

AN EXPOSITION

OF THE

SECOND CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

SERMON I

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—VER. 1-10.

THE first seven, or, if you will, ten verses of this chapter are woven so into one piece with what went before in the preceding chapter, that to begin with any division of the parts of this chapter as distinct from the former, were to make that rent worse which already hath been made for many ages, in parting these words from the matter contained in the latter end of the first chapter, viz., in the midst, ere it came to a full joint, and by too hasty a making a second chapter to begin at these words. Let the reader look back, and take notice that these seven verses do continue to make but one entire sentence, though the largest in the book of God, which began at the 18th or 19th verse of the first chapter, and arrive not at any full period until the 8th verse of this chapter.

In the 19th verse of the first chapter, he began to set out in a way of praying for them—to the end that they might be the more apprehensive of

the greatness and necessity of the things he uttered—the exceeding greatness of that power which had already begun, and was engaged to perfect, that salvation which consisted in that riches of glory he had mentioned in the verses before, even according to the working of that mighty power which he had wrought in Christ, in raising him up to glory : as whom God had set up a pattern and prototype of what was to be done in us and for us, until the full accomplishment of our salvation. From thence therefore,—that is, from the 19th verse,—his drift and scope was to make a parallel comparison between what was done in Christ our head, and us his members, that so in Christ's glory, as in a lively pattern and idea already perfected and completed, we might the better view what God had and would do for us, and what a great and glorious salvation was ordained to us, to the praise of his great power and rich grace towards us. Now that first piece of the parallel on Christ's part he hath finished in the four last verses of the first chapter, in which he largely sets forth the power which began to shew itself in Christ's resurrection, and continued to glorify itself in placing him at God's right hand, and then draws to the life that glory of Christ which, as a head to his church, God had bestowed upon him. Which the Apostle having perfected, he proceeds in the first seven verses of this chapter to finish the counterpane or second draught, the antitype, which answereth to this original, that parallel which is on our part, and which concerneth the completing of our salvation, interweaving thereinto a magnifying that rich mercy, great love, and exceeding rich grace of God manifested therein ; to magnify which, as the conclusion in the 7th verse tells us, was God's ultimate design, and the Apostle's chief scope. Now to draw out the particulars wherein these two parallels meet :—

In Christ's exaltation there were three things more eminent. 1. The *terminus à quo*, the state or condition out of which he was raised ; even 'from the dead,' says the 20th verse. 2. The *terminus ad quem*, the opposite sublime state of life and glory he advanced him into ; raised him, and 'made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenlies.' The glory whereof he sets out in the rest of the chapter, 'far above principalities,' &c. ; shewing withal how in all this he was our head, and so a pattern to us, ver. 22. And, 3. the author hereof, God, and the exceeding greatness of his power, which is set out by the infinite distance and disproportion of these two states.

Then, in us and our salvation, which answereth this pattern, there are answerably three things more eminently set out by the Apostle in these first seven verses :—

1. *Terminus à quo*, the state and condition of us all by nature, which God saves and raises us out of ; a state of death, both in sin, and in respect of condemnation to wrath and punishment, the deplorable and inextricable misery of which state he sets out most briefly, exactly, and comprehensively in the three first verses.

2. The salvation itself, and *terminus ad quem* he raiseth us up unto out of this condition, which he sets forth in all the eminent parts and degrees thereof, in three works answering to those wrought in Christ our pattern : he quickens, raiseth, and causeth us to sit together in Christ in heavenly places ; which summarily comprehends the whole of our salvation first and last, and all expressed in the very same words he had used of Christ. This in the fifth and sixth verses.

And, 3. he sets out the author of this to be God, and God alone,—as in that of Christ he had also done,—and in him magnifies, not only the same exceeding greatness of power shewn in this work on us that was shewn

in Christ, which is tacitly implied by the likeness of type and antitype, but further, and more eminently, his rich mercy, his great love, his kindness, and the exceeding riches of grace more illustriously and conspicuously shining therein; and the cause of all, ver. 5, to shew forth the exceeding riches of which, as his great design, was the principal and ultimate end of our great God,—as the 7th verse, which is the conclusion of all, tells us,—that moved him thus to cast the contrivement of bringing us his sons to glory, from out of such a depth of misery and wretchedness, to such a height of glory and blessedness by such several steps. And this is the more general sum and coherence of these words, and of the Apostle's scope therein, which more briefly is to set out and greaten these three things to us:—1. The greatness of that misery we lay in. 2. The greatness of that salvation out of that misery which is ordained unto us. 3. The greatness of that love, mercy, kindness, grace in God, which are the causes of this salvation.

In this long discourse, continued through so many verses of this and the former chapter, the Apostle is enforced to make an *hyperbaton*, a disturbed and disjointed order of speech, wherein one thing thrusts back another that should come next; those things that should, according to usual law of speech, follow near one another, are transposed and set far off; and so he leaves sentences imperfect, which are a long while after made full. For, whereas in the 18th and 19th verses of that first chapter he had thus begun, 'That you may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,' according to the ordinary way of speech he should then have next subjoined, 'and you hath he quickened, who were dead in sins,' &c. Before he arrives at this, he first runs out into a large field of discourse, setting forth the glory of Christ and his relation of headship to his church, and minds not, as it were, what according to the law of speech was next. But when he returns to his first design again, and begins to bring in this other part in this second chapter, which immediately was to have cohered with the 19th and 20th verses, and should make the reddition and parallel complete, 'and you that were dead in sins and trespasses,' he runs out again as largely, in three verses, to paint out that wretched condition in all the causes and effects of it, and to set out also the grace of God, even before he adds that verse, 'you hath he quickened,' which was to govern and complete those words, 'you that were dead,' &c., for the word *quickened* is not in the first verse; insomuch as when he addeth that in ver. 5, he makes an emphatical repetition, 'even when you were dead hath he quickened,' for a supply. Yea, and whereas he had in the beginning of this discourse—so I must call it, rather than one sentence—set himself to magnify the exceeding greatness of God's power, and that attribute only, manifested both in Christ the pattern, and the salvation of us that believe, as the counterpane; and accordingly he should, when he came to this work of God upon us, which answereth to that on Christ, in a correspondency have said, God, that is thus exceeding great in power, hath in like manner out of the like power quickened you that were dead, &c., he quite leaves out here the explicit mention of that attribute, and instead thereof falls to magnify the exceeding riches of mercy and love in God. 'But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved.' And so again at the 7th verse, 'to shew forth the exceeding riches of his grace,' (he mentions not power,) &c.

Now the reason of all this long and disturbed way of discoursing was, 1st, because he was full of matter, and wrapt into things; the Holy Ghost filled and extended his mind to such a vastness, he saw so many things at once, and so far into everything he was to speak of, all which were necessary to be taken in to illustrate each other, that wherever the Holy Ghost broached him, and gave vent to his spirit, the plenty of matter about that particular gushed out abundantly, and *pleno gurgite*; and still new matter coming in, strove to get out before what was next. And yet, 2dly, he was guided therein to do it, to the setting out the matter he would set forth to the greater advantage, which he preferred to the ordinary laws of speech; for hereby you have as many things as were possible crowded up into one period, whereof each was necessary, serving to set forth the other, and all the whole; and that we also might have all that belonged to any one of those heads to be spoken of set together in one view, to give at once a full prospect of each. Thus he first possesseth us with that infinite glory of our Head, CHRIST, and what belonged to him, with an intimation of uniformity and conformity to him; and then he sets out as largely the fulness of misery God raiseth us out of into that glory with Christ; and then enlargeth upon the grace and love in God that raiseth us hereto, loading both with the richest epithets, &c. All which, when set together, do infinitely illustrate and set forth the one the other. And, 3dly, that in this reddition or parallel on our part, he mentions not the power of God, as in the other, but only falls to magnify grace,—besides the more particular account and observation upon it to be given in the due place,—it was because he had shewed the engagement of power sufficiently in the 19th verse, which the reader's mind would therefore carry along with him, and the matter itself necessarily included it; as also to hold forth, that besides this of power, that also of grace, mercy, love, kindness, and all in God, were as deeply engaged. He meets with new attributes that discover themselves and appear in it; and above all, grace and mercy, which was the supreme original cause, and which God's design was to magnify as chief, and as his utmost end, more than and above power, or any other attribute, or all other attributes that are manifested in this work, as that which did set power and all else on work; hereby the more to take their hearts with that which God values in his heart most, the grace and love in himself. And this also, because grace and mercy more eminently appears in that work that is in us, and in the saving us; but power more eminently in that on Christ, as it is in him. Thus artificial is the Apostle to set out his matter to the fullest advantage, when he neglecteth art in speech most.—This in general of the whole seven verses.

THE GENERAL SCOPE OF THE THREE FIRST VERSES.

To begin with his *description of the state of nature* in the three first verses; and therein let me first give you the general scope thereof.

The Apostle is larger in the setting forth the greatness thereof, than he is in those other two heads that follow. And, as in the parallel on Christ's part, he enlargeth most upon the *terminus ad quem*, the glory he was advanced to; on the contrary, in that of ours, he spends most of his discourse upon the *terminus à quo*, the state of death we are raised out of. And his scope and drift therein was double:—

I. To set out the exceeding greatness of power which is put forth in our salvation, and especially in that which is already done for us in our quickening and conversion, as a pawn of what follows. And that is most illustrated and made manifest by the consideration of the difficulties and opposition

from that state we lay in before. Whereas, on the contrary, the greatness of that power shewn in Christ, which hath perfected all in him already, was seen and drawn forth most in the bestowing upon a man crucified in so much weakness, so great a glory, and investing him with so great a power.

Now, to set out the greatness of this power that goes to quicken us, every word in this description of our natural state doth serve :—

1. Not only 'dead,' without any principle of life to raise themselves,—and what a power must go to quicken one that is dead!—but 'dead in sins and trespasses,' in sins of all sorts; dead, and dead again, with 'ten thousand deaths, for every sin is a death; like a man that is not only killed with one stab or mortal wound, but his body is full of thrusts throughout his vitals, a hundred, yea, a thousand stabs. And then—

2. Though dead to that life he is to be raised unto, yet alive to sin, a life that is contrary, and which is habitually strengthened by long custom; for the text says, 'in which we walked.' And this life of sin is first to be taken away, and seeks to the utmost to preserve and defend itself. And—

3. There are, besides, three great hindrances, over and above this, to be overcome, in the doing of which the greatness of the power of God is shewn. Here is—

First, A correspondency with the world, which all men by nature hold: they are carried with the multitude and crowd of all other men; they 'walk according to the course of this world,'—and there are many engagements to the men of this world,—that gang and stream of unregenerate men, that carry and hurry men with them, as men in a crowd are carried, and assimilate men to themselves; all these, saith he, do environ and besiege all in a man. And in that respect, to fetch a man out from his natural condition is as much as to fetch a man out of the Great Turk's court, out of his dominions, in a hostile way; therefore it is made a mighty business to overcome the world. We are therefore said to be 'delivered' as by strong hand—as the word implies, Gal. i. 4—'out of this present evil world.' The good opinion of men, correspondency with friends, honour from men,—'How can ye believe,' saith Christ, 'which receive honour one of another,' John v. 44,—how strong cords are these! how do these fetter and entangle us! The stream of most of the world is against us, and then the weeds of correspondency hang about us. Therefore, to overcome the world is made the effect of an almighty power, in 1 John iv. 4: 'Stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world;' otherwise we should never have come out of it, or from among them. But then—

Secondly, There is a more potent adversary, stronger than flesh and blood, and than all these—the devil, to whom God hath given man up by nature; that 'strong man,' as he is called, Matt. xii. 29, as I opened it before on the 18th verse of the former chapter; he will never yield a man up. And he is a prince of a greater army, whereof the least is stronger than all men; and he hath power, and hath a permissive commission from God. He is the spirit that worketh effectually in the children of disobedience; he fails not in his working, men are taken captive at his will. And to fetch a man out of his kingdom, and to overcome and bind this strong man, this is yet more. 'In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, that works effectually,' &c.

Well, but, thirdly, here is yet a worse, and nearer, and stronger enemy than either of both these—those of a man's own household, his own lusts: 'in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.' And there are as many of these lusts as there be creatures, or several motions

of our immortal spirits within us. And these are natural, yea, our nature, as the next words tell us; 'by nature,' &c. To alter the whole course and frame of nature, how hard is it! To part with any one lust, how difficult! Much more to crack all these heart-strings, to pluck up all these roots! You may as soon turn the sun in his course, change a leopard, or turn a blackamoor, that yet hath but his blackness in his skin; but these lusts possess all the inwards. They are lusts bred and seated in the flesh,—and what power shall fetch that out of the bones, as the proverb is?—yea, in the mind, which is yet more inward; yea, they possess the whole man, and all that is in him, flesh, and mind, and will, and all; 'wills of the flesh and of the mind.' And then, besides all these, whoever delivers you hath, or must have had, the wrath of the great God to overcome and satisfy, which is more than all this; for you are 'children of wrath,' &c. And thus all this description here comes in to illustrate the greatness of that power towards us spoken of, ver. 19.

II. Observe his scope in reference to what follows, to illustrate the greatness of God's grace in raising us up to the condition we have in Christ, and to be made conformable to him; which he doth by way of paralleling what we were before by nature, and after in Christ, together; and you may observe how exactly one answereth to the other. You may remember,—and indeed all may read it in the words themselves,—you that heard it opened, how that our Lord and Saviour Christ, in ver. 20–23 of the first chapter, is set forth as a head, raised up to a glorious kingdom, set at the right hand of God in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but in that which is to come; and that he hath all things put under his feet; that he is the head of his church, and filleth his body. And to be a member of this head, a part of this church, doth the Apostle insinuate, is that condition you are raised up to. Now to set forth this, mark how artificially he winds in, by way of opposition, what a miserable condition they were in before. Is Christ your head now, saith he, and hath God raised him up on purpose so to be? Are you set in heaven with him? Why, Satan was your head before, or at least your king. And he describeth Satan in terms parallelly opposite to what he had said of Christ; for it is evident that he doth allude, in setting forth their natural condition in subjection to Satan, to what he had said before of the advancement of Christ their head, and then their advancement to Christ, that is such a head as he had described. And let us but parallel a little the description of both, that we may see the difference of this change in this respect:—

First, He describeth Christ as a Head, that had principality and power under him, whereby is meant the angels good and bad. But before you were in Christ, whilst in your natural condition, whom were you under then? Saith he, under Satan, instead of Christ: for though the devil was not a head to you,—he doth not indeed call him so, because that is too natural a relation to be given to him, that is proper to Christ,—yet he was ἀρχὴν, a prince to you; and, saith he, he is the 'prince of the power'—he useth the same word as he did of Christ, Christ was over 'principality and power'—'of the air.' And what means he by 'prince of the power of the air?' That great devil, that prince, that hath all devils under him; all which devils he calleth *power*, in the singular number, because they all do service unto him; and as they went out as one man, so they go on with one power. They are called, Eph. vi., principalities and powers.

And, secondly, if you look up to him, that is, Jesus Christ, your Head,

‘above all principality and power,’ he is set ‘in heavenly places’ also; so saith ver. 20 of chap. i. But where is the seat of the devil’s power, that was your prince before? It is but in the air; it is brought in on purpose—it is nowhere almost in the Scripture brought in but here—to make up the parallel, by way of contrary illustration. He that is your head now, saith he, he is one that sits in heavenly places, whither you yourselves shall come, for he sits there in your stead; here is your advancement now. But the devil, his power is in the air, and so is nearer to hurt you; and yet but in this air, the lower heaven, and therefore all the happiness you could have had under him was but in things aerial, in things worldly, no higher; and when you had enjoyed a while this his dominion, this air to breathe in, then you must have gone to the fire with this devil and his angels. This was your condition by nature. How great a change is there in this respect!

Thirdly, Jesus Christ being your Head, you are his body now, and so he doth fill you. So ver. 23, ‘The church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.’ And as Jesus Christ is ordained thus to fill you with all grace and glory in this estate, so then, when you were in your unregenerate condition, the devil filled you; for he is the spirit that worketh effectually in the children of disobedience,—the phrase comes in likewise on purpose,—he filled their hearts, as Christ doth the other. ‘Why hath Satan filled thine heart?’ It was, you know, the expression of Peter to Ananias, and it is all one with what is here said, he ‘works effectually’ in them, for it is done by filling them with himself. And withal he insinuateth this: Did the devil work effectually in you then? Then how effectual and mighty was the working of our Lord and Saviour Christ, when he raised you up from this death and condition, and plucked you out of the snare of Satan, that took you captive at his will.

So much now for the second thing that these words have an aspect to, as they refer to the 19th verse of the first chapter.

Then these words, which lay forth our unworthiness and our vileness, come in also on purpose to illustrate the fountain of all the mercy we receive, and that is the free grace of God in Christ. He beginneth it with a *but*. ‘But God, who is rich in mercy.’ That ever God, saith he, should contrive such ways of mercy, for creatures so vile, so miserable! And what infinite mercy was it to pluck such men out of that condition! Yea, he is so full of it, you see, he had run out a large discourse before without interruption, and he was long before he recovered himself; but when once he begins to talk of the grace of God, there he breaks off, sentence after sentence, to bring that in abruptly. After he had long discoursed of the grace of God in Christ in the 19th verse, and of man’s misery here in these 1st, 2d, and 3d verses, when he makes a reddition of the grace of God towards us, he brings it in, ‘But God, who is rich in mercy.’ Well, he should have gone on here, but he brings this in abruptly, ‘by grace you are saved.’ And then he goes on again, ‘and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.’ And then he comes in with the grace of God again, and again, a fourth time. So that the great scope of laying open the miserable condition of man by nature, was to set off the rich mercy, the grace, the love of God, in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And let me add this, to make up this complete: having mentioned free grace as the fountain of all, when he had thus humbled them, laid them in the dust, he then brings upon them the weight of all the benefits in the former chapter. You that were thus dead in sins and trespasses, you were chosen in Christ before the world was, unto adoption, &c. And man’s misery here by nature

comes in to illustrate all those benefits too. Election to holiness, ver. 4; predestination to adoption and glory, ver. 5; the fountain of all these is said to be the glory of his grace, ver. 6; then redemption and forgiveness, ver. 7; then effectual calling, ver. 8; the power of it, ver. 19; then heaven and glory, ver. 11; the riches of which he speaks of, ver. 18; the earnest of that heaven, the Spirit, ver. 14; and then, last of all, Christ the Head. And for whom, saith he, is all this? For you that were 'dead in sins and trespasses,' and who before 'walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.' And thus, I say, mentioning the free grace of God, he brings upon them the weight of all the benefits in the former chapter, to break their hearts in pieces. And this is the wonderful artifice of the Holy Ghost in the Apostle, in the order and station of these words, which are the centre both of all before and of all that follow after; for having described all these benefits, see how these words do by a contrary parallel answer to them too. He told them first, that they had a being in Christ; for so when I opened the words in the 4th verse, I shewed that was the meaning of it. We were in Christ, had a being in him. 'Ye are in Christ Jesus,' saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. i. 30. And their being was to holiness, they were ordained to it when first they were ordained to being. But now, on the contrary, saith he, your very being is a death in sin, it is the *esse*, it is the constitution of it. However, spiritual death is that being which a man hath being fallen.

Again, answerable to adoption of children, which you are predestinated unto, saith he in these words, you were before 'children of disobedience.' Instead of having an inheritance in glory, saith he, you were 'children of wrath,' and that by nature, and that was all your portion. And instead of having the Holy Spirit, the earnest of that inheritance, you had a spirit that wrought effectually in you, the earnest of hell, the devil himself, and his wicked angels. This was your condition before, and thus it answereth the benefits before. And you were so fast shut up in this condition, that no power in heaven and earth, but only that of God's, and of Christ's, could deliver you. You were internally dead, and how could dead men rise? externally envired with the power of the world, of hell, and of your own lusts.

This, my brethren, is the coherence of these words, which I thought meet in the entrance of this exercise to be more large in, especially because of so artificial an elegance which certainly the Holy Ghost aimeth at here. And so I shall come to the particular application of them.

The misery of man by nature, as I said, is the sum of these three first verses; and it is his natural condition that is here laid open, as the closure of all shews: 'and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.' And so is all this intended to shew what we are by nature, and whilst we are in that natural condition. It is set out to us, first, in respect of sins; they, you know, are mentioned; 'sins and trespasses.' Secondly, punishment; that is mentioned in the term here expressly, and both included in the word, 'dead in sins.' For though he mentioneth the 'course of the world,' and the 'prince of the power of the air,' and the like, yet being 'dead in sins' is the eminent thing, the depth of our misery; therefore in the reddition, ver. 5, he only mentioneth that again, 'even when we were dead in sins, hath he quickened us.' The mercy lay in that respect. You may divide the words in particular thus:—

I. *Here is their internal, habitual estate and condition*, or the essential constitution thereof, as I may so call it; they are 'dead in sins and trespasses.' You know that death and life are two several states and conditions of man-

kind ; when a man is dead, he is put eternally into another state and condition than he was in whilst living.

II. *Here is the outward constant course of these men in their conversation,* that was the concomitant of that state. And that that is intended in the 2d and 3d verses is clear by the very words, for he calleth the one 'walking,' and the other, 'having our conversation.' Therefore I distinguish it as the Apostle himself doth. Now that is aggravated by three things, as the causes of their evil conversation :—

1. There is the exemplary cause, which is the weakest, and yet it is a cause. 'In which we walked'—namely, in sins, for of that he had spoken before—'according to the course of this world.'

2. There is the outward efficient cause,—that is, Satan ; 'the prince of the power of the air.'

3. There is the inward efficient moving cause—their own lusts ; 'fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,' which you have in the 3d verse. And therein you see how exact he is. He describeth both the corruption of man's nature under one general term, as it is called flesh ; 'had our conversation,' saith he, 'in the lusts of the flesh,'—that is, of corrupt nature, taken in the general, with all the lusts of it. But then he doth subdivide them : there is 'the desires of the flesh,' which are the sensual lusts of the body ; and there is 'the lusts of the mind.' Which two do part all the wickedness of man's nature, they divide it between them.

III. And then, lastly, *Here is the punishment that is due to each of these sins,* the wrath of God ; 'children of wrath by nature.' And this, saith he, is the general common condition ; you were so that are Gentiles, and we were thus that are Jews : he turns it from one to the other, and there is no difference between either the one or the other ; this is our condition, we were children of wrath as well as you, and you were children of wrath as well as we were.—And so you have the division of the words.

I now come to open the first, *their inward state and condition ; 'dead in sins.'*

I will not mention many scriptures to prove it to you ; you know enough already. 'Let the dead bury the dead,' &c. I shall only instance in that one text, Col. ii. 13. And, as I observed long ago, in opening the first chapter, the epistle to the Colossians is to the epistle to the Ephesians like Mark to Matthew, almost in all sort of passages. He had said in this second chapter to the Ephesians, 'Ye are dead ;' he did not say, 'in sins and trespasses,' for *ἐν* in the original is not in ; and it might have borne 'dead to sins and trespasses,' as some have been mistaken in it. But now compare it with Col. ii. 13. There you have the particle *ἐν* in the Greek expressly, 'dead in sins.' And so the one, as in other passages so in this, explains the other.

Now, in opening and handling this, I shall not run out into a large commonplace—for that is not to expound—of what are the symptoms of spiritual death ; you have had them in books printed : stiffness, and coldness, and senselessness, and the like. I shall not enlarge upon these at all, but I shall speak as an interpreter ; and therein, because it is the most comprehensive expression, I must therefore open what the Apostle intendeth, what is comprehended in this word *death*.

And, first, let me observe this upon it, that though there are many other expressions which man's natural estate is set forth by, yet, as I said before, there was no expression so full for the Apostle's purpose, speaking of the power that raised up Jesus from death to life, and so raised us up too, to follow the metaphor ; so there was no expression would so fully have laid open

the misery of man by nature, the intrinsical state and condition of man, in a comprehensive way, all sorts of ways, as this. You know it was the first original curse, that whereby God expressed all the curse, 'In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die the death.' And therefore here, you see, when Paul would express himself to the uttermost,—as for certain he sets himself to do,—he saith, you are 'dead in sins and trespasses.' And though other expressions might in some respect manifest and illustrate the grace of God more; as to call a man an enemy to God, as the Apostle elsewhere doth, which illustrateth the grace of God in respect of pardon, which to be dead in sins and trespasses, or condemned to death for sin, also doth; yet to say a man is dead in them, that expresseth more our misery, and our inextricable condition, and our inability to get out of it. The truth is, my brethren, death, take it in a natural way, is the sum of all evil, for it is the deprivation of all good; so take it in a spiritual way, it is comprehensively all evil whatsoever. The utmost misery that can befall a man, as he is a natural man, what is it? It is to die. 'A living dog,' saith Solomon, 'is better than a dead lion.' A worm is better than a man when he is dead, take him as he is a man, if he should not rise again. Death strips him of all excellencies proper to a man, makes him worse than a stock or stone; for when he is dead he stinketh, which a stock or stone doth not. Therefore, the Apostle, to set forth our spiritual misery, takes that expression rather than any other. And though it is but a similitude, yet know this for a general truth and a certain rule, that all similitudes taken from outward, bodily, or worldly things, and assumed up to spiritual, the spiritual are the realities, and the other are but the shadows. Run over all the course of spiritual things that belong to that other world, and all outward things that they are compared unto, they are but the shadows of them. As Christ is said to be a vine, but a 'true vine,' the other is but a shadow: so this being a spiritual death, bodily death and all the evils thereof are but the shadows of it. That, look as when we say of beer or wine that hath lost its spirits that it is dead, yet this is but a poor death in comparison of seeing a man die, or a prince: so, to say a man is dead, speaking of his body, it is even to say dead drink, in comparison of a dead man, if you will compare it with this death, the death of his soul in sins and trespasses. The death of a man is infinitely more than the death of a beast, the death of a king more than the death of other men,—we speak now in a natural way,—but the death of the soul of a man in sin is infinitely more than the death of the body, by how much the more the soul transcendeth the body, and our spiritual condition transcendeth our natural life; which it doth as far as a man—taken in himself, or take the body simply considered, without relation at all to the soul—doth transcend a beast. And so now that is the reason why the Apostle singletly out this expression of 'death' to express our natural condition by, rather than any other whatsoever.

Now, in the second place, to describe this death, though but in the general first, and so come to particulars, which the Apostle intendeth—

This death of the soul is not a *physical death*. The death of the body is a physical, natural death; for when the body dies, all the actions of life that were once in it cease: but all actions of life, of all sorts of life, do not cease in the soul when it is thus dead in sin; for if so, the soul should lose understanding, will, and affections, and all, which is impossible it should, for then it must cease to be a soul. It is not therefore a physical death that the Arminians' objections tend to. Say they, a man is not wholly dead. Why? Because he understandeth and he willeth. It is true it is not a physical

death, but it is a moral death,—that is, in respect of the holy actings and well-being of the soul. That, look as the soul, while it is in the body, is the well-being of the body, the body hath all its excellencies from the soul; so there is answerably in the soul of man, according to the original constitution of that first making, a soul of that soul, and a life springing from it: there was the Spirit of God; and therefore they are said in the 19th verse of the Epistle of Jude to be without the Spirit. There was the image of God, there was the life of God; it is the very expression the Apostle useth, Eph. iv. 18. It is the summary of spiritual life. It is called the life of God. Now what is it makes God live a happy life? He liveth in himself. Such was the life of the soul; it was to live in that God that liveth in himself, to live that life that he liveth. It is therefore called the life of God, because it lay in the union of the soul with God, which was wrought by the Holy Ghost. And also as, you know, in the body there are spirits that unite; so there is an image of God, holiness and righteousness, by which God in innocency was united to the spirit of a man, without which in the state of grace he would not be united to a man, nor would dwell in him; that as the kingdom of God is said to consist in righteousness and peace, so this life of God consisteth in joy, in righteousness, in peace, and in happiness, as in God himself. And all the actions that a man performeth, having this principle of life, tend to communion with God and enjoyment of him, and therefore are actions of life. Now then, this death is the separation of the soul from God, and the extinction of this image of God in a man, and cutting off all sorts of influence from God to him, either of comfort or of holiness, further than by the creatures. God may comfort him by the creatures, but he doth no way comfort him by himself. And therefore, if you mark it, the Apostle, to shew the kind of this death, what it is, saith it is a death in sin. And what is sin? The death of the soul, because it cuts a man off from that principle of life; that as natural death is the separation of the soul and body, and the extinction of the vital spirits, so, saith the prophet Isaiah, chap. lix. 2, ‘Your sins have separated between God and you;’ and hence they come to be ‘strangers from the life of God,’ as it is, Eph. iv. 18.

Now, God is not driven, nor was not driven out of man’s soul by sin in a natural way, as the soul is out of our bodies. When the body hath a wound, and is struck to the heart, the soul goes out, like as the spider doth when the cobweb is broke; neither doth the soul go voluntarily out at any time, but in a natural way, when bodily spirits fail: but God goes out by virtue of his own law. ‘The strength of sin is the law,’ as the Apostle saith, 1 Cor. xv. 56. And therefore, when man stood upon the legal covenant only, as soon as ever he broke the least of God’s laws, by God’s law he died, and God was gone; but the strength of grace is the gospel, so that now, though we sin, being in the state of grace, yet God goes not away; his Spirit may be grieved, but departeth not. The Apostle, explaining this death, saith we are ‘dead in sins.’ When he had spoken of our pattern, Christ, chap. i. 19, 20, and the power that wrought in raising him up, he saith, it was a raising up his body from corporal death; but yours was not so, saith he, your death was spiritual, it was a death in sin. Only this you may observe by the way, that even the bodily actions and sufferings of our Lord and Saviour Christ prevail to spiritual effects; the very raising of his body, there was a virtue in it to raise souls out of a death in sin. It is strange that a bodily action or passion, or whatever else, should have a spiritual virtue in it, there being such an infinite disproportion between that which

is bodily and that which is spiritual. What is the reason? Because this man, Christ Jesus, was a spiritual man, and though he took flesh and blood and a body to save us, yet that spiritual body of his in heaven was ordained to him; the second Adam, saith the Apostle, was made 'a quickening spirit.' And therefore this body that was thus spiritual, of so transcending a glory, as it must needs be by the Second Person dwelling in it, advancing it above the rank of all reasonable creatures, as a man's soul would the body of a beast if it were put into it: hence all his actions have a spiritual virtue in them; the raising his body up will raise you up from the death of sin. But that by the way.

Now to explain more particularly this death. It is, you see, a death in sin. Sin hath two evils in it: there is the guilt of sin, and there is the power of sin; and in both these respects a man in his natural estate is dead in sin.

1. He is dead in respect of the *guilt* of every sin he committeth; as a condemned man that is guilty of murder, or the like, we say he is a dead man. You shall find in Heb. ix. 14,—it is a pertinent place to this purpose,—that the blood of Christ is said to 'purge our consciences from dead works.' Every sin is a *dead work*, and here it is spoken evidently in respect of sin, because he speaks of purging the conscience; now the conscience is that which is the subject of all the guilt of sin. And therefore now in Hos. xiii. I you have an excellent place for it: 'When Ephraim offended in Baal, he died,' saith he,—that is, from that time came upon him a sentence of death and condemnation; the state stood still, lived a long time after, but it received the fatal sentence for the sin it then committed.

2. A man is dead in sin in respect of the *power* of sin. There is a two-fold death, in respect of the power of sin, in every man by nature. My brethren, I must enlarge upon this, because it is that whereby the Apostle doth illustrate the grace of Christ in quickening us, in freeing us from all these sorts of death, for he intendeth them all. There is, first, a *privative death*; and, secondly, there is a *positive death*, or rather a positive life, that followeth upon that privative death.

There is, first, a *privative death*. Every sin, as it is a dead work to a man's conscience, binding it over unto guilt, so it works a death in him in respect of the power of sin, disabling him to good and making him more active and lively to sin, which is his death: for the more lively he is made to sin, the more dead he still groweth. Why? Because he is lively to that which is indeed his death. For that I shall give you another place; it is in Heb. vi. 1. I choose these places the rather, because they open and are parallel one to another. As he had said before, the blood of Christ 'purgeth our consciences from dead works,' calling every sin so in respect of the guilt of it, so here he calleth them dead works in respect of the power of sin; 'repentance from dead works.'

Now, my brethren, as there is this double death,—the one of the guilt, and the other of the power of sin,—so there is a double life we are restored unto by Christ. There is, first, a *life of justification* from the death of guilt, which is called a 'passing from death to life;' which is a greater change upon a man, (not a change in a man,) in respect of his estate, than for a man condemned to die to receive a pardon, that you may say now he is a living man, whereas before he was a dead man. And, secondly, there is a *life of sanctification*, a spiritual life. Now, first, you have a justification of life, opposed to a condemnation, and to a death, as you shall find it in Rom. v.,

comparing ver. 12 with ver. 18. In the 18th verse, saith he, 'As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.' Mark it, here justification is called a man's *life*; and compare now but the verses before: ver. 12, 'By one man sin entered, and death by sin, and so death passed'—as a sentence, namely, before men died—'upon all men.' And that which in this 12th verse he calleth *death*, in the 18th he calleth *judgment*; 'judgment came upon all men to condemnation.' There is a death therefore of condemnation, and there is a justification of life. Then, secondly, there is a life of sanctification also, opposed to the power of sin and the death that the power of sin bringeth; for that I shall not need to insist upon. 'You hath he quickened,' saith my text afterwards; and what is that quickening but giving you faith, creating a new workmanship, as we shall find when we come to open those words that follow?

Now the question will be, Whether that the Apostle, when he saith we are 'dead in sins and trespasses,' doth in this phrase include both, or which more chiefly?

I answer, he certainly includeth both; for, in the first place, when he had said in the first verse, 'dead in sins and trespasses,' he doth in the close of this description say, we are all 'by nature children of wrath,'—that is, obnoxious unto wrath, unto condemnation for every sin, and that is all one and to be dead men in sin. It appears likewise by that parallel place, Col. ii. 13, which epistle and this of the Ephesians, as I said, are as the Evangelists, the one explaining the other. You shall find there, that their being dead in sin is spoken in respect of guilt clearly; yea, and their being quickened with Christ is spoken in respect of their justification by Christ. Read but the words. 'And you, being dead in your sins,'—there is the guilt of sin,—'and the uncircumcision of your flesh,'—there is the corruption of nature and the power of sin,—'hath he quickened together with him.' Wherein lay that quickening? 'Having forgiven you all trespasses.' Therefore, forgiveness of sins and justification, being a taking off of the sentence, and acquitting a man from death, and pronouncing a man free from it, is part of that quickening. Hence it is, that as in sanctification we receive the virtue of Christ's resurrection, so we are said to be justified by virtue of his resurrection. 'He rose again for our justification;' by his quickening we are quickened. You shall find in Rom. vii., when a man is humbled for sin, he dies. 'Sin revived,' saith he, 'and I died,'—that is, I apprehended myself to be a dead man, dead in sins and trespasses. Then cometh Jesus Christ and works faith in the man, and so raiseth him up to a justification of life, and now the man liveth again. But how doth he live? He liveth by faith. 'The life which I live, it is by faith,' saith he, laying hold of the free grace of God, and justification by my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Apostle here intends both, for his scope is to illustrate to the uttermost the grace of God towards us in quickening us; and as in quickening us by Christ, he intendeth freeing us from all sorts of death, so in saying we are 'dead in sins and trespasses,' he includeth all sorts of death also.

But if you ask which is principally intended here; I answer, principally, and in a special manner, is intended the death in respect of the *power of sin*. And my reason is this, because this verse refers to the 19th of the first chapter. According to the mighty power which works in us, according to the power which wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead: 'And you, being dead,' saith he, 'hath he quickened.' So here in this first

verse, and in ver. 5. Therefore, in Col. ii., though it be applied to forgiveness, yet there is the power of sin mentioned too. 'You were dead,' saith he, 'in the uncircumcision of the flesh;'—that is, in their original corruption, in the power of sin, as well as in the guilt of it. Therefore, afterwards in this chapter he magnifies the grace of God, in respect of making a new workmanship in him, 'created in Christ to good works,' a new principle of life. So that, I say, the Apostle's chief scope is, to hold forth a death in respect of the power of sin. And so I have opened to you what is meant by *life* and *death*.

There is a third death, which is the consequent of both these, which is certainly meant too, and is the consummation of both these: and that is *death eternal*; even eternal death is but a being dead in sin. What is the great executioner of men in hell? The truth is, it is purely the guilt of a man's own sin, and the wrath of God joining with it, that which he lived in here. I will give you a plain similitude for it. A fish liveth naturally in the water; take that water, and heat it, and put the fish into it, the fish dies, even in the very same water it lived in. The Apostle speaks in a manner the same, Rom. vii.: The law came; and sin revived, and I died. So that in hell itself, God shall need no other executioner but only thine own sins, set on fire by his wrath, to boil thy soul. Men shall but then die in their sins, and their sins will be the instrument. They are like gunpowder, as I may express it, which the sparks of God's wrath falling into blows up. Therefore why doth the Apostle say, 1 Cor. xv. 56, 'The sting of death is sin?' He speaks in relation to hell after death. But because sin is that eternal sting, you know it is said the 'worm that dies not.' Observe the analogy: when a man is dead, his body breedeth worms; so the sins that are in a man's conscience, they are as so many worms that prey upon that dead soul for ever in hell. Here in this life, men sit but in the shadow of death, where men have a little light in this shadow, to play by, or work by, or sing by; here they have the creatures, and God puts comforts in the creatures to draw out men's lusts; but in hell, when God shall take away all comforts, take away all creatures, there shall be 'utter darkness,' the 'blackness of darkness,' which is the expression for death, as light is for life.

Now I will make but an observation or two, though this discourse hath had observations strewed amongst it all the way.

Obs. 1.—Look, first of all, therefore, upon *every sin as death*. 'He that hateth me,' saith Wisdom, Prov. viii. 36, and will follow other ways, 'loveth death.' If a man apprehends he is doing that which he knows will be his death, it is the greatest argument in the world to shun it; all in nature riseth up in him. What! will you have me catch my death? Will you bring me to my grave? Let us all think so of sin. But you will say, A man that is regenerated, he sins not unto death. It is true that is not the issue of it; what is the reason? Because another's death went for it, and that is the death of Christ. And let that move thee more than the other shall give thee liberty to sin; let a holy ingenuity move thee. It was his death that was the death of thy death.

Obs. 2.—Observe again, *That sin only kills the soul*. The devil himself could not kill the soul, nothing but sin could do it. All the devils in hell could not have taken that spiritual life from us in Adam, had not he himself laid it down. He might, in respect of spiritual life, say, as Christ did, No man takes my life from me, but I lay it down. There is no death but in sin, and man sinneth not but of himself. It is true, when men sin,

the devil tempts them; but there is no death unless men sin. Nay, my brethren, the wrath of God alone could not kill the soul, if it were not for sin. The wrath of God seized upon Christ, he having sin laid upon him, but his soul died not. 'Dead in sins,' saith the Apostle. Nothing indeed properly kills the soul but sin, because nothing doth utterly cut off the soul from God but sin. And, as I said before, in hell it is sin that is the pitch in the barrel that makes it burn, it is sin in the conscience that makes the fire; God's wrath comes upon it, but it is that which burns. Therefore they are called 'vessels of wrath,' because *vessels of sin*.