery was the first union, simply considered as creatures. I need not stand to shew you how both angels and men were first united to God. Adam is called the son of God, Luke iii. 38, by creation. And the angels are called the sons of God, as they were first made, when they were holy and standing holy, Job xxxviii. 7. United then they were both to God.

And, in the second place, although we cannot say that there was a perfect association between angels and men then in the state of innocency, as now under the state of grace there is, (which I shewed you before,) and shall be for ever ; but that angels should remain in their heaven, and man should have remained on his earth : ‘The first man,’ saith he, ‘is of the earth earthly ;’ he speaks of man at best. I am not of the mind of some of those modern divines that have said, that the sin of the angels was this, that God did send them down upon earth to attend man ; this they stomached, and tempted man to sin, and that was their sin. There is no ground of that at all, to think that, under the law of nature, the elder should serve the younger. It is a privilege we have by Christ ; they are his ‘ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them that shall be the heirs of salvation,’ Heb. i. 14. Yet concerning the association of both then, we may say this, that it is most certain that the same things whereby Adam knew God, by the same things did they know God ; though also in a further degree, and in a higher measure. And therefore, as before I said there was an association both of angels and men in this respect, that angels themselves do pry into the things of the gospel, and so are present to our assemblies ; so likewise in this respect both angels and man then had a kind of association in this, that the angels themselves took in the glory of God from things here below. They rejoiced when they saw the world made, when they saw God to limn out the world, and fill up that first draught of the chaos as he did, and when he brought man in the lord of all. That you have an express place for, Job xxxviii. 7. He saith, that when the foundations of the earth were laid, the angels, that were created the first day with the heavens, shouted for joy : ‘The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.’ They are called the morning stars, because they began early to glorify God, they were *matutina* ; and they are called sons

of God : it is said they all shouted for joy ; and if they shouted for joy when the foundations of the earth were laid, certainly then when man was made they stood by as spectators to see God, I say, limn out the world, and perfect it in man's creation. So that though man should not have known, nor knew things from heaven, yet they knew things on earth ; and therefore in that respect there was some kind of fellowship, they partaking of the same things that we did, though not we that they did.

And then, again, if there were not a fellowship, nor ever should have been,—and we have no ground at all to think so that I know of,—yet this is certain, there was a peace amongst them in these two kingdoms of God, of which he was monarch and lord. Though they remained distinct and divided, yet notwithstanding they were at peace, they were not at hostility, they were gathered in peace under one Lord then, both men and angels, and so united unto God. And they did glory in the good of man certainly ; as they sung at the birth of Christ, 'Peace on earth, and good-will towards men ;' they shouted when man was made, if they shouted when the foundations of the earth were laid. So that you see there was a common union, both to God, and some way among themselves ; there was a peace at least.

But you will say unto me, This first union, was this in Christ ? The word *again*, you will urge, will imply so much,—they are gathered again to a Head in one in Christ. Was he the Head, then, both of angels and men in creation ?

For that I answer, *first*, it was not absolutely necessary, (though the force of the word will hold.) They were gathered unto one Head, God ; for in 1 Cor. xi. 3, you shall find that God is called the 'Head of Christ,' and so of all things else, of all men and angels ; he is the supreme Head of all, above the rest. They were gathered unto one Head, God ; that is certain then. But that they should be gathered first unto Jesus Christ as a Head, as God-man, that is not necessary. It is true that the second gathering is in him as a Head.

Yet, in the *second* place, there is much in the current of the Scripture, which I shall have, sometime or other, opportunity to allege, that even Jesus Christ was the 'corner-stone' of the creation, both to men and angels. If he would not have been a creature, God would not have made a creature else. The meaning of it is not as if that he should not have been incarnate, if man had never fallen ; but that neither men nor angels should have been made if Christ had not been to have been incarnate, which was at once ordained together with him. I could name many places for it. Rev. iii. 14, speaking of Christ, 'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God.' You have the like, Col. i. He reckoneth up all the uses of God-man, and he saith, ver. 16, that 'by him all things were created, visible and invisible,' (there is the first gathering unto him ;) and then, ver. 20, he speaks of reconciling all things in heaven and on earth, which is the second gathering, and the same with that in the text.

But then another question will be this : Was Jesus Christ the Head of the creation ? What scripture is there for that ?

For that I will give you but this place, 1 Cor. xi. 3, &c. Saith he, I would have you know, for perhaps it was a thing they did not so much consider, that the head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God. He speaks of Christ as God-man ; for so only God is said to be his head. He doth not only say he is the head of the elect angels and men, but of every man, and that by the law of creation ;

for as the man by creation is the head of the woman, so is Jesus Christ the head of the man; therefore ver. 8, 9, saith he, 'The man was not created for the woman, but the woman for the man.' He speaks of creation expressly. So we elsewhere read, 'All things were created by Christ, and for Christ,'—that is, by virtue of him. For as he was the 'Lamb slain from the beginning of the world,' that he might redeem it, as he did those that were before he was incarnate, so virtually he might have an influence into the creation also, he being to be incarnate.

So now, my brethren, you see the *first gathering* how it was. But then you will say, If he was their head in creation, there is this difficulty yet, why did they not then stand? Why did not he preserve them, being their head, by virtue of being the head of the creation also?

The answer to that is easy, and it is this. He was their head by creation, but in a common relation, but by way of eminency, as being the chief of the creation of God, and as the Lord and heir of all, in a natural way, by a natural due; and therefore, notwithstanding it was his due thus to be their head, it went no further; he left them to the course of nature. But now his being a head a second time, in this second gathering, it is by a special protection, undertaking to preserve them in a more peculiar manner, and that in a supernatural way, to bestow supernatural glory, and if they fall to redeem them, as he did the sons of men. So that now, by a natural due of his, he was the head in creation; by a special undertaking, by a special protection, (as I may so express it,) he becometh a head in the second gathering; and therefore he will be sure now to hold them fast enough. Thus you see what this first gathering in Christ was; you have that explained as briefly and as plainly as possibly I could.

Secondly, We come now to the necessity of a second gathering, both of angels and men.—Still the difficulty will be on the angels' part; of men, (you know they falling,) there is no difficulty at all about them.

To represent this necessity unto you, my brethren, it is thus in a word. All things, angels and men, though they were by the common tie of creation, being made holy, knit unto God; yet only by no other term of justice or union, no stronger than what was simply due to the creature as the creature, and as it was meet for God as a creator to carry himself towards the creature. It was not *ultra debitum*, beyond the due of the creature, as the school-men express it. Now, therefore, it was not a due to the creature, nor no obligation by the law of creation that was between God and the creature, that he must uphold it; but that he might leave it to shew itself what it was to be a creature. What assistance, therefore, he giveth to uphold and to confirm in grace, and perpetually to stand, is above the bargain, above the covenant of creation, above the obligation of nature; it is wholly supernatural, and it is of grace; it is more than nature's due. So that, as I said before, though the angels themselves were created in heaven, as man upon earth, yet they stood by the same common law, and no otherwise, that man did upon earth. It is true, indeed, this of the angels, they had stronger natures and were built of stronger matter, and so were less subject to fall; they were more able to stand; yet still, if left but to the mere assistance that by the covenant of nature God was to give them, though in heaven, they would fall as well as man. See a scripture for this, wherein angels and men are compared together, Job iv. 18. It is a scripture which in this argument divines have recourse unto, and I shall have recourse unto it afterward. 'Behold,' saith he, 'he put no trust in his servants; his angels he charged with folly: how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay?'

Comparing men and angels together, saith he, the angels had two advantages : they were, first, by nature made of stronger stuff ; alas ! man dwells in a house of clay, a house of cards, that is easily tumbled or blown down ; but they are built of a house of marble, that is stronger and abler to stand. Secondly, they had this advantage, that they were God's servants in a more peculiar manner ; so they are called his, because they were his servants about his throne, at court. Man was his subject, but they were his household servants then in a more peculiar manner, and therefore nearer God. Yet, notwithstanding these advantages, saith he, God could put no confidence in them, he could put no trust in them ; and he had a great deal of reason not to trust them, for you know how a great part of things in heaven served him when they fell. He chargeth them that fell with folly, with damnable folly ; he spared them not, for he laid the guilt of sin upon them, and threw them down to hell, as Peter saith ; and he chargeth the other with possible folly, as I shall shew anon.

So that you see by the law of creation—(for it is that law which he disputeth there ; 'Shall a man be more pure than his maker?' It is the words immediately before, in the 17th verse ; he bringeth it in, indeed, to another purpose ; yea, but take God as he is a Maker, the one as the clay, the other as the potter)—he is no way obliged to make them stand as they are of themselves, but they are creatures that are not *stable*, as the word signifieth, and as some translations have it. You see then the angels,—and there was sufficient proof for it,—that by that law wherein they were first gathered to God, by that knot, by that covenant—it was too slippery—God could put no trust in them ; all the angels might have served him as the devils did.

Again, there is this intallible reason, for it is an inseparable property of the creature, by an essential defect that cleaveth to it, that it is mutable, it is changeable, and may be tempted to sin. I call it a property of the creature, for in James i. 13, 17, compared together, you shall find that it is made the property of God alone to be immutable and without shadow of turning.

Now then, my brethren, you see that for these angels, if God would be sure of them, if he would put confidence in them, there must be some further knitting of them to him, by some further covenant, some further medium, by some higher law than this merely of creation, that passed between them as creatures and him as their Creator. There needed therefore a second gathering. Out of this that hath been said, you see then, that although they were not actually scattered, yet they were in danger ; they had need therefore be fixed in a head ; they are glasses, and they had need of a bottom, which might keep them from falling ; and these morning stars, the Lord Jesus Christ had need hold them in his hand, or they may fall down from heaven, as Lucifer, that great devil, did. They needed supernatural grace to confirm them ; it is not their due by nature ; it is not their due by creation. And by whom should they have this grace ? By whom should they have this protection ? Why, from him whose ministering spirits they are ; his ministering spirits, he calleth them so because he hath a special interest in them ; they are not our ministering spirits, it is nowhere said so. They are sent indeed for our good, but they are his ministering spirits ; he hath a proper interest and title in them ; he is the fountain of grace, and everything that hath anything by participation is reduced to that which hath it of itself. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is that man of grace ; he is the fountain of all grace ; therefore if they have supernatural grace, they must have it from him, and therefore in him. When the Apostle had reckoned that he

had created all things in heaven and in earth, he addeth that still in him all things consist, angels and all; the standing they have, this consistency, it is from the Lord Jesus Christ, Col. i. 17. He is the corner-stone of both the buildings, both that in heaven and that in earth.

For, my brethren, let me give you the reason of it. It is only Jesus Christ's natural due,—it is his natural due, only being the natural Son of God,—that after he is united to the Son of God, God should be engaged by a law, a law of nature, to uphold him, to be impeccable, to be put out of the danger of falling. It is only proper unto Jesus Christ; it is his law of nature, for he is the natural Son of God. It is his privilege to have life in himself; so you have it, John v. 26, 'For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.' No creature hath so that it can stand of itself; therefore he having life in himself, if they stand and continue to have life, they have it from him.

Likewise, let me say this unto you, that the fulness of the glory in heaven, which is by a union with God, the angels could not attain to it, nor had it by the law of their creation; it is supernatural to them. The Papists ascribe it to the use of free-will, and to their merit; but it is above the due of the creature, as the best divines hold it. This utmost glory in heaven, that beatifical vision which we shall have after the day of judgment, and which the angels are brought unto *tantum ad terminum*, as unto their utmost happiness, this is only Jesus Christ's natural due. So to see God as Jesus Christ himself doth, (and with the same kind of sight shall his members see him, though for degree he exceedeth, as we are anointed with the same Spirit that he is, though in degree, he above measure;) that sight which is thus proper to Christ, is the transcendent privilege of the Son of God. It is peculiar unto him, and it is by virtue of him we have it, both angels and men.

I will give you both Scripture for it and reason. John i. 18, 'No man hath seen God at any time.' It is translated *no man*, but it is *none*, οὐδείς, hath seen God; you may take it of all creatures at any time. 'The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.' If angels had seen God as Christ seeth him, they might have declared him: it had not been Christ's peculiar prerogative to help us to that sight, if the angels had had the fulness of that beatifical vision which the Lord Jesus Christ hath, and bringeth all unto at last.

And, my brethren, I will give you this reason for it. (Another scripture there is, it is Ps. xvi., it is a psalm of Christ, and he it is that saith, 'At thy right hand there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore;' he was able first to speak that speech.) There is, I say, the greatest reason for it that can be. The angels did not, by the law of their creation, receive that full sight which now they have in heaven, not by the law of their creation; though they that stood might have it at first, but it is probable otherwise. There is this evident reason, for otherwise those angels that fell had never fallen. Had they been filled with the sight of God which the saints of heaven shall be for ever filled with, it had kept them from sinning. Why? Because there had not been a possibility of thinking there was any other good, not a possibility of it. If the creature knew God to the uttermost,—knew God as we shall know him one day, as we are known of him,—and saw his face with that clearness as Christ, the saints, and angels in heaven now do, they could not have turned their thoughts upon anything else. Therefore you must suppose there was but such a sight and knowledge of God as they might entertain a thought of some better good thing; for the

will of any creature, whether sinning or otherwise, must still be pitched upon some good. Therefore the school-men do rightly say that the utmost beatifical vision of God doth captivate, doth swallow up the mind. When we see God to the full, we shall be so in love with him that the heart shall never turn off from him. That 'fulness of pleasure,' those 'rivers of joy,' carry the soul away with a torrent for ever; it can never go back against the stream. The love of God constraineth. Now you see the angels did fall, and therefore certainly that fulness of the sight of God they had not; and if it had been by virtue of their creation they would have had it. To think that it should be by their own works, we know no such covenant; it is that, as you see, that is proper to the Lord Jesus Christ so to see God, he only lying in his bosom: by virtue of him men see God, and shall see God; by virtue of him angels see God.

And so much now for that, why there was a necessity of their being gathered unto Christ, as unto a head, a second time: both that they might have confirmation in grace, that God might put trust in them; and, secondly, that they might have fulness of glory, and that beatifical vision, that might make them impeccable, and without danger of sinning for ever.

There is yet somewhat more in that first of Colossians, (I confess I need not meddle with it, for it is out of my text, but yet it cometh fitly in.) It is said, 'He reconciled all things, both in heaven and in earth.' Interpreters are very shy here of interpreting it of angels, because they needed, they say, no reconciliation, for reconciliation doth suppose enmity. Therefore to speak to this a little.

This reconciliation, you see, is more than a second gathering; what need had they of this? Bishop Davenant saith of it that there was *reconciliatio analogica*, something that had the shadow of it, something like it. I shall give you my sense of it thus: when God had experience that the angels fell from him, and fell from him so at a clap, Why, might he think, they will all serve me thus, if they be left to the law of their creation; they may drop away thus, and turn rebels one after another, and as I have lost man, so I may lose all the angels too; it is in their nature to do it, the creature is apt to do it; I see experience in some of their natures already, made of the same metal with them. Now, my brethren, this must needs be supposed, that God is not contented with his creature, taken merely in itself, it breedeth a kind of *simultas*, a kind—I cannot call it of grudge, because there is no sin—but a kind of unsatisfiedness and displicence. Therefore the Scripture doth not only speak of the evil angels that fell, that God put no confidence in them; but it speaks plainly of the good angels, that God put no confidence in them, seeing the evil angels' fall, Job xv. 15, compared with that place I quoted before, Job iv. 18, 'Behold,' saith he, 'he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man?' Whom doth he call saints here? He meaneth the angels. It is the same paralleled speech with the other, 'He put no trust in his servants, and his angels he chargeth with folly.' And it is plain he meaneth the angels by saints here, for he opposeth them to man; 'how much more abominable and filthy is man?' They are called in Scripture the *saints of God* oftentimes, as in Dan. viii. 13, 'I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said to that certain saint that spake,' &c. Then saith he, 'the heavens are not clean in his sight.' By heavens he meaneth angels too, or at leastwise they may be meant by heavens, for in Scripture often they are; as the devils are called the *gates of hell*, so the angels are called *heaven*, from the place where they are.

Now, saith he, these heavens, these heavenly creatures, these holy ones, the angels, they are not clean in his sight ; he seeth a possibility in them of sinning. And as he repented that he made man when he saw man fall from him, so when he saw some of the angels fall from him, there was just ground of repenting for making angels ; for, saith he, all these may fall too, if let alone. He could take no contentment in them. Here is some ground for a reconciliation, to take away all this discontent. God could not love them perfectly, unless they could stand for ever. Why ? Because he must so love as some time he must hate ; and that, you know, is not every way perfect love ; *amare tanquam aliquando osurus*. Therefore now, as it is not only called mercy to deliver the creature out of misery, but it is truly mercy to prevent from misery ; it is more than goodness to do so—it is mercy. Mercy respecteth misery, either misery that it may fall into, as well as mercy to deliver out of it ; it is analogically mercy, though the other is more properly mercy. So there is *quædam analogica reconciliatio* ; whether this was by the blood of Christ or no, I will not now stand to dispute. This is certain, Christ needed not to have died to preserve angels in their standing ; the necessity was only on man's part for satisfaction ; there is a plain place for it, 2 Cor. v. 14, ' In that he died for all, we conclude that all were dead.' That he died thus out of necessity, it must be for them only that are dead. Yet, dying for men, there might be this overplus in it, that for the merit of his obedience's sake, he having relation to angels, they might have, not a satisfaction, but a benefit by it. And if it be true, which some divines—not Papists only—say, that he did *mereri sibi*, merit for himself, he hath the benefit of his death ; being exalted on high, he hath a double right to glory ; so likewise he might for them too.—And so I have done with this thing, *things in heaven*, the angels ; and thus much for them.

I will but anticipate a use, or observation or two.

Obs. 1.—The first is this, Has God now purposed in himself, as the text telleth you here, such a great and vast price as this is, and is this the story of the purpose of his heart ? (and I have not told it out.) My brethren, I appeal to you all, whether the heart of man could ever have invented such a story as this is : One God, making the creature one with himself ; and, the creature falling from him, making him one again ; in making of all things, in summing up of all in Christ, that is the founder of this gathering again, making up a body of all things in heaven and in earth unto the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot stand to lay open the particulars of it ; you have heard it. The text saith, ' He purposed it in himself ; ' it could have come into no one's heart but his ; it was hid in God, it was purposed in himself ; the ' wisdom of God,' therefore, it is called, Eph. iii. 10.

Dost thou not believe that there is a God ? Come hither, let this convince thee. Could all intelligible natures, all reasonable creatures, invent such a story as this ? You think the Gunpowder-Plot to have been a plot so desperate that it must have been hatched in hell, it could not be formed in any man's brain. My brethren, this plot here could be hatched nowhere but in heaven, and in the heart of God. Go, and take angels and men, lay all your heads together and make such another. Such a God, such a Christ, thus great, having such a kingdom made out of all, both in heaven and earth, scattered from him, and reduced again ; how infinitely doth this set out God and Christ ! It is beyond the thoughts of men and angels to invent such a thing as this. No story ever had such a winding up as this. Read all histories, all romances, that men are pleased withal, they have not the shadow of such a plot as this. Take all the plots of all the great ones of the

earth, and all their petty plots come to nothing. The wisdom of the world is foolishness in comparison of this. We preach wisdom, saith the Apostle, in a mystery, which none of the princes of the world knew; their wisdom comes to nothing before this, it all vanisheth. To set up so great a monarch that hath alliance to all his subjects, and to make him king of all the world, of both worlds, and to have some out of all in heaven and in earth to be made subjects unto him, and he in his own person to have all things in him; and they falling from God, he being able to knit them all again a second time. 'Without controversy,' saith he, 1 Tim. iii. 16, 'great is the mystery of godliness.' What is it? This very thing I have spoken of. It is first, 'God manifested in the flesh,' God and man summed up in one. It could never have entered into the heart of man or angel to have a thought that the Son of God should have taken a creature up into his own person thus, and such a creature as all should be summed up in him. 'Justified in the Spirit,' that is, at his resurrection. 'Seen of angels,' to be their head. 'Preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world,' to be the head of them on earth by faith too. This is a mystery without controversy; no man that readeth it or heareth it, but he must fall down before it. This is not man; this is not the wit of angels; this is, without controversy, from an omniscient understanding that knoweth all things, and hath infinite depth in him. Nay, my brethren, of all the arguments that ever fell upon my understanding to convince me that there is a God, there is none like unto this.

Obs. 2.—A second observation is this, See the several steps of the goodness of God to his creatures in these three particulars, which that which I have handled doth shew. First, there is his simple goodness as he is a Creator, communicating himself unto them as to creatures by the law of creation, but not beyond their due as creatures. This was the state of Adam in innocency, and this was the state of the angels that fell. Then, secondly, there is a further degree of goodness shewed,—which becometh grace, which hath a peculiarness in it, it is supernatural, it is beyond the common tie of creation,—to keep them from falling; this he shewed to the angels that stood, when he let the other fall, which prevented them from falling. Well, but there is a third degree beyond all; that is, when actually they did fall, as the elect of the sons of men did, then here is riches of mercy, to gather them all to himself, in him again, and that by his blood. This is the mercy, this is the top of the mercies of God; and the truth is, to shew forth this, he shut up all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. It was but to shew mercy so much the further. There was his mercy in preventing this, but there is infinite depth of mercy in recovering out of this; when they were all scattered from him, to gather them together again.

SERMON XII.

According to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, in the dispensation of the fulness of times to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth ; even in him.
—VER. 10.

THESE words, as I have formerly, in opening the coherence of them, shewed, do hold forth the full purpose, the whole birth, that lay hid in God's eternal purposes and decrees. All that God purposed, both concerning Christ and concerning us,—him as a Head, and us as members,—are all gathered into this one expression, 'He purposed to gather all in one in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth.' That by things in heaven are meant angels, I have shewed. That by things on earth are meant men, I have shewed also. There are 'all things in heaven,' for there are several offices of angels at least ; and there are 'all things on earth,' there are several sorts of men. Now, God hath gathered together all things in one. The great thing to be opened, as I promised at first, which containeth in it all that God intended both toward Christ and us, is this word, which is translated *to gather together in one*, ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι. It is a teeming word, a pregnant word, that containeth all that God intended toward Christ and us in the womb of it.

At the first, I did give you four approved significations of it, that none that knoweth and studieth the meaning of the word can deny.

The first ; it signifieth a *summing up*, a casting up of several figures into one total sum.

The second is, it is a *gathering together* of several members or parts unto one head.

The third, which is rather an addition unto the second ; it is a *gathering of them again*. There is ἀνὰ, a doing of it the second time.

The fourth is, a reducing things unto their *first principles*, to their first estate, *instaurare*, as I shall shew you anon.

I gave you these, when I made entrance into the words, to be the four several meanings of it. There is a fifth, which I will not stand upon. And these four contain all that God intended both towards Christ and us.

First, as a foundation to the great restoration of all things, the great recapitulation and gathering of all under one head, God layeth this foundation—he summeth up all things in Christ's person. He was to make him a head, and he would make him a head that should partake of all the body ; one that should be a fit and a meet head, fit to be King of both worlds. He casteth up, summeth up in him, into one total, all divisions whatsoever, all things in earth and all things in heaven.

He summeth up in him God and the creature. That was the first great division.

He summeth up in him the nature of man and the condition of angels ; for he is a heavenly man and far above angels. It is his due, and he possesseth it now.

He summeth up, in man's nature assumed, both Jew and Gentile ; for he came of both.

Thus he cast up all sorts of divisions into one total sum in Christ's person first, and made that a foundation unto a second ; and that is this, to gather together all things in earth and in heaven under one head, that is both head of angels and men ; that angels and men do make up one great association under this one Head and Monarch, Christ ; and that of all sorts of angels, and of all sorts of men, make what division you will,—nations, tongues, kindreds, sinners, ranks, whatsoever,—he gathereth together of all such, and makes up a body to Christ. That is the second.

The third was this, which I entered upon in the last discourse, that he hath made a second gathering of all things in one. In Christ there is a second gathering. There is a twofold union of creatures reasonable, with God, and amongst themselves, a first and a second ; ἀνὰ is not to be lost. Yea, and he hath gathered together again the second time after a scattering, when they were dispersed, broken all in pieces ; he makes up all again in Christ, to make his glory so much the more illustrious.

In the first place there was a first gathering of all things unto God, as under a head, which was that gathering of all in heaven and in earth by the law of creation ; which I explained in four things.

First, that both angels and men were, by that law of creation, united to God. It was their due so to be ; a natural due, if he would make them creatures reasonable.

Yet, secondly, so, as they were both united to God, but by the same like common tie, they might both fall in pieces.

Then, thirdly, there was a peace between both these among themselves, if not an association ; which indeed the Scripture holds not forth ; but a peace there was.

And then, fourthly, in some respect this might be said to be in Christ ; not as a head undertaking for both, but by his natural due. It was his right, if he were to be a creature, to be the head of that creation, the 'beginning of the creation of God,' as he is called, Rev. iii. 24.

Now, I shewed there is a second gathering in Christ, as a head undertaking both for men and angels.

First, for the angels' parts, it was the thing I shewed you, the necessity of second union, and that in Christ. I cannot stand to repeat the particulars. They needed both confirming grace, as I shewed out of Job iv. 18, compared with Job xv. 15. They needed elevating grace, to that fulness of the vision of God which is only Christ's natural due, as John i. 18, 'None hath seen the Father,'—it is not only *no man*, but it is οὐδείς, *none*,—but only by way of participation from him who lay in the bosom of the Father. There is a vision of God which the angels were not created unto, which in Christ they are raised up unto.

Then, again, I shewed there was a kind of reconciliation of them, a gathering together in that respect, as the phrase, Col. i. 20, importeth, where all things are said to be reconciled, both in heaven and in earth. It is not a proper reconciliation indeed ; but when God saw that his angels served him so, the most part of them, he chargeth the rest with folly. It was in their nature to do it, he could not trust them ; it might have made him repent that ever he made angels. Christ takes this off, it is not an actual falling, but a possible falling, and fixeth them to God for ever. Thus he gathered all things in heaven to himself by a second gathering ; for that is the point.

Now, that which I am to handle is this, *That there is a second gathering of men, of all things on earth*; and that is clearer than the other.

God doth not preserve men only from a danger of scattering by a second union with himself in and through Christ, but he actually preserveth them. He sheweth not his grace of preservation only; he withdraweth, or he leaveth them unto themselves, suffereth them all to turn head against him, to turn rebels, to the end he might get glory by a further degree of grace toward them, to shew forth the riches of his mercy in their recovery.

And, my brethren, this gathering of all things on earth in Christ, of men to himself, is the great gathering of all the rest. It was the greatest work of Christ. That of angels was but an overflow of it, cast into the bargain, to confirm them; but that which did draw forth all that was in Christ, to satisfy his Father, was to reconcile men unto him. This was the great scattering, for it divided heaven from earth, angels from men, men amongst themselves, as I shall shew you by and by. Therefore, when this cometh to be added unto the other, it makes it an universal gathering: it makes Christ a catholic King, the only catholic King, the only universal Head, to all things in heaven and in earth, when all come in again to him.

I shall explain or present unto you this gathering again in one of all things, all sorts of men on earth, by these four particulars:—

I. I told you, first, it implied a dispersion, a scattering; therefore I will briefly lay forth the desperate, miserable, forlorn, scattered condition of the sons of men, by the sin of Adam; how all in earth and in heaven were fallen in pieces, divided, and at enmity.

II. I shall, secondly, shew you the making up of all this again; what a complete, full, and entire gathering together in one there is of all that were scattered.

III. And then, thirdly, because God's second works always exceed the first, therefore this gathering again is with an addition of a more near, and entire, and more glorious union than at first; a more indissoluble union, never to part again.

IV. And, fourthly, that all this was done in Christ, or by Christ, as you shall hear anon; and by what it was in Christ that all was thus gathered together, when they were all scattered and broken in pieces.

These are the four heads which I shall now insist upon; and all are necessary to open this text.

I. *First, I shall shew you the division, the scattering, that was of things on earth, both from what is in heaven, and from amongst themselves.*

First, What is in heaven? There is God there, he is the chief in heaven. Why, they were all cut off from God. It is called a 'departing' from God, in Jer. xvii. 5, and Heb. iii. 12. It is called a 'going astray, like sheep,' after a thousand vanities, in Isa. liii. 6. 'This people,' saith he, Jer. v. 23, 'hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone;' clean gone from God, and gone for ever, if God take not the care of them: so the phrase is there. And, Col. i. 21, there are three degrees, which indeed comprehend all: 'You were,' saith he, 'alienated and enemies;' once they were friends, God and they were one; now they are strangers; not only so, but 'enemies in their minds;' yea, thirdly, 'in evil works,' all sort of hostility, not only in outward actions, but in inward dispositions; and by means of this, an eternal wall of separation is set up between God and man, Isa. lix. 2.

Here now is one division, all on earth cut off from him, 'without God in the world;' it is the expression the Apostle useth, Eph. ii. 12.

Secondly, What else is there in heaven? There are angels. Men are

scattered utterly from them, because, as I told you, though there were not an association, yet there was a peace; though there were two worlds divided, distinct, though there was no trade, yet there was no enmity. But through man's fall there was; for the angels cannot but hate where God hateth, and they cannot but be angry where God is angry. And therefore you read, Gen. iii. 24, when man by sin was cast out of paradise, then cherubim came, with their swords turned every way to keep man out, with their swords drawn upon him. You never read of angels till then. When Balaam went on in a perverse way, Num. xxii. 22, it is said, 'The angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him.' They are adversaries, they are enemies to men in their evil courses and ways; and howsoever some divines have thought that all executions of judgments here below have been by evil angels, yet the Scripture evidently sheweth that they ordinarily and mostly be good; we have more instances of the one than the other. Those that destroyed Sodom were good angels, and Lot entertained them as such: 'The Lord,' say they, 'hath sent us to destroy Sodom,' Gen. xix. 13. They were angels created; therefore, Heb. xiii. 2, Lot is said to have 'entertained angels.' The like may be said of that, 1 Chron. xxi. 15; of that that struck Herod, Acts xii. 23; and of that smote the camp of the Assyrians, 2 Kings xix. 35. It is evident, for in all those places they are still called the angel of the Lord, which is never spoken of Satan.

There is once, indeed, mention of an 'evil spirit' from the Lord, but it is with an addition of evil; but the angels of the Lord are still good angels. And that angel that destroyed Jerusalem, which David saw with a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over the city, 1 Chron. xxi. 15, was evidently a good angel; for, ver. 18, he directs Gad to tell David where the temple should stand, and biddeth him worship; which an evil angel, God would never have used him to do it.

And, my brethren, if men be enemies to the Church of God, as wicked men by nature are, angels will revenge it. 'Take heed,' saith Christ, Matt. xviii. 10, 'that you offend not one of these little ones;' and he giveth the reason of it; 'for,' saith he, 'their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven:' they have angels that take their part. Thus they are enemies in this life unto wicked men; and at the day of judgment, you shall read in Matt. xiii. 41, 42, 49: 'The angels are the reapers,' saith he, ver. 39; and he sheweth there how they take the bodies and souls of wicked men. The good angels are their gatherers, but it is for hell. They gather all together, and 'cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.' It is attributed unto the angels.

Thus you see, I say, that angels and men are at odds, and all by sin; all is broken now. God is gone, angels are divided from us, and at enmity with us. All in heaven and earth is broken to pieces.

Well, come to *things on earth*; nothing but divisions there. There is not a man in the world but by nature is divided from all men. 'We, like sheep, have gone astray, every one after his own way;' so it is Isa. liii. 6. All went one way once, we all cleaved to God; we have left God, and are fallen all in pieces. 'God made man righteous;' there was but one way then, for so the opposition implieth; 'but they have sought out many inventions,' even as many as there are men, Eccles. vii. 29; and, Tit. iii. 3, 'serving divers lusts and pleasures.'

Then again, secondly, men are at enmity one with another, it is certain, more or less, *homo homini lupus*. Tit. iii. 3, 'We,' saith he, describing man's natural condition,— 'We ourselves lived in malice and in envy, hateful,

and hating one another.' Hateful every man is to another more or less, he is hated of another, and he hateth another more or less; and if his nature were let out to the full, there is that in him, 'every man is against every man,' as it is said of Ishmael. Self-love, my brethren, that ruleth all the world, is the greatest monopolist that ever was in the world. 'Men shall be lovers of themselves,' as you have it 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3; and what followeth? 'Covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, without natural affection, truce-breakers,' &c. Self-love breaks all bonds; all things in earth are scattered.

Go amongst all nations; there is nothing else but a fatal confusion amongst them; the Jew at enmity with the Gentile, and the Gentile with the Jew. All have heard how the Scripture sets it out, they were an abomination and curse each to other; of which I have treated elsewhere.*

And, thirdly, in religions, nothing but divisions, before our Lord and Saviour Christ came in the fulness of time. Look upon all nations, so many nations, so many gods; nay, so many cities, so many gods, as it is Jer. ii. 28; nay, so many families, so many gods; there was not a family but chose a several god to itself; and therefore, 1 Cor. viii. 5, 'there are lords many, and gods many.' Many indeed; for there was as many almost as there were men to worship them; each chose what god he pleased. And the Apostle in that place I last quoted, if you read it, you shall find, instanceth in both things in heaven and things in earth. All things in heaven and in earth, from stars to serpents that creep on the earth, the very onions were made gods amongst them! Thus was all the world divided; this was the shattered condition of all mankind, of all things in earth, when Jesus Christ came.

Nay, my brethren, fourthly, there is another division yet. There was a fatal sentence to scatter men's souls from their bodies, their bodies to go to the grave, and to return to dust, which also is scattered up and down with winds, God knows where, and their souls to hell; called their own place.

And, lastly, to conclude; by all these gatherings, they are gathered to the devil, as their head and prince, though they know not of it; who is the prince of the world, that rules it; and the 'god of this world,' that is worshipped by the 'children of disobedience.' What a miserable shattering is here; all in earth broken in pieces, and all in heaven! And thus have I represented to you the state and condition of man dispersed.

II. *Now I must shew you, secondly, that Jesus Christ hath made all one again; I must go over all these particulars, and make it good; that is the second thing.*

First, as I told you, all things on earth were cut off from God. What doth Christ do first? He makes peace with God, that was the great business of all the rest; make peace with him, and all else will fall in. This Christ did, Col. i. 20, 'Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.' Here you see it: I need name no more scriptures, for I might give you many for it.

In the second place, angels come to be reconciled; you heard before they were enemies. I will shew you it in the general first, and secondly in the particulars.

First, *in the general.* They were enemies before, you heard; you shall see that the angels in Christ are made friends to souls and bodies. Read Luke xv. 8-10: Christ makes there a comparison of a woman that had lost

* *Vide* Sermon of Christ's being the Universal Peacemaker, on Eph. ii. 14.

her groat, and she lights a candle and sweeps her house; and when she had found it, she calls in her friends and neighbours, and, said she, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my groat which was lost.' Who are those friends? the next words shew that they are angels; for it is added in the very next verse, 'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over a sinner that repenteth.' They are made friends you see, the text is express for it. And in token of it what do they? Look in the second of Luke; they are so far friends, that as soon as they knew the Saviour of the world was born, they came flying down, a whole troop of them,—their hearts were full of it,—to bring men the news of it; and to shew their rejoicing, they sing; they were glad at heart, and sing, 'Peace on earth, good-will towards men.' They are the first messengers of that glad tidings: ver. 10, 'Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will towards men.'

Everywhere you shall find angels described throughout the whole Scripture to be the *heavenly host*, because they are the men of war, they are the militia of heaven, to speak in the language of the age; so they are called in that second of Luke, and they are everywhere else so called: 1 Kings xxii. 19, 2 Kings vi. 17, Matt. xxvi. 53. Christ calls them legions, as the devils are called. Now, my brethren, what do these angels that were soldiers, enemies, warriors against devils and men? They come in all their warlike habit and attire down to earth, and proclaim peace. It became them so to do. 'A multitude of heavenly soldiers,' saith he, 'praising God, and saying, Glory,' &c. What do they say? God is at peace with men, and we are at peace with men; we are in our armour still, but it is to fight for this gospel we preach. As in the Revelation, 'I am thy fellow-servant,' saith he, 'and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus.' If any man have the testimony of Jesus and hold it forth; if you be for Jesus, we are for Jesus and for you too, saith he. Angels and men are friends: Ps. xxxiv. 7, 'They encamp about the saints.' All that heavenly host turn all their weapons now for Christ, and for the saints. Therefore, when Ahab went to fight, in that 1 Kings xxii. 19, the whole host of heaven appeared; for the whole host of heaven standeth ready to defend the gospel; they are all friends to Christ and the saints; so that you see that all in heaven is for them. See another place, Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. When poor Jacob went out to meet Esau, he went out trembling before; but the angels of God met him, and saith he, 'This is God's host;' there were two hosts of them, *Mahanaim*, two troops, so he calleth them.

Now, what is the cause of this, that angels come thus to be reconciled with us; that they come down upon the earth to serve men, and to be friends with them thus? It is Christ. Gen. xxviii. 12, Jacob saw a ladder that touched heaven and touched earth. Who is that ladder? Christ himself is that ladder, and himself interpreteth it so, John i. 51, 'You shall see the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man,' as they did there ascend and descend upon that ladder that appeared to Jacob. The ladder, it touched heaven, it touched earth, for Jesus Christ hath both in him; he is a heavenly man, and he hath the nature of a man, he hath made up heaven and earth. You heard before how Christ was partaker of both natures, and by the one he hath a foot on earth, whereof the top is in heaven; and it is he that hath made the highway between heaven and earth an open passage. Therefore now angels are reconciled to men, heaven is reconciled to earth, and there is an intercourse, a trade, a highway, they ascend and descend familiarly; it was there to defend Jacob, and for many other ends they do it. Before, you heard, they kept man out of Paradise

with a sword ; but now you read, that they carry into Paradise the souls of men : as of Lazarus, Luke xvi. 22, and at the latter day, as in Matt. xxiv. 31, 'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

This is the general. Now see it in the *particulars*, that angels are, in all the particulars wherein they are at enmity that I instanced in, reconciled to men. In the first place, I told you before that they execute judgments and plagues. It was a good angel that destroyed in Jerusalem with the plague. Now read Ps. xci. 10, 11, it is a pat instance of the contrary : 'There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall the plague come nigh thy dwelling : for he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.' You heard before that when man fell and was cast out of Paradise, angels stood there with a flaming sword to keep him out. Now you shall see the angels stand to let him in. Rev. xxi. 12, describing there the new Jerusalem, he saith there were 'twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels.' It was Paradise, as appears, chap. xxii. 14, because there was the tree of life, for so it is described : 'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.' It is an allusion to Paradise ; there angels kept out, here angels carry in. The angels, you know, fetched the soul of Lazarus, and carried it into Abraham's bosom, Luke xvi. And so at the latter day, Matt. xxiv. 31, the angels shall take the saints that rise, and bring them all to Christ ; so the text saith there. Here you see it, I say, in all the particulars wherein they are enemies, how they are made friends. Here is then angels and men reconciled after being broken to pieces.

Well, I shewed you in the third place, that all on earth were shattered to pieces, the Jew from the Gentile, one man from another. Now Christ hath made up this division too. Take any man, my brethren, that is the greatest enemy to any ; let them have had the most desperate enmity that ever was between two mortal men ; let these two men be turned to God, let them meet in Christ, they will love one another, it is certain. Take a godly man, set before him the greatest enemy he hath in the earth ; do but put that question to him, What will you say if this man should be turned to God ? Oh, saith he, I could fall down before him ! He would do anything in the world to procure it and bring it about.

My brethren, the Jew and the Gentile were two, so they are called ; it is the very word used, Eph. ii. 15. They were two indeed, saith he, 'He hath made of twain one,' he hath reconciled both. Christ did it ; it was by the blood of his cross he broke down the partition wall. The *μεσότοιχον*, the partition wall, of the ceremonial law is broken down : which is elegantly signified, alluding to the wall in the temple that kept the Gentiles from the Court of the Jews. The Jews were such enemies to the Gentiles, that they could not endure the gospel to be preached to them. They were all 'filled with envy ;' so you read in the Acts the carnal Jews were. Well, but when Peter goeth and preacheth the gospel to the Gentiles, what say the godly Jews ? See what they say, Acts xi. 18, good souls, 'When they heard these things,'—namely, that the Gentiles believed, that is the context,—'they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God given also unto the Gentiles repentance unto life.' They fell down and glorified God. Here Jew and Gentile, that would not eat one with another before, are made friends ; now they eat together at the same table, at the same Lord's Supper.

Now there is one body, one supper, one sacrament, one God, one Lord Jesus Christ, both Jew and Gentile one.

Go over particulars. Amongst the Jews themselves there were great divisions. There was the ten tribes opposite to the two tribes. Ephraim and Judah extremely opposite; you have it, Isa. xi. 13. He speaks there of the envy of Ephraim, and how they were adversaries to Judah; but I will order it so, saith he, that 'the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.' This is in Christ; for if you mark it, he speaks of the 'root of Jesse' in the 10th verse. Here now both these are reconciled. You have the like, Ezek. xxxvii. 19. There are two sticks, the one is Ephraim, and the other is Judah. Take these sticks, saith he, and make them one; for I will make them one nation, and they shall have one king, and they shall be no more divided into two kingdoms. You may read it there at large, ver. 21-24. And you read how these are scattered as dry bones used to be; so as none knows who these Jews of the ten tribes are, as in a charnel-house none knows what bones are of such and such men. 'These bones are the whole house of Israel,' saith God to the prophet, ver. 11. Bones that were dried, their hope lost and cut off, and they scattered one from another.

Well, you heard that the Gentiles were dispersed one amongst another, and had a thousand religions; by the death of Jesus Christ they are all gathered into one. Take one place for it; it is John xi. 50, 51. The high priest there prophesying of Christ's death, and shewing the end of it, saith he, 'It is necessary that Jesus should die for this nation,' (for the Jews.) And what followeth, added by the Evangelist? It may be it was the prophecy of the high priest at that time, but this followeth: 'and not for this nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.' All the Gentiles that were scattered, scattered in place, scattered in religion, thus divided, Christ dieth to gather them together in one, all them that belong to God's election, both in that age, and in all ages to the end of the world. Therefore now, when Christ came into the world you have it fulfilled; in the apostles' time there were as many gods as men, as many gods as cities, as many gods as families,—1 Cor. viii. 5, 'There are lords many, and gods many,'—as many as there were 'things in heaven and things in earth,' as I said before he intimateth it there. Their religion lay in having *lords* that were mediators unto their *gods*. But, saith he now to us, 'There is but one God, and there is but one Lord.' This alteration did God make in the very apostles' times. And, my brethren, let me add this to it. Since the greatest part of the world hath one God, though it have not one Lord; the Turks and we have one God, we have not one Lord indeed; but yet over all Turkey, over all the Roman empire, there is still one God to this day, and those heathen gods are all gone.

Thus he hath gathered together things in earth in one, in Jesus Christ; he hath reconciled the nations; and he will never leave till such time as he hath been the God of the whole earth, of the whole world. He saith, Isa. xi. 9, when both Jew and Gentile shall come in, that 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' Isa. liv. 5, he saith that 'the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, shall be called the God of the whole earth.' Dan. vii. 14, 27, he saith, there shall come a kingdom, after all the kingdoms, after the fourth monarchy, which is now a-destroying, (for the Pope is the last head of it,)—there shall come a kingdom of all nations, and tongues, and languages, and they shall serve him, and he shall possess

all the kingdoms under the whole heavens, (it is not a kingdom in heaven.) He shall gather all in one, and there shall be but one kingdom, and one Lord, through the whole earth. This God will do in the end. Thus you see, I say, that Jesus Christ hath reconciled all on earth, he hath made them up all again; he meaneth to do it by the virtue of his death.

Well, there was one division more that I named; as great a scattering as any of the former is not yet made up: and it is of things that are yet both in heaven and earth, and remain divided one from another; and it is of the saints from the very beginning of the world, and will continue so to the very end. For death and the grave hold and keep the bodies of them, remaining still in the earth, whilst their souls, being 'spirits made perfect,' are lodged together in heaven. Here is a great scattering. All the patriarchs that did die before Christ came, all that have died since, their bodies are in one place, and their souls in another; one is in heaven, and the other is laid in the grave, and there resteth. Death hath scattered all the saints into two worlds, it hath reigned over all; and though he will be the God of all the earth, and join all nations together, yet souls and bodies are still divided of all that are dead, and of all the saints from the beginning of the world, and that shall be to the end. Now, what will Jesus Christ do? He will raise up all, and bring them all together, make up that division too. 1 Thess. iv. 16, compared with Matt. xxiv. 31. He saith there, the angels shall go into all the four corners of the world, when the great sound of the trumpet cometh,—he speaks of the latter day,—'and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

My brethren, the bodies of the elect, where are they? Some burnt and turned to ashes, all dispersed into the elements; who knoweth where every man's body is, and all the parts of it? All those atoms, all those bones, will God bring together again, and gather them all in one, and join their souls to them, and, saith he, we shall ever be with the Lord. There will be then a gathering together that shall never be dissolved. Thus, I say, he hath gathered together all in one that were all shattered and fallen to pieces.

III. *The third head, as I told you, was this, That this second gathering shall exceed the first infinitely.* I mentioned four particulars, you know, to explain. First, that all were fallen in pieces; secondly, that all shall be gathered together again; and that this second gathering shall exceed the first. It exceedeth it in two things; I will name no more. It exceedeth, first, in sureness and stability. That same first union with God by creation was upon slippery grounds. 'He putteth,' saith he, 'no trust in his saints,' Job xv. 15. He could trust none of them. He could not send an angel down,—for he speaks of angels there, as I shewed before,—he could not send them on an errand to earth, but they might have fallen and been in hell before they came up again. It was a slippery knot, that of creation. But now they are headed in Christ. God would never trust creature more, he will make sure work; and what doth he? He headeth them all in Christ; and what saith Christ? 'My sheep shall no man take out of my hand.' If angels and men be once bottomed on Christ, they can never be parted again. Who shall separate us, now we are again the second time gathered, from the love of God in Christ? It exceedeth in sureness, you see.

It exceedeth in nearness of the union too. We have a more near union with God, and one with another, than we had. First, a nearer union one with another; for in the first gathering by creation, as I told you at first, men and angels were at peace indeed, but they should have lived in two worlds. Man should have lived upon the earth, and they in heaven. They

should not have come one at another, that is certain ; man was an earthly creature, and he must have continued upon earth, as I have often hinted out of 1 Cor. But when we are gathered together the second time, angels and men live together in one world : men shall be like angels, Matt. xxii. 30 ; they shall 'bear the image of the heavenly man,' 1 Cor. xv. 49 ; and 'we are come to angels,' Heb. xii. 22 ; and we shall have places where they are, as I shewed out of Zech. iii. 7. There is a nearer union now one amongst another than was before. And a nearer union with God too. For, my brethren, let me tell you this, that men that were thus shattered from God and fallen into this great misery, shall be raised up to the nearest union with God that can be ; for aught I know, nearer than the angels. Rev. vii. 11, there is the throne ; the four beasts next that ; the four-and-twenty elders next them ; and the angels round about the throne and the elders. They are more remote from the throne than the beasts are, than the men are. Therefore, as I shewed before, Christ is our brother, which is nowhere said of angels ; they are nowhere called brother ; it is proper unto men, Heb. ii. Christ is our husband. It is not said of any of the angels that Christ is their husband, and that God is a Father to them by adoption through the marriage with Christ ; there is a nearer union that these scattered ones have with God through Christ, upon this second gathering. So there is the third head explained.

IV. There is a fourth head, which shall be, and deserves to be, the *coronis* of this glorious story : *They are said to be gathered together in Christ.*

Well, *in Christ.* What will this hold forth ? It holdeth forth that they are not only all gathered in Christ as unto a Head, but they are gathered by virtue of him. Not only gathered to him, but in him, efficiently, meritoriously, by something he hath done to gather all together again, when they were all shattered in pieces. You heard how all things both in heaven and earth were gathered together and summed up in the person of Christ, who is the founder of this their gathering. We shall now see that ere he himself could effect a gathering together of all in heaven and earth, himself must be made the subject of a fatal scattering ; and as the gathering of all things in his person is the fundamental *medium unionis*, means of union, of all things else that are united to God by him, that so this scattering is the means of all that reconciliation of things scattered, as hath been said. Christ had his *avé* too ; he had his gathering again in his own person ; and therefore a scattering first that befell his own person ; and what is true of us is first true of him. And by virtue of this it was that we were all gathered ; for it is a sure rule, that what is done in us by him, the like was first done for us in Christ himself ; as, if we that are poor be made rich, it is because he that was rich was made poor. So in like manner, if he would gather all things that are out of himself into one in himself, himself must be scattered in himself. As his incarnation was the summing up of all, so his death the scattering of all, and his resurrection is his gathering of all again ; and we had not God's design complete without all these. Now, to shew that he was scattered and shattered in all but the personal union—

First, That his death was a scattering of him ; it was a taking down all, as I may so express it. Indeed, the union could never be taken down ; the union with the Godhead could never be dissolved, but it went as near as possibly could be. You shall see the expression the Scripture hath, John xi. 51, 52. When he speaks of gathering all in one that were dispersed, he saith he must do it by his death. It is necessary, saith he, that Jesus should die for that nation, 'And not for that nation only ; but that also he

should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.' You know that death is a separation of all things, and so it was to Christ. Were we cut off from God? Look to that phrase, Dan. ix. 26, 'Messiah shall be cut off.' There was a division, a separation made. There were these *three* things summed up in him—God, the condition of angels, the nature of man. They are all dissolved, there was a kind of dissolution; it came as nigh as could be, so as he might still hold a personal union, for that was necessary.

First, *God*. God, you know, is called the Head of Christ, 1 Cor. xi. 3. Now, when Jesus Christ came to die, as we were cut off by sin from God our Head, so there was as near a cutting off of Christ from God as possibly could be. 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' saith he. 'My God, my God,' still; yet he was turned enemy to him. Zech. xiii. 7, 'Awake, thou sword, against the man that is my fellow.' He strikes him, runneth his sword through his soul. Here God was gone, yet God is his God still. You see here was one scattering of that was once summed up in him.

Secondly, all the creatures left him; first his disciples, as it followeth there in Zechariah, 'Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.' When he hung upon the cross, not an angel durst come to comfort him; though whilst in his agony in the garden, when the curse came not on him unto its height, not so until he hung upon the tree; and then when the curse came in its fulness upon him, no angel did or durst appear to comfort him. If the light of the sun would comfort him, God withdrew it; and, in Dan. ix. 26, it is expressly said the Messiah had nothing. So in your margins.

In the third place, he was born, as I said, unto the condition of angels. He was a heavenly man, 'the Lord from heaven,' 1 Cor. xv. ; and it was his due to be advanced, as now he is, 'far above all principality and power;' and therein he hath but his due. This I shewed at first, when I told you there was a summing up of all in him. Now what saith Heb. ii. 9? Saith he there, 'We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour,' &c. To give you the exposition that learned Camero hath given it, and certainly it is the right; the Apostle had shewed in the first chapter that Christ was above the angels, and that both as God and man it was his inheritance, his due, as he saith, ver. 4, 6. And, chap. ii. 5, he sheweth that the 'world to come' is not put into subjection to the angels, but to Christ; 'so that,' saith he, 'he hath that glory and that honour above the angels, as due to him.' What did God make him now? 'He made him,' saith he, 'lower than the angels,' when he came to die. You will say, 'a little lower.' But that same $\beta\epsilon\lambda\lambda\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\tau\iota$ is but for 'a little time;' *per illud tempus passionis*, for the time of his suffering, that is the meaning of it; for otherwise he was made a great deal lower than the angels. 'I am,' saith he, 'a worm and no man,' Ps. xxii. 6; that is lower than the angels, infinitely lower; but $\beta\epsilon\lambda\lambda\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ $\tau\iota$, for 'a little while,' so interpreters many of them carry it. 'A little while,' saith he; that is, while he suffered death, as Camero interpreteth it. That man that had an inheritance above angels, to whom all things should be put in subjection under his feet, angels and all; this man, saith he, was for a little while made lower than the angels, and this while he suffered death. So that now, my brethren, you see that, as God hath forsaken him, so likewise, in the next place, here is the condition of the angels that he was born unto, that is gone too, while he tasteth of death for every man.

Well, but he is man yet? Why, but that is scattered too. What is man? He is the result of soul and body. Take the soul from the body, the humanity ceaseth; there is a body indeed and a soul still, but where is the man? Though he was personally united to the body in the grave, and the soul in Paradise, yet in a proper and strict sense there was a ceasing to be man. You know death is the dissolution of man into his soul and body. Take Christ's own expression, John ii. 19; he calls it an *unbuilding*, or destroying of himself. 'Destroy this temple,' saith he; take it in pieces, fling one stone from another,—for when he died, his soul went one way and his body another,—and, saith he, 'I will build it again.' The stones were pulled down, it was but unbuilt. It is true, it may be said that he is God-man when dead, but it cannot be said he was man when dead. Man he was indeed, in respect that his soul and body must be united again; but yet in a proper and strict sense, man he was not then. Here, I say, all is gone; here is a shattering even in Christ himself, so far as possibly may be. The union could not be dissolved, for then it could not have been said that God died, and that God was buried, and that God was raised, if the Godhead had not been united to the body. The union of the Godhead ceased not; the union of the soul and body, the man, ceased. Though it is true that the Godhead was united personally to his body in the grave, and to his soul in Paradise, and that union was never interrupted; yet our divines, speaking in a strict sense, say *in triduo desiit homo*, he ceased to be man; as man consisted of body and soul united in one together, so he ceased to be man, during the time he lay in the grave. Here, I say, you see all is gone in his death. Here is his manhood scattered too.

Second, But what followeth? In his resurrection all was made up again; he gathereth all together again in one, and by virtue of this we are gathered together in him; for what is done in us is done first in Jesus Christ. To give you an express scripture for it: Acts xiii., when Peter speaks of his rising again, saith he, at the 33d verse, 'God hath raised up Jesus again.' How doth he prove it? 'As it is written,' saith he, 'in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.' As if all had been shattered, dissolved, and taken in pieces, and he was, as it were, new born; God never saw his Son look like his Son till now; he begets him anew when he raiseth him, bringeth soul and body, and all is knit and made up again.

1. His body and soul came together again. 'He was declared to be the Son of God,' in that he was raised up by the eternal Spirit,—that is, the Godhead. Rom. i. 4, 'Destroy this temple;' he spake it of his body; and then at his resurrection it was verified that he built it up again; so then he was an entire man again, with soul and body united. 2. He is made now a heavenly man in qualities, not only such as the angels have, but far above the angels, and is become a quickening Spirit. 3. God is come again, and never so near him as now, for he hath admitted him to sit at his right hand. 4. He is advanced above all principalities and powers, 1 Pet. iii. 22; yea, 'far above all principalities and powers,' Eph. i. 21. And let us see the same place that spake of his abasement, that 'he was made a little lower than the angels,' to give testimony of his glory; we see him 'crowned with glory and honour,' Heb. ii. And in heaven he sits as a Head and Redeemer, to draw all men to him in all times and ages to come, until he is complete in respect of his body, which is his fulness.

Thus you see, my brethren, how all is made up, when all was shattered, and all broken to pieces, by the shattering of Christ himself; God, and the condition of angels, and the nature of man, in a sense, all being as it were

dissolved, although the union with the Godhead was kept.—So you see now this third interpretation made good, that there is a gathering together again, when all in earth and all in heaven were shattered, in and through Christ.

There is a fourth interpretation, a fourth signification rather, to make up all complete. I shall give it you in a word; for it is a thing cast in by Christ, and therefore I will not insist upon it. I told you this, that he would restore all things to the first original,—I laid open that, when I expounded the words, I remember, at first. And, therefore, many translators read it *instaurare*, to restore all things, which is reserved, as the complement of all, in the fulness of time; and others, though they do not reject it, yet they say it is not the full meaning of the words, but it falleth short.

Well, my brethren, what doth this hold forth to us? You see all is in Christ's person; here are angels and men made a body to him. Well, take all things in heaven and in earth, all creatures else, and they shall all be restored to him; and when that is done, there is all God's full plot, all that was in his heart toward Christ, and us, and the whole creation. There is a time a-coming wherein the creatures shall be restored, all things in heaven and in earth, to their first original, and a more glorious condition, in and through Christ. It is a thing indeed that cometh in by accident; it was but cast into his bargain: he came to gather together men and angels; but yet this is cast together into the bargain.

To open this unto you a little. Man falleth. With his fall what should have fallen? The world should have fallen about his ears; as traitors' houses, you know, should be pulled down and made a jakes. What doth Jesus Christ? He buyeth the world of his Father. I will pay for it, saith he, and will have it into the bargain. He payeth for wicked men that live in the world; therefore it is said they deny the Lord that bought them: that is the meaning of that, 2 Pet. ii. 1. He buyeth wicked men and all the world, at one lump, of God. In the meantime he upholdeth it. It was said of David, Christ's type, Ps. lxxv. 3, 'The earth is dissolved, and the inhabitants thereof; I bear up the pillars of it:' and Christ 'upholdeth all things,' so saith the text, Heb. i. 3, 'by the word of his power;' it is spoken of Christ. And, my brethren, when he hath governed the world, and made it serve, though indirectly, that all works together for good; though wicked men have it directly, and the devils they carry the world away with them, and have done since the creation, but they shall not do so always; there is a time a-coming wherein all things in heaven and in earth shall be restored to their first condition, to a glorious condition, in and through Christ.

Read but Rom. viii. 19–21. There the Apostle is express for it: 'For the earnest expectation of the creature,' saith he, 'waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.' And delivered, saith he, they shall be, if not before the day of judgment, yet certainly while the day of judgment lasteth, which will be a long day, while Christ will be upon earth and judge angels and men. As the first Adam did bring them all into bondage by reason of sin,—for as all was created for him, so most justly the whole frame and fabric of what was made for him was subjected to bondage by reason of his sin, and would have fallen to nothing had not Christ upheld it,—so the second Adam shall restore all unto

a liberty; and this, in Acts iii. 21, is called 'the restitution of all things,'—not of angels and men only, but of all things.* It was meet that Christ, having taken the nature of man,—that is, the sum of all things,—that therefore all things should have some benefit thereby in their several kinds and capacities, and be in their kind gathered and restored according to their capacity; and when this shall be done, then God's design of *gathering* is fully accomplished. And though the time was full in respect of the centre of it when Christ came; and therefore it is said that in the fulness of time he might gather all, in the text; yet the fulness of time in the circumference is yet to come, and is then when we shall be gathered to Christ, as, in 2 Thess. ii. 1, the time of the resurrection and judgment is called.

And, my brethren, it became Christ thus, into the bargain, to restore all things in heaven and in earth. He created all things, therefore it is fit he should restore all things; they were all created by him and for him. The first Adam lost them, so saith Rom. viii.; but they were subjected under hope of a second Adam, that should come and restore them.

So now I shewed you the splendour of the universal Church out of Rev. v., and we will add the creatures to them, at that general assembly at the last day. I shewed you that all things on earth will meet then, and the angels will meet then; a representation of it you have there, though I will not say it is the full intendment of the place, yet it will hold forth much unto us. Read over Rev. v. 9–13, you shall see all things brought into Christ's presence. First, you have men, 'all things on earth,' ver. 9. 'They sung a new song, saying, Worthy art thou 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.' Here is all on earth gathered together, as I shewed you before. 'And I beheld,' saith he, ver. 11, 'and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne,' (here angels come in too,) 'saying, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power,' &c. Here you see God hath gathered both angels and men together; they both come in. Well, now there is but the creatures wanting. Read the next verse, 'And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' Because not only angels and men are thus gathered in one unto him, but all the creatures shall be restored; every creature that is in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth, they all afford and administer matter of glory to man to praise God.—My brethren, now you see the sum of *gathering all in Christ*.

A MEDITATION OR TWO.

First, View and contemplate, with admiration and astonishment, the glory and splendour of Christ and his universal Church, to move your hearts to seek to be one thereof, and not left out of this number and gathering up of all things. You have the representation of this Church universal, during this world, in Rev. v. And, chap. vii., you have, first, the Church of men—four beasts, and four-and-twenty elders, next the throne—falling down and worshipping him that is on the throne, and the Lamb. 'Thou hast redeemed us,' say they—there are all things on earth—'out of every kindred, tongue, nation, and people,' chap. v. 9. Secondly, you have a round of all in heaven; they come in too, ver. 11, 12, 'And I beheld, and I heard the

* And unto this doth Bishop Davenant, as divers others, extend this word, because of the word *πάντα*, speaking of things; and not *πάντας*, speaking of persons only.

voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' You have the like, chap. vii. 9-11. Then, thirdly, you have a ring of all the creatures that are round about both angels and men, that afford matter of praise unto God for his creating them, chap. v. 13, 14. This is the scheme and representations, as in this world. Oh, but what will it be at the great day, when Christ will come in his own and his Father's glory, with all his holy angels,—when Christ, that bath all things in his person, shall appear in his fulness ! And all the holy angels, and saints of the sons of men that have been existent from the beginning of the world to that day, and not one wanting, but that Christ will raise it up at the last day ; and then when all these shall go to heaven, and be ever together, when God shall have all his sons about him, and his eldest Son in the midst of them, then he will bring forth all his treasures of glory, that shall last, and not be spent to all eternity.

Secondly, Make sure to be one of this great assembly ; let men flock unto and get into Christ by clusters ; Gen. xlix. 10, 'To him shall the gathering of the people be.' Jesus Christ setteth up his standard ; come into Jesus Christ, not to be as Judas, who fell short by iniquity from this lot. It is a fatal saying of Peter's to Simon Magus, 'Thou hast no part nor portion in this matter ;' that so innumerable a company should be gathered under this one Head, and that thou shouldest be shut out. I have but further, to move you to it, two things out of the text : you must be gathered one way, either to Christ or Satan ; you must fall either to Christ's or the devil's allotment and share. As Christ is the head of all that shall be saved, Eph. i. 22, so the devil is the head of all the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2. And as Christ is the head of the angels, though he be not of the same nature with them, so is the devil of men ; and at the end of the world, when Christ shall have taken out all these his own, all the rest shall be cast into the fire prepared for the devil and his angels. The old expression in the Old Testament was, that men were gathered to their fathers ; the wicked unto *catus gigantum*—unto the company of the giants, those wicked ones before the flood, from whom hell hath its denomination, as the first inhabitants of it, in Prov. xxi. 16. So the language of the New is, to be gathered to the devil and his angels, to the fire prepared for them.

Obs.—I will give you but one observation, and so I will end. The observation is this,—it is from this same gathering together again,—That God, to shew forth his glory, and his skill, and his grace the more, goeth over his works again the second time, spoils them, shatters them in pieces, and then makes them better than ever. This is his manner. Shattered, you see, are all things in heaven and in earth ; here is his glory now to make them up again. This makes his glory illustrious, and his work illustrious. To give you an instance or two, and then to make a little use of it, and so conclude—

God created man according to his image, you know, at first, (and certainly had you lived with Adam, you would not have known how you could have been happier.) A glorious creature he was ; he had the image of God drawn upon him, he was God's herald, he had his arms upon his breast. On a sudden, after God had drawn this picture, he dasheth it, breaketh it in pieces, strikes out all he had done. What was the reason of this ? He meaneth to make it up better ; he meaneth to frame upon man the image of Christ, and

make him like unto him. 'You bore the image of the earthly, but I will make a better image for you ; you shall bear the image of the heavenly, you shall be changed from glory to glory.' Thus he goes over his work again, after he had spoiled the first.

So, likewise, he createth man at first immortal ; there was a possibility he should die, but by the providence of God he should not have died. What doth God ? He takes and divides soul and body, and flings the body into the grave, there to rot. What is his end in this ? He will raise it up a spiritual body, more glorious ten thousand times than it was at first. What saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 46 ? First, saith he, that which is natural, and then that which is spiritual.

Go, take his chosen people, the Jews ; they were the only nation, his darling ; theirs were the oracles of God, the promises, the covenant, and they were all in all with him for many thousand years. Why ? He scatters them, breaks them all in pieces ; the ten tribes he carrieth captive away long before the two tribes, and then the two tribes. And when he had thus scattered them all, what is his promise ? Isa. xi. 11, 12, 'It shall come to pass,' saith the text, 'that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people. And he shall gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.' He will gather them together in one again. What saith the Apostle, Rom. xi. 11 ? 'Have they stumbled,' saith he, 'that they should fall ?' Or, as the prophet Jeremiah expresseth it,—we may allude to it, if it be not the meaning of the place,—chap. viii. 4, 'Shall they fall, and not rise ?' He compareth the casting off of the Jews but to a stumbling, it was no more ; yet it was the greatest stumble that ever was, for they stumbled upon the Rock, Christ : they crucified him, and yet God calls it but a stumbling ; but it was a stumbling of a long stride, for it was sixteen hundred years. But, shall they stumble, saith he, that they shall fall ? No, he will recover them again. Shall they fall, and not rise ? Yes, and their rising shall be 'life from the dead,' as it followeth, ver. 15. In Ezek. xxxvii. 3, God compareth them to dry bones : 'Can these dry bones live ?' saith he. Their hope was gone, all was gone. 'Behold,' saith he, ver. 5, 'I will cause breath to enter into these bones, and they shall live.' He comes over them the second time, and makes all these bones come together, and flesh comes upon them, and they shall live, and he will never cast them off again. Compare but Rom. xi. 26, the apostle quoteth but one Scripture to prove the calling of the Jews there ; it is out of Isa. lix. 20. Read but that chapter, and you shall find that when they are once called, he will never cast them off again ; but their seed's seed shall remain for ever. And, Isa. lxv. 17, he saith that the former heaven and earth shall no more be remembered, nor come into mind.

This, my brethren, is the manner of God. I should give you the reason of it, but I must pass on. I will conclude with a short use. You see here how all mankind ran into a confusion ; here is a shattering in pieces of heaven and earth, and God gathered up all again. Fear not God's shattering nor breaking things in pieces. You think our kingdom now is running into confusion—confusion in opinions ; the saints are divided, one runs one way, and another runneth another ; one holdeth one opinion, and another holdeth another. My brethren, although the revealed will of God is that they should all agree, yet, notwithstanding all this scattering and division, God will in the end bring forth a glorious gathering together in one. If he pull down the tabernacle set up, and the frame and form of it, he will set up a better. If he pull down the temple, it is in three days to build it up again,

and make it better, as Christ's body was when he rose again. Never fear, I say, God's shattering things, God's unbuilding.

To give you an instance. God set up a glorious church in the primitive times, and it was according to the pattern. What doth he do? He sendeth Antichrist into the world, and he pulls it down and defiles all the worship of God; there is a falling away to be, saith he,—so he calls it, 2 Thess. ii. 3,—both in worship and doctrine. And what hath God done? He hath reasonably well built it up again, recovered this temple out of the hands of Antichrist; he had once all nations following him, as you have it, Rev. xiii. 4, 7. Why, ere Christ hath done, all nations shall worship him; he had lost them all, he gathers all again. Fear not his scattering then.

There was a reformation made when first we came out of Popery. My brethren, what is imperfect God will pull down certainly; he will scatter you, he will melt you: and what is his end? To fetch out the dross, and when he hath done, you shall have a purer reformation come out of all. This is his manner. Fear not, I say, therefore, his scattering. And he will never cease till he hath brought the Church, not only to that purity that was in the primitive times, but to a purer. When the whore is burnt and cast off, and the bride cometh to dress herself for the Lamb, as you have it, Rev. xiv. and xviii., the Apostle saith he fell down and worshipped the angel that brought this news. This, saith he, is better than ever I saw, than ever was in his time; he would never have worshipped for it else; nay, he could scarce be brought to believe it, the angel was fain to say, 'These are the true sayings of God.' Thus, when God goeth to break all, he meaneth to mend all, and he will never cease till he hath brought the Church to the full stature of a perfect man in Christ. Fear not confusions, therefore, for the issue of them will be a closing in the end; it will be a gathering together of all again in one.

Again, after the reformation, the Church is to get power against Antichrist, and against all his adherents. The witnesses, saith he, shall have power to do thus and thus, Rev. xi. Yea, but after that power, when they have gotten it and carried it as you think they shall do, there will be an unbuilding, a scattering of the power of the holy people; so it is expressed, Dan. xii. 7. He speaks there of these latter times. Fear it not, for if God pull down one temple, he will set up the Holy of Holiest afterward. And as it followeth in that same 12th of Daniel, 'Blessed are those that come to those days;' and thrice blessed indeed are they, for they shall see better times. Fear not therefore God's scattering. What a miserable confusion was there when man fell! All was scattered; man divided from God, from angels, from himself. Christ came into the world when all nations were divided, men from men, and things on earth from things in heaven. So he will do in the Church; scatter all, that he may make all up again; melt all, that he may mend all. Fear not then his scattering.

I have done, you see, with the design itself which God had. I am now to come to *the time when this great dispensation began*, when God did break up his decrees that had lain hid from everlasting in his breast, and ordered the dispensation and administration of things to his Church; and then I shall have finished the 10th verse.

The text telleth us that he purposed in himself, in or *for* the dispensation of the fulness of time, to gather together all things in him.

Concerning this *time*, first, in general; the meaning is this, that God, that hath made every business under the sun, hath set a time for it. So you have it, Eccles. iii. 1, 'To everything,' saith he, 'there is a season, and a

time to every purpose under the sun.' Here is now a dispensation of the fulness of seasons, (so the word signifieth,) and of the greatest purposes God had, not under the heavens, but before the heavens were, which he purposed in himself from everlasting. 'A time,' saith he, 'there is to be born.' If there be a time to be born, and a time to die, as the second verse saith, there was certainly a fulness of time when Messiah should be born, when all things should be gathered in the person of Christ in one, and when all should be scattered again, and he should die, as I opened before. 'There is a time,' saith he, ver. 3, 'to break down, and a time to build up.' So there is a time when he suffered all the world to lie scattered, and a time when he buildeth them up. The word *dispensation* is a family word, and is taken from rearing or building up a house. 'There is a time,' saith he, ver. 5, 'to cast stones away, and a time to gather stones together.' God let all the stones, both of Jews and Gentiles, lie scattered; but when the set time came he had pity upon those stones, as the expression is, Ps. cii. 14, and gathered them all in one. It was a 'dispensation of the fulness of times.'

I am to open here these three things:—

1. What is meant by *fulness of times*.

2. Why *dispensation of the fulness of times* is added.

3. *In, or for*; for indeed the word rather signifieth *for* the dispensation of times than *in*.

First, For the fulness of times, when this great project of God began to take its birth, as I may so speak. There were some shows of it before, but when the great delivery was, that was when Christ came first into the world, and after his ascension into heaven, then Jews and Gentiles were called, and angels fall down before him and acknowledge him their Head, and all things were gathered together in one. There was, first, a fulness of *times* when this was done; and, secondly, a fulness of *seasons*, for so the word in the original signifieth. It is not only a fulness of time, as you have it, Gal. iv. 4, but it is also a fulness of seasons; for so I say the word signifieth.

First, it was a fulness of *time* for this great work, when Christ came into the world. And why was it a fulness of time? What is meant by fulness of time here?

Then is time said to be full when all ages are run out, that God shall come to turn the glass, and set the lower end upwards, as I may so express it. Or, if you will have it in Gal. iv. 2, 'the time appointed by the Father,' so it is called there; it is called 'the fulness of time' in the fourth verse. There is a time, saith he, that God hath set; so many ages shall run out, and when they are run out, I will turn the glass, and begin a new dispensation and administration of things in the world; I will send my Son. When times appointed by God are run out, then is a fulness of times. I will give you a scripture for that phrase; it is Luke xxi. 24; he saith, 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down, till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;' that is, till the times be expired that God hath given to the Gentiles to enjoy the gospel alone; and when that time is expired, he will call the Jews, and till then Jerusalem shall be trodden down. So that this is the first signification of it, it is till all times be run out that God hath appointed. There is, as you know, the first age of the world, and the latter age of the world. You may justly compare it to your hour-glass, when the former age was expired, when all is run out, and the bottom glass is filled, then God cometh and turneth up a new administration, and beginneth another dispensation.

In the second place, it is not only a fulness of times, but it is a fulness of *seasons*; so the text hath it.

Christ came into the world in the centre of seasons, when the world was ripe, when all things called for him, the condition both of Jew and Gentile; the full time was come, the harvest was ripe, as our Saviour Christ doth express it to his apostles. When Christ came into the world to begin a new administration and dispensation of things, it is called a due time, Rom. v. 6, 'In due time,' or in due season, as the word is, 'Christ died for the ungodly.'

Now, why was it a fulness of time first; and, secondly, why was it a fulness of season?

It was a fulness of time—why? For the world had stayed long for it; they had stayed four thousand years before the Messiah of the world came. Great actions have long delays, so God doth order things in his dispensations; great mercies have long delays; the greatest mercy that ever was had four thousand years after it was promised, and then came the fulness of time.

But why a fulness of season? Why, my brethren, it was a fit season for the Jews, and it was a fit season for the Gentiles, that Christ should come into the world when he did, and that he should stay long before he came.

It was a fit season for the *Jews*; for the Church of God, which was only confined to the Jews, was, as a man, to grow up by degrees; to be a child first, and then to grow up to youth; and when a full age was come, then to receive their inheritance. This is the very reason the Apostle giveth, Gal. iv. 2, 3, which respecteth the Jews; he compareth the Jewish church there, God's first church, to a child, though an heir, but an heir under age. 'This heir,' saith he, 'so long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, but he is under tutors and governors.' He is under the government, under the dispensation of what? Under the elements of the world, under his A B C; for so was Moses' law. The Church of God was an infant, and was to grow up by degrees, first to learn its letters, its A B C; for such, I say, was the ceremonial law, the types of it. And then came David and the prophets, and led them up further; but the Church was not grown to man's estate till Christ came. What followeth then? 'When the fulness of time was come,' ver. 4, 'God sent his Son, made of a woman,' &c. It was fit that the Jewish church, or whoever was a church, it was fit they should for a while be under nonage, and have a dispensation, an economy, a dispensation that was fit for a child; but when they were come up unto man's estate, then the great heir of the world, Christ himself, their elder brother, cometh into the world to bestow their inheritance upon them.

In the second place, it was a fit season in regard of the *Gentiles* too. For, you know, I said it was to gather together all things on earth, not Jews only, but Gentiles, as I have expounded. Now God ordered that Christ should not come into the world till about the time he meant to have the Gentiles called; and there was great reason that he should stay the experiment many thousand years before the Gentiles should be called; he would not have Christ come into the world till he should break up his decrees, till there should be the great birth of his everlasting purposes, that both Jew and Gentile should come in.

When Christ was to come into the world, he was not to stay long for his reward. What was his reward that he bargained for? Not for the Jew only, but also for the Gentile. Isa. xlix. 5, 6; it is driven there, by God the Father, bargainwise. When he saw that he was to die only for the Jew, saith he, ver. 4, 'I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought.'

But what saith God in answer to him at the 6th verse, 'Is it a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel? I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth.' Our Saviour Christ would have complained if he had not had the Gentiles brought in after his death; therefore God ordered his coming into the world then, when he meant to have both Jew and Gentile to be brought in; then should the 'desire of all nations come,' as you know he is called.

And there was a great deal of reason that God should suffer the Gentiles and all the world to lie in sin, long before Christ came, that there might be a fulness of season for his coming. Why? I will give you Scripture reason.

First, would have mankind try all the ways they could for to be saved, and when they had tried all in vain, lo! your physician, saith he; there is he that shall help you. You have it, Acts xvii. 26-29. He speaks expressly to the point. To open the text; he telleth the Athenians there, ver. 26, that God had made of one blood all nations of men, and determined their times and the bounds of their habitation; and he was pleased to set such times wherein the Gentiles should walk in their own ways; he would afford them but the help of nature, 'that they should seek the Lord,' ver. 27, 'if haply they might feel after him,'—find him in his works by groping in the dark,—'though,' saith he, 'he be not far from every one of you.' Let them try all their works of nature, whatever might do them any good; when he saw all these would stand you in no stead, then, saith he, he sendeth his Son into the world. When they had tried all in vain, then there was a fulness of season. 'God now,' saith he, ver. 30, 'commandeth all men everywhere to repent.'

I will back this with another scripture; it is 1 Cor. i. 21. He had left the world, the Gentiles, to their philosophy, (the 'wisdom of the world,' he calleth it, ver. 20,) to find out the way to be saved. Where is the wisdom of this world? You philosophers, where are you? 'God,' saith he, 'hath made foolish the wisdom of this world.' All the light that nature hath, how made he it foolish? 'After that,' saith he, ver. 21, 'the world by wisdom knew not God,'—I will try you, whether by that wisdom I gave you by nature you will come to know me, I will turn nature every way. Mark now, 'After that,' saith he, when through their corrupt wisdom they did abuse that light God gave them, and instead of knowing God, worshipped idols, 'it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe' among the Gentiles; to send Christ, and by the preaching of the gospel to save these poor Gentiles, after they had tried all ways. So that it was the fulness of season every way.

I will but add one scripture more, and so I will leave it. It was fit that all men should corrupt their ways to the full before the Messiah came. As they should try all ways how they could grope after God, and pervert all the wisdom and light God gave them, so to be corrupted to the uttermost; for then the physician comes most seasonable to administer physic, when the disease is at the height. Read but the 14th and the 53d Psalms, and read the last verse of both. The Apostle quoteth both those two psalms in Rom. iii. 14, to shew that all mankind was corrupt. 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt they are, and have done abominable iniquity; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth good, no, not one; their throat is an open sepulchre,' &c. What followeth? 'Oh that the Redeemer would come out of Zion!' That is the last verse of those psalms. When David, by the spirit of prophecy, foresaw that all men should corrupt

their ways, that they were all full of wickedness, and that the world could never be saved of themselves, and that they had tried all sort of ways to help themselves, and all in vain—then, ‘Oh that the Redeemer would come out of Zion!’ Now is the time for the desire of all nations, the Redeemer longed for, to come; he speaks it upon occasion of the universal corruption of all mankind. Here was a fulness of season, when God sent his Son into the world to gather in one both Jew and Gentile.

So now you see what is meant by fulness of time, and by fulness of season. Fulness of time is, when all the times appointed by God were run out, fulfilled. Fulness of season is, when there was the fulness of season for the Jews, that were to be a child grown to age; for the Gentiles, when they had all corrupted their ways, then it was a fit season for the Messiah to come. And that is the *first*.

But, *secondly*, What is meant by *dispensation*; *εἰς οἰκονομίαν*, *in*, or *for*, the dispensation of the fulness of times? The truth is, to read it *for* is more genuine and more natural; and what is the meaning of it? Some interpret it, ‘in the dispensation of times,’—that is, say they, time wisely dispensed. God is the steward of time, and he did wisely dispense it; he gave every age a portion, and in the end brought forth this fulness of time wherein he dispenseth his Son. But I take it, it is not so much meant of the dispensation of times properly taken, of times ordered, although that is a true meaning of it; but it is taken metaphorically—the fulness of time is said to have a dispensation, a new dispensation; which new dispensation is to gather all things in one. The latter days, when Christ came into the world, it should have a new business, a new dispensation; there should be a new administration of those times, to begin from that time and continue to the end of the world.*

We know that *time* is said to do that which is done in time; as, for example, you find in Scripture a day is said to *bring forth*, so here it is said that *time doth dispense*. He compareth it to a steward; as in other places he compareth it to a womb, or a mother, so here to a steward that hath a dispensation. It is not meant of *dispensatio temporis*, so much as *dispensatio rerum*, of things in time. In the 6th verse of the Epistle of Jude, the great day of the Lord is expressed thus—‘The judgment of the great day.’ Why, the great day is not the judge. It is called the judgment of that day because it is done in that day. So here, ‘the dispensation of the fulness of time’ is not the dispensation of time properly taken, the ordering of time, though that is included; but it is meant the *business of time*. So that the scope is this—that God did appoint that the latter days, which is meant the fulness of time, from the time that Christ was born, and so on; he intended this to be the dispensation, the business, the administration of the world from that time, to gather all together in one.

It agreeth with what the Apostle saith, Heb. i. 1. ‘God,’ saith he, did ‘at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak in times past unto our fathers by the prophets; he hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.’ There is a new business, a new dispensation of things belonging to the fulness of time, to the latter days, from the time of Christ. He beginneth to alter the dispensation of himself to his Church; he turneth the Jewish church into Christian, out of one nation to another; he turneth all the types of the law into his Son, for his Son is nothing but the types of the law really expressed. This is now the dispensation of the fulness of time; he makes that the business of the last age, to send his Son into the world, to make

* See Jackson, Book vii. p. 42.

him the head of his Church visible ; whom angels shall acknowledge, whom all things that are in heaven and in earth shall come into, that are his elect, both Jews and Gentiles. This was, saith he, reserved for the fulness of time, to be the business of the latter age. This is the meaning of it.

Obs. 1.—I will come to an observation or two, and so end. You see, my brethren, that there was a fulness of time when Christ came into the world ; the world stayed long first, it stayed four thousand years. Learn this observation from it, *That if you wait for a great mercy, you must have many times and days run out before the fulness of time cometh to have it.* You cannot have a greater instance ; for how long did the world stay for Christ ? Four thousand years, as I said before. Thou art a poor soul that hast waited for Christ long to come into thy heart ; how many years hast thou waited ? The world waited four thousand years to have Christ come into it. It is the greatest mercy thou art capable of to have Christ come into thy heart ; he is well worthy thy waiting for then. It is no argument that he will not come because he stays long ; for should the world have argued, that because he stayed two parts of the three, therefore he would not come at all ? No ; great mercies are long a-coming, for the Messiah was so. The breaking up of God's heart, of the great design, of all the treasures there, you see it was hid in himself from the beginning of the world for so many thousand years. That is the first observation.

Obs. 2.—The second is this, *That God may let men go on in sin long, and give them Christ too, for all that.* You see, God let the world go on in sin, try all ways to help themselves, let all the world corrupt their own ways ; he did it for a long time, and at last in the fulness of time sent his Son. Thou mayest try all ways ; try duties, try what thou canst, how far corrupt nature may go, and God may give thee Christ at last. He did so by the world ; after that by their wisdom they knew not God, he sent his Son, made of a woman. When God hath given thee light, and thou hast tried a thousand ways, thy duties, and this and that, to get Christ, and thou hast set up a ladder to heaven, to get Christ this way and that way,—after thou hast tried all things, he sends Christ into thy heart ; when thy case is desperate, when thy heart is forlorn, then Christ cometh.

Obs. 3.—There is a third observation, that I will but mention ; it is this, *That God is the Lord of all time.* He appointeth the fulness of times.