

# COMMENTARY

ON THE WHOLE

## EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF THIRTY YEARS' WEDNESDAY'S LECTURES  
AT BLACKFRIARS, LONDON.

BY THAT HOLY AND LEARNED DIVINE  
WILLIAM GOUGE, D.D.,  
AND LATE PASTOR THERE.

BEFORE WHICH IS PREFIXED  
A NARRATIVE OF HIS LIFE AND DEATH.

VOL. III.

EDINBURGH: JAMES NICHOL.

LONDON: JAMES NISBET AND CO. DUBLIN: G. HERBERT.

# A COMMENTARY UPON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

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## SEC. 1. *Of the analysis of eleventh chapter.*

The apostle having prescribed faith in the latter end of the former chapter as an especial means of perseverance, in this chapter he doth further describe it, and set it out by the excellent effects thereof. So as the sum of this chapter is a declaration of the excellency of faith.

Hereof are two parts :

1. A description of faith, ver. 1.
2. An exemplification of that description.

The exemplification is set out by the effects of faith : and that in such as were endued therewith.

These are set out,

1. Indefinitely, ver. 2, 3.
2. Expressly by name ; these may be ranked under four heads :

1. Such as lived before the flood, from ver. 4-8.
2. Such as continued from the flood to the time of the law, from ver. 8-30.
3. They that were in the church of Israel till the captivity, from ver. 30-34.
4. They that remained from the captivity till Christ's coming, from ver. 34 to the end.

Of them that lived before the flood three are mentioned.

1. Abel, ver. 4. His faith was manifested by his sacrifice.

2. Enoch, ver. 5, 6. His, by pleasing God.

3. Noah, ver. 7. His, by building an ark.

Of those that lived betwixt the flood and the law, there are mentioned six by name, and others indefinitely implied.

1. Abraham ; whose faith is manifested by four effects.

(1.) His going whither God called him, ver. 8.

(2.) His sojourning in a strange country, ver. 9. This is amplified by that heavenly city which he looked for, ver. 10.

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- (3.) The numerous offspring that he had, ver. 12.

(4.) His offering up Isaac, ver. 17-19.

2. Sarah ; whose faith is evidenced by bearing a child in her old age, ver. 11.

The faith of these, and others that lived as they did, is amplified by their perseverance therein : for they 'died in faith,' ver. 13. This is proved,

- (1.) By their confession that they were strangers, ver. 13, 14.

(2.) By omitting the opportunity of returning to their country, ver. 15.

This is amplified by the kind of country which they sought, ver. 16.

3. Isaac ; whose faith is set out by blessing his two sons, ver. 20.

4. Jacob ; who in faith blessed the two sons of Joseph, ver. 21.

5. Joseph ; who commanded his bones to be carried out of Egypt into Canaan, ver. 22.

6. The parents of Moses ; whose faith showed itself in their preserving their son Moses against the king's edict, ver. 23.

7. Moses ; his faith was demonstrated five ways.

- (1.) By refusing the honour of Egypt, ver. 24.
- (2.) By suffering affliction, ver. 25.
- (3.) By highly esteeming the reproach of Christ, ver. 26.

(4.) By forsaking Egypt, ver. 27.

(5.) By keeping the passover, ver. 28.

8. The Israelites which came out of Egypt, and passed through the Red Sea, ver. 29.

Of those that were betwixt the law and the captivity, seven are numbered by name, and sundry others under general terms intended.

1. Joshua, and the Israelites under his government, gave proof of their faith by the fall of the walls of Jericho, ver. 30.

2. Rahab testified her faith by entertaining the spies, ver. 31.

3. Gideon. 4. Barak. 5. Samson. 6. Jephtah. 7. David. 8. Sammel, are produced by name. 9. The prophets are indefinitely set down, ver. 32.

The effects of sundry of these are set down, ver. 33, 34.

Of those that were from the beginning of the captivity to Christ's time, none are mentioned by name, but the faith of many of them is demonstrated by sundry great effects. These effects were their sufferings for maintaining the true faith; whereof sundry distinct kinds are mentioned, ver. 35-38.

The conclusion of the whole is set down by an approbation of their faith, 'they obtained a good report,' and an illustration thereof in this phrase, 'received not the promise:' as if he had said, by faith they held out, though they received not the promise.

Of that illustration a reason is rendered, ver. 40, namely, God's reserving the better things to our times.

#### See. 2. *Of the inference of Heb. xi. 1.*

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

In this Chapter is a large amplification of the forementioned means of perseverance, which is faith; wherein there is, first, a description of faith, in this first verse.

Of the notation of the word *faith*: of the general nature, and several kinds of it, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 6, Sec. 11, 12, &c.

Here is meant a true justifying and saving faith. The inference of this description upon the forenamed proposition of living by faith, and holding faith to the saving of the soul, gives proof hereunto. If the proof be not of the same faith whereof the proposition is, it is to no purpose.

*Obj.* Many of the instances following in this chapter are of a miraculous faith. As Sarah bearing a child, ver. 11; Israel's passing through the Red Sea, ver. 29; the walls of Jericho falling down, ver. 30; and sundry others, ver. 33, 34, &c.

*Ans.* The miraculous things there intimated were subordinate to the main promise of the Messiah; for they, believing that principal promise, did withal believe other things that for the present were requisite for them.

Now the mixture of a miraculous faith doth not shoulder out a justifying and saving faith. There are many effects of a vegetative and sensitive soul in man, which are all comprised under the reasonable soul. So justifying faith extends itself to all God's promises.

The first particle in our English, *now*, is the note of an assumption in a syllogism. It is the interpre-

tation of the Greek conjunction *νῦν*, commonly translated *but*, which is used to the same purpose.

The syllogism may be thus framed:

The just live by that which is the substance of things hoped for, &c.

But faith is the substance of things hoped for:

Therefore the just live by faith.

#### Sec. 3. *Of faith being the substance of things [not] present.*

Of the Greek word *υπόστασις*, translated *substance*, see Chap. i. 3, Sec. 21, and Chap. iii. 14, Sec. 152. In general, it signifieth that which hath a subsistence or being; that which is indeed, and so substeth. Thus it is taken as it is simply considered in itself. But as it hath reference to other things, it importeth that which giveth a kind of being to that whereunto it hath reference; so as believers rest confident thereupon. In which respect this word is translated *confidence*, Chap. iii. 14; 2 Cor. ix. 4, and xi. 17.

This property or effect, *substance*, is here attributed to faith in reference to the object thereof, which are things hoped for. Things hoped for are future, they are to come: but things to come have no present being.

*Quest.* How can faith give a being to things that are not?

*Ans.* We speak not of a natural being in regard of the things themselves, as if faith did simply make that to be which is not: but of a being to the mind of the believer; which, if we may so speak, is a mental being; such a being as the believer is confident of, as if they had a natural present subsistence. This is not a mere imagination, but as true as anything can be. For faith resteth on the most principal and infallible truth that can be, namely, God's promise. What he promiseth shall without question be accomplished, and faith resteth upon it as accomplished.

That faith giveth a being to things that are not, is evident by the patriarchs' embracing the promises which they received not, ver. 13. 'In Christ are hid all the treasures of God:' and faith is that hand whereby Christ is received, John i. 12. Now all things tending to life, being in Christ, that which hath Christ hath all.

Faith is herein much commended; and that,

1. By the excellency of it. It is a kind of creator, in giving a being to things.

2. By the necessity of it. Our chief happiness is to come; as perfection of sanctification, full freedom from all misery, resurrection of the body, eternal life. Faith gives a present being to all these.

3. By the benefit thereof. Though faith we reap good by things before they are: for faith gives not only a title, but a kind of possession of that which we hope for.

This giveth an answer to those that make temporal blessings the only ground of the faith of the ancient

fathers: and that because evangelical and celestial blessings were not then exhibited.

The answer is this—They hoped for those evangelical and celestial truths, and thereupon their faith gave a being unto them. In this respect ‘the gospel was preached unto them,’ Heb. iv. 2.

Evangelical and celestial truths were promised beforehand; now faith giveth so full assent to that which God hath promised, as it rests as confidently upon it before it be actually accomplished, as if it were indeed really accomplished. We may therefore conclude, that the ancient fathers who believed, made evangelical and celestial truths the object of their faith, and rested thereupon.

A proper object of faith is that which is hoped for; and that is not seen, as is showed in Chap. vi. 19, Sec. 156. In this respect faith is the substance of it, and gives a being unto it. Thus there is a mutual relation betwixt faith and hope. ‘We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith,’ Gal. v. 5. See more hereof in *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 2, Part 7, on Eph. vi. 17, Sec. 3, 5.

#### Sec. 4. *Of faith an evidence of things not seen.*

That faith which is the substance of things hoped for, is also ‘an evidence of things not seen.’ The noun *ἔκφανσις*, translated *evidence*, is derived from a verb *ἐκφάνω*, that signifieth to *convince*, John viii. 9, 46; James ii. 9. Thence this noun, that is here properly translated *an evidence*, which proveth and demonstrateth things to be so and so. Hereby it appeareth that faith doth as evidently convince the soul of the truth of things that are not seen, as if they were before a man, and he saw them with his eyes. Herein lieth a main difference betwixt faith and sense, 2 Cor. v. 7.

By things (*ὧς βλέπομεν*) *not seen* are meant such as cannot be discerned with the eyes of the body; because they are either invisible in their nature, or kept some way or other from the eye of the body. Of this word, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 72.

*Quest.* Wherein lieth the difference betwixt this fruit of faith, and the former part, and this?

*Ans.* The former speaks only of things to come: this of things past and present also, as well as to come. There are many things past and accomplished, which are not now seen; as, the birth of Christ, his miracles, his death, and resurrection. There are also many things present that are not seen; as, Christ’s sitting at God’s right hand, angels attending us, the souls of just men in heaven; yet faith gives evidence of the truth of all these, even such evidence, as they are as sure to believers that now live, as the things which Christ did on earth were to them who then saw them with their eyes, and as the things in heaven are to them in heaven. So as faith works assurance. This apostle attributes ‘full assurance’ to faith. See Chap. x. 22, Sec. 65.

In that the things whereof faith is an evidence are not seen, it is evident that invisibility maketh not things less credible; many evidences are given hereof in this chapter. This point is thus expressed to the life, ‘Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice,’ 1 Peter i. 8. Christ taketh the point for granted in pronouncing them blessed ‘who have not seen, and yet have believed,’ John xx. 29.

‘Faith comes by hearing,’ Rom. x. 17, not by sight, 2 Cor. v. 7; we hear of many things that we see not.

This discovers the deceit of them, who so long as they see such and such objects, can believe, but will believe no further; like Thomas, who said, ‘Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, &c., I will not believe,’ John xx. 25. If God give men health, peace, plenty, and all manner of prosperity, they will believe him to be their God; but if they see no external evidences of his favour, they will not believe on him. This is the common faith of most men. Herein they take away the difference betwixt faith and sight, 2 Cor. v. 7.

It is faith’s excellency to raise the soul above sight, and to support it against sense. True faith makes him that hath it believe that God is his loving Father, when he seems to be angry with him; it makes him believe that he is in a blessed estate, though he be subject to many outward miseries.

Well were the martyrs instructed herein. Had they not had evidence of things not seen, they would never have endured what they did. This is rendered as the reason of Moses’ enduring, ‘He endured, as seeing him who is invisible,’ ver. 27. Invisible comforts and recompenses swallowed up the terrors of those present trials which martyrs saw and felt.

How much doth it now concern us to acquaint ourselves with things invisible, such as the word hath revealed for our stability! This was it that kept Christians from fainting, ‘They did look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen,’ 1 Cor. iv. 18. This made David, when he was ‘greatly distressed,’ and saw no outward help, to ‘encourage himself in the Lord his God,’ 1 Sam. xxx. 6. ‘We know not what to do,’ saith Jehoshaphat to God, in regard of outward helps, ‘but our eyes are upon thee,’ 2 Chron. xx. 12. Thus may we be encouraged in all manner of cases that can here befall us.

#### Sec. 5. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 1.*

Ver. 1. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

The sum of this verse is a description of faith.

Herein two points are observable—

1. The inference, in this note of assumption, *Now* or *but*.



2. The substance; whereof there are two branches.

(1.) The point described, which is *faith*.

(2.) The arguments whereby it is described. These are two properties of faith, both amplified by their distinct object.

The first property is thus expressed, *the substance*.

The object hereof is, *things hoped for*.

The other property is thus expressed, *the evidence*.

The object thereof is, *things not seen*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Helps prescribed are to be explained.* This ariseth from the inference, *Now*. See Sec. 2.

II. *Faith is a prime grace.* This ariseth both from the description, and also from the large amplification thereof. See Sec. 2.

III. *Faith gives a being to future things.* The word, *substance*, intends as much. See Sec. 3.

IV. *There is a mutual relation betwixt faith and hope;* for they are future things hoped for, whereof faith is the substance. See Sec. 3.

V. *Faith works assurance.* This property, *evidence*, intends as much. See Sec. 4.

VI. *Things invisible are not incredible.* Though they be *not seen*, yet is faith an evidence of them. See Sec. 4.

Sec. 6. *Of the meaning of Heb. xi. 2.*

*By it the elders obtained a good report.*

In this and the other verses following, the foresaid definition of faith is amplified and exemplified, and that by the virtue and efficacy of faith, manifested in sundry particulars.

The first is a good report which it brought to saints that lived in former times.

This relative, *ἐν ταύτῃ*, *by it*, or, *in it*, hath reference to that grace described in the former verse, which is *faith*.

The persons whose faith is here commended, are styled *πρεσβύτεροι*, *elders*. Both our English, and also the Greek word, is of the comparative degree. The positive, *πρεσβυτέρως*, *πρεσβυτέρως*, significth an old man, Luke i. 18. Men in place of dignity or authority have this title given unto them in the plural number,<sup>1</sup> and that in two especial respects:

1. Because old men were fittest to have dignity and authority, by reason of their experience, which teacheth wisdom, Job xxxii. 7, 1 Kings xii. 6.

2. Because such honour was done unto them as useth to be done unto old men; for old men, carrying gravity in their faces, use to be revered; yea, the law requireth as much, Lev. xix. 32.

The comparative here translated, *elder*, is attributed to men in regard of their age or office. In reference to age, both those that have attained to many years are so called, 1 Tim. v. 1, 1 Pet. v. 5,—in which sense ancient women have this title in the feminine

<sup>1</sup> *πρεσβυτεροι*. Principes quibus ea reverentia exhibetur que senilibus exhiberi solet.—*Anglic.*

gender, *πρεσβυτεραι*, given unto them, 1 Tim. v. 2,—and also they who are elder than others, in reference to the younger, are called *elder*, though they be not old in age, Luke xv. 25. They also who have lived in former times are called *elders*, in that the times wherein they lived were ancienter than our times; especially such as were men of parts, of worth, of dignity, authority, or any other esteem. Thus is the word frequently used in the New Testament, Mat. xv. 2.

In regard of office, men were called *elders* in reference to civil and ecclesiastical matters. We read of 'elders of the people,' Exod. xix. 7, Mat. xxi. 23, 'elders of the town,' 1 Sam. xvi. 4, 'elders of the city,' Deut. xxi. 3, 'elders of the lands,' 1 Kings xx. 7. These were elders for civil affairs.

The elders of the Jews, who, in the Evangelists and Acts, are said to meet with priests, scribes, and other rulers, were for ecclesiastical affairs; for the civil power was then taken from the Jews.

There were a number of these elders, which may be called senators, that made up a council, which the Jews called *Sanhedrim*. Their greatest council consisted of seventy-one senators, which number is supposed to be ordered according to this direction which God gave to Moses, 'Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel,' &c., Num. xi. 16. Moses being added to these maketh up seventy-one. By *elders* in this text are meant such as lived in former ages, before the times wherein these Hebrews lived. We call such, ancestors, predecessors.

The Rhenists translate them *old men*, which is absurd, obscure, and untrue. For all those elders that obtained a good report were not old men; witness Enoch, compared to the other patriarchs before the flood, Gen. v. 23, Jonathan, Saul's son, 1 Sam. xxxi. 2, Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 1, Jeroboam's son, 1 Kings xiv. 13. They might be therefore young men, as well as old men, that are comprised under this word, *elders*.

The apostle useth this indefinite word, which excludeth none that in former times believed, because there were many more that manifested the truth and vigour of their faith, besides those that are mentioned in the catalogue following.

Of all of them it is said, they *obtained a good report*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word. The verb whence it is derived significth to witness a thing. See Chap. ii. 4, Sec. 30, and Chap. iii. 5, Sec. 53.

It is here of the passive voice, and may word for word be thus translated, *ἐμαρτυρήσαντες*, *Testimonio ornati sunt, were witnessed*; that is, had witness or testimony given unto them: they were approved, and honoured with testimony. Testimony given is under this passive word, frequently used in the New Testament, in the better part, for a good and honourable testimony, as ver. 4, Acts vi. 3, and xxii. 12, 1 Tim. v. 10.

*Quest.* By what kind of testimony were those ancients so honoured?

*Ans.* Both by God's testimony, and also by men's.

God three ways gave good testimony unto them :

1. He enabled them to do things worthy of good report.

2. God gave inward testimony to their souls of his approving them, Acts xv. 8.

3. God caused their names and memorable acts to be registered in the everlasting record, the sacred Scriptures.

Men gave testimony of them, both while they lived and after they were dead. Such as lived in their time approved and commended them. Thus was witness given to Cornelius by those that lived with him, Acts x. 22; and David had honourable testimony given to him by those that lived in succeeding ages.

The ground of this good report is here said to be faith; 'by it they obtained a good report.' The Greek preposition, *in*, *in* ('in faith'), carrieth emphasis : it implieth that the ground of all that made them to have that good report which they had, was in their faith. I will not deny but that the preposition, *in*, may here be put for *by*, as our English doth translate it, and so makes it answerable to the many evidences of faith which are set down without a preposition, but implying, by the case in which it is used, as much as this preposition doth, 'By faith Abel,' &c., 'By faith Enoch,' &c., so in the rest.

The preposition *in* is, in other Greek authors, also put for *by*. It is oft joined with an instrument,<sup>1</sup> or means of effecting a thing. So *Beth* (2) in Hebrew.

Sec. 7. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 2.*

The sum of the second verse is, a commendation of God's ancient people.

The parts are two :

1. The persons commended, *elders*.

2. The matter of their commendation. Herein consider,

(1.) A testimony given unto them, *They obtained a good report*.

(2.) The ground thereof, *By it*, namely, by faith.

*Doctrines.*

I. *There were of old men of worth.* Such were the elders here mentioned.

II. *Worth of men had due testimony.* They obtained good report.

III. *Faith especially makes men praiseworthy.* By it they had their good testimony.

IV. *Faith is a Catholic doctrine.* The elders from the beginning of the world had learned it, and it is continued to these our days.

Sec. 8. *Of the meaning of Heb. xi. 3.*

Ver. 3. *Through faith we understand that the worlds*

<sup>1</sup> ἐν βελει πλάγεις. *Telo percussus.*—Eurip.

*were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

This verse gives another general proof of the virtue and vigour of faith. It is somewhat more general than the former.

The former was restrained to elders. This is so indefinitely set down as it is extended to all believers in all ages.

The persons are not distinctly expressed, but comprised under the first person plural of the verb, thus, *we understand*.

The verb, *we understand*, translated, *Understand*, is derived from a noun, *νόος νόος*, that signifieth the mind, Tit. i. 15. It importeth, therefore, an action of the mind. But in that it is here inferred upon faith, it appears that such an act is here meant, as is not wrought by the strength of natural reason, but by that credence which is given to the word of God, and from a persuasion of the heart concerning the truth thereof.

The word *πίστις*, *faith*, is here indefinitely used in the dative case, without any preposition at all, as in the other verses following.

For there is a rhetorical figure, *ἀναφορά*, whereby all the distinct commendations of faith, in the several instances thereof, are set down in the beginning of every clause which setteth down a new instance.

The word *τοὺς αἰῶνας*, translated *worlds*, is the same that was used, Chap. i. 3, Sec. 18, and taken in the same sense—namely, for all manner of creatures.

Of the worlds, it is here said that they were *framed*, *κατακτισθῆναι*.

Of the derivation and composition of this word, see Chap. xiii. 21, Sec. 172. It implieth a full and perfect finishing of a thing, so as there remaineth no want, no defect, no imperfection therein. Thus much doth the Hebrew word intend in this phrase, 'Thus the heaven and the earth were finished,' *יִכָּלּוּ* *perfecti sunt*, Gen. ii. 1.

The means of framing the worlds is here said to be, *ἐκ λόγου*, *the word of God*. Some by the word of God here understand the Son of God, who is called the Word, John i. 1, of whom it is also said, that 'all things were made by him,' John i. 2. But there are two different terms in that and in this place, *ἐκ λόγου*, *λόγος*, used by the penmen of the one and the other, whereby they are distinguished in the Greek, though not in our English. So as there the author or efficient may be set forth, here the means of making the world. The term here used, *ἐκ λόγου*, was used before, and applied to the providence of God, called 'the word of his power,' *τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς δυνάμεως*. See Chap. i. 3, Sec. 25.

By God's word is here meant the manifestation of God's will. It is metaphorically spoken of God, and that after the manner of men, who ordinarily manifest their mind and will by their word.

This point, that the world was made by God's word, gives proof of faith, and of the vigour thereof. For

it may be evinced by reason that the world was<sup>1</sup> made. Many philosophers have demonstrated as much by arguments fetched from reason. But that it should be made merely by the word of God is a point of faith. This is believed, because in sacred Scripture it is so revealed. From that evidence of faith the apostle inferreth this consequence, 'so that things which are seen' &c.

Here must be supplied (*ἀπὸ λόγου*), to make up the sense full and clear, the principal verb, in the former part of the verse; as if it were thus set down, 'So that we understand that things which are seen,' &c.

For things were not made because we believe them, but because we believe that they were made by God's word, we understand 'that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear.' *Things seen*, τὰ ὀφθαλμοῖς, comprise all visible things, whether they be actually seen or no. This is the same word that was used, Sec. 4. It is not to be taken exclusively, as if it did exclude things invisible; for all things, visible and invisible, were created, Col. i. 16, and that of nothing. But because the greatest question is about things visible, and such as are seen, and because there is the most direct opposition betwixt things which are seen, and things which do not appear, he fitly useth this phrase, 'things which are seen.' Thus doth Moses exemplify the creation of the world in and by things that are seen: and these are the things which by philosophers are accounted to be created.

The negative in this phrase, *were not made*, is to be referred to this verb, *φανοῦναι*, appear, as if it had been thus placed, 'were made of things which do not appear.' Though they were made, yet they were not made of anything that did or could appear. There was no pre-existent matter whereof they were made; so as this phrase directly implieth, that the worlds were made of nothing.

Because the philosopher could not by natural reason discern how anything could be made of nothing, he denied the creation of the world. But by faith we believe it, because God's word hath revealed as much.

The very first phrase in Scripture, 'In the beginning,' intendeth as much. For before the beginning of things, there could be nothing, but the Creator who gave them a being. If there were anything before, that had not been the beginning.

This instance of believing the world to be made of nothing, giveth proof of the latter clause of the description of faith, ver. 1, namely, that it is 'the evidence of things not seen.'

Sec. 9. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 3.*

This verse gives an evidence of the world's creation.

Hereof are two parts:

1. The evidence itself.

<sup>1</sup> Plato in *Timæo*.

2. An inference made thereupon.

In setting down the evidence, four points are observable:

1. The thing evidenced, *The worlds were framed*.

2. The means thereof, *By the word of God*.

3. The kind of evidence, *Faith*.

4. The manifestation thereof, *We understand*.

In setting down the inference, one thing is granted, another is denied.

That which is granted, is, *That things seen were made*.

That which is denied, is, *That they were made of things which appear; for they were not made of such*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *The world had a beginning.* This is here taken for granted.

II. *The worlds were made in their full perfection.* The word translated, *framed*, implieth as much.

III. *God's word was the only means of making the world.* This means is here expressed.

IV. *All things were made of nothing.* This is intended under this phrase, *were not made of things which do appear*.

V. *Faith gives evidence to creation.* This is the main intendment of this verse.

VI. *Faith is in the understanding.* Not that it is only there. It is also in the will. It worketh alliance as well as assent. But by faith we understand.

Sec. 10. *Of Cain and Abel's names.*

Ver. 4. *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; for by it he being dead, yet speaketh.* Or, *is yet spoken of*.

Here beginneth a particular exemplification of the effects of faith. This is set forth by a distinct enumeration of such worthies as gave proof of their faith.

Though every worthy be not here set down, yet I may well say that the chief and most principal are named. Others are comprised under general words, as *others*, ver. 2; *all these*, ver. 13; *prophets*, ver. 32. *They* passed through the Red Sea, ver. 29. And sundry effects common to many, ver. 33, &c.

The first of all is Abel, who was the first son of man born of man that was born again, and was endued with a true, justifying, saving faith, as his faith here mentioned was; which is evidenced by God's accepting him, and his sacrifice; for 'without such a faith it is impossible to please God,' ver. 6.

Abel, according to the Hebrew notation, signifieth vanity; for it is derived from a verb, הָבַל, which signifieth to become vain, Jer. ii. 5. A noun, הַבְּל, hence derived, is used by the wise man to set out the vanity of this world, Eccles. i. 2.

Some say that this name was given by a prophetic spirit, in reference to Abel's intemperate death. But I suppose rather that this name was given in acknowledgment of that vain mortal and miserable condition whereunto mankind was brought by the first sin.

There may be the same reason of the name of Adam's grandchild, אָנִישׁ, *Enos, Homo miser, vel mortalis*, which also signifieth mortal, or miserable, Gen. iv. 26.

Adam and Eve had a son before Abel: his name was קַיִן, *Cain*, which is a noun derived from a Hebrew verb, קָנָה, which signifieth, to *get* or *obtain*, or to *possess* what is gotten. By this name an acknowledgment was made of God's mercy and truth, in giving seed; that so the accomplishment of the promise concerning seed, Gen. iii. 15, might be in confidence expected. The interpretation of this name, *Cain*, is thus expressed, 'I have gotten a man of the Lord,' Gen. iv. 1.

These two names do give us to understand, that God's goodness, and man's wretchedness, are both worthy of frequent and serious meditation. The former raiseth up man's heart to admire God's goodness, and to be thankful unto him. The latter strippeth man of all self-conceit, and humbleth him before God.

#### Sec. 11. *Of the difference betwixt Abel and Cain.*

The aforesaid two brothers, Cain and Abel, came from the loins of the same father, and out of the womb of the same mother, *uterini*. Many are of opinion, that they were twins of a birth: because, it is said, 'Adam knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain;' but it is only said, that 'she again bare his brother Abel,' Gen. iv. i. 2. It is not again said, that Adam knew her again, and that she conceived again.

*Ans.* This argument does not necessarily infer the foresaid point. It is no matter of great consequence to know whether they were twins or no. I will not, therefore, stand to discuss it. This is evident by the text, that both of them were the sons of Adam and Eve, and that Cain was the elder; and probable it is, that these two were the first that ever came out of a mother's womb.

Of the two, the younger was the better; yet being younger in birth, he was inferior in dignity: for God himself said to Cain, in reference to Abel, 'Thou shalt rule over him,' Gen. iv. 7.

By this first instance of difference betwixt persons, it plainly appears, that spiritual grace doth not always accompany external prerogatives. As here, God accepted Abel before Cain, so Shem before Japheth, Gen. v. 32, and x. 21; and Jacob before Esau, Gen. xxvii. 37; and Judah before his brethren, Gen. xlix. 8; and Joseph also, Gen. xxxvii. 7; and Ephraim before Manasseh, Gen. xlviii. 19; and David before his brethren; and Solomon before his, 1 Chron. xxviii. 4, 5. See Ver. 32, Sec. 193.

God is free in bestowing his grace on whom it pleaseth him. From God's preferring the younger before the elder, the apostle proveth the free grace of God, Rom. ix. 11, 12.

This, in particular, warranteth parents to observe how grace aboundeth in some children above others,

and answerably esteem them. See *Domest. Duties*; of Parents, Treat. 6, Sec. 67.

In general, it directeth all how to set their hearts upon any, even as they see them seasoned with grace, Prov. xii. 26. Take heed of respecting men upon outward respects, James ii. 1.

#### Sec. 12. *Of God's church in Adam's family, and different offerings.*

Of Abel it is said, that  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\eta\gamma\gamma\alpha\varsigma\ \tau\hat{\omega}\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{\omega}$ , *he offered unto God*.

Of this phrase, *offering*, and that *to God*, see Chap. v. 1, Sec. 6.

This is here set down as an act of piety and service performed to God. The like is implied of Cain. For if Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, then Cain also offered, such as it was. But the history expressly sets down that Cain brought an offering to the Lord, Gen. iv. 3.

It is probable that these brothers were yet of their father's family, and there did service to God; so as Adam's house was God's church: whereby we may see the antiquity of the church, even from Adam's time. As this first family was a church, so other families of the ancient patriarchs were churches.

The church herein hath a pre-eminence above other societies.

Though both the foresaid brothers offered to God, yet both of them did it not with the same mind, and in the same manner. This is implied under this word of comparison,  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\lambda\iota\sigma\alpha$ , *more excellent*. Of the positive whereupon this comparative, *more excellent*, or *greater*, is grounded, see Chap. x. 12, Sec. 120. They were of different dispositions. One was an errant hypocrite, the other an upright worshipper of God. Thus from the beginning it was showed, that God's church on earth is a mixed assembly.

That this may here more distinctly appear, I will shew,

1. Wherin these two agreed.

2. Wherin they differed.

They agreed in three points:

1. In their general action. They both drew near to God, and worshipped him.

2. In the general matter of that action. They both brought an offering.

3. In the general kind of their offering, which was of that which belonged to each of them. Cain was a tiller of the ground, and he brought of the fruit of the ground: Abel was a keeper of sheep, and he brought of his flock, Gen. iv. 3, 4.

They differed, 1. In the distinct kinds of offering. Cain's was of the fruit of the ground, which was but a mere gift. Abel's was of the flock, which was a sacrifice *domia*. The notation of the Greek word in my text, *domia*, translated *sacrifice*, implies as much. See Chap. v. 1, Sec. 7.

2. In the manner of offering. Abel offered up his

sacrifice in faith, whereby he believed that God would pardon his sins, and accept of his person and service. No such thing is implied of Cain.

3. In the quality of their offering. 'Cain brought of the fruit of the ground:' we read of no choice of any excellent fruit that he should bring. But Abel brought 'of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof.' These were the best and choicest.

Sec. 13. *Of the testimony which faith brings.*

As Abel testified a good respect to God, so likewise God testified a good respect to him; for 'he obtained witness that he was righteous.' The ground hereof was his faith. For this relative, *ὃς ἦν*, *by which*, hath reference, not to *sacrifice*, but to *faith*: for this is an exemplification of that which was said of the elders, 'By faith they obtained a good report': as others, so Abel: as he obtained a good report, so he obtained it by faith. By a true justifying faith, the believer so applies Christ unto himself, as he resteth upon him, to be enabled to do that which is acceptable unto God, and therein to be accepted of God.

This faith put him on to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; this faith in Christ moved God to give a gracious testimony of him.

This phrase, *he obtained witness*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, namely, *ἡμαρτυροῦν*, that which is before translated, *obtained a good report*, Ver. 2, Sec. 6.

The testimony, or witness which he obtained, is thus expressed, 'that he was righteous.' Of this word, *δικαιος*, *righteous*, see Chap. x. 38, Sec. 144.

By faith he applied to himself that righteousness of Christ, which made him righteous before God: and by the same faith he was put on to endeavour to do such duties of piety towards God, which appertained to him in his place, and withal such duties of justice and mercy as made him be accounted righteous before men.

This witness of Abel's righteousness was given by God especially; as it was before said of the witness which the elders received, Ver. 2, Sec. 6, so it may be here said of this witness which Abel received.

This giveth instance, that even in God's account men in this world may be righteous. See more hereof, Chap. x. 38, Sec. 144. This testimony, 'that he was righteous,' hath an especial respect to his person, and that must be by faith in the Lord Jesus. Thus it is said, that 'the Lord had respect unto Abel,' Gen. iv. 4, namely, unto his person. Nothing can here make us righteous before God but the righteousness of Christ applied by faith, 2 Cor. v. 21.

To set out the foresaid witness more fully, the apostle addeth this, *God testifying of his gifts*. Howsoever distinction may be made between sacrifices and gifts, as hath been shewed in Chap. v. 1, Sec. 7, yet they are also both taken in the same general sense. Sacrifices were brought to God, and offered up to him, and in that respect were called gifts: so as God

himself doth here witness, that men may give gifts to him. Hereof see.<sup>1</sup>

God's testifying of those gifts, was a manifestation of his accepting thereof: for it is expressly said, that God had respect to his offering.

In two respects are the things which Abel offered to God called *gifts*.

1. In regard of Abel's mind, he brought them in testimony of thankfulness.

2. In regard of God's mind, who accepted them as gifts.

The twofold mentioning of *witness* concerning Abel, hath reference to that double respect that in the history of Abel the Lord is said to have. He 'had respect unto Abel,' namely, to his person, 'and to his offering:' this was his gift.

By this witness it appears that God will have his children to know his mind towards them, that so they may be the better encouraged to go on in that course which is acceptable to God.

Sec. 14. *Of Abel's speaking, being dead.*

For greater commendation of Abel's faith, another kind of testimony is added, in these words, *By it, he being dead, yet speaketh*.

This is a perpetual testimony from Abel's death till the time that the apostle wrote, and so will continue to the end of the world. For the verb *λαλῶντα*, *speakeeth*, being of the present tense, implieth a continued act: so also doth this adverb *ἔτι, yet*.

Of the word translated *dead*, see Chap. vii. 8, Sec. 51. It is here meant of the death of his body, being slain by his brother Cain, Gen. iv. 8.

*Quest.* How doth he speak, being dead?

*Ans.* 1. In that his faith, and the fruits thereof, are registered in the everlasting records of the Holy Scripture: and thereby he speaketh as evidently as if we heard his voice.

2. In that his innocent blood being wrongfully spilt, cried to God for vengeance, Gen. iv. 10. Yea, still it remaineth crying against all such fratricides and homicides, as Cain was: in which respect Christ saith to the murdering Jews, that 'upon them should come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel.' Mat. xxiii. 35.

3. In that his soul is among those souls which cry aloud, saying, 'How long, O Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?' &c., Rev. vi. 9.

He is said to speak *by faith*: because, as he offered his sacrifice by faith, and by faith obtained witness; so by faith he commended himself to God, even when he was under his brother's hands, as Stephen did when the malicious Jews stoned him, Acts vii. 59, and thereupon God took special care of him, to testify not only of his gifts while he lived, but also of his innocency in his death, and causeth all to be remembered in his church throughout all generations.

<sup>1</sup> Reference omitted in original edition.—Ed.

Sec. 15. *Of the resolution of, and observations from,* Heb. xi. 4.

In this verse is a commendation of Abel's faith.

His faith is commended two ways,

1. Comparatively.

2. Simply.

The comparison is betwixt him and his brother.

Wherein observe,

1. The persons, set down by their names—*Abel, Cain*.

2. By their act. Herein observe,

(1.) Wherein they agreed.

(2.) Wherein they differed.

They agreed,

[1.] In their act. *They offered unto God.*

[2.] In the subject-matter of the act—a sacrifice.

They differed,

[1.] In the matter of their sacrifice, implied in this word of comparison, *more excellent*.

[2.] In the manner of offering; Abel did it by faith, Cain not so.

The commendation of Abel's faith simply set down, is by witness. This is twofold; partly while he was alive, partly after he was dead.

The former is,

1. Propounded.

2. Amplified; and that by two ways.

(1.) By the subject-matter which was witnessed.

This is double.

[1.] Concerning his person, that *he was righteous*.

[2.] Concerning his gifts.

(2.) By the author of the witness, *God testifying*.

The testimony given after he was dead, is set out two ways.

1. By the evidence of his innocency, *he speaketh*.

2. By the continuance thereof, in this participle, *yet*.

Both these are amplified by the ground of them, which was faith, in this relative, *by it*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *God's truth, in accomplishing his word, is to be remembered.* The meaning of this name, *Cain*, importeth thus much.

II. *Man's vanity is to be oft considered.* The meaning of this name, *Abel*, importeth so much.

III. *The church is an ancient society; it hath been from the beginning of the world.* That which is here noted of Cain's and Abel's offering, implieth that the first family that ever was, was a church.

IV. *God's church did ever consist of a mixed society; there were good and evil persons in it.* This was evidenced in the first church that ever was.

V. *It is faith that commends a man and his actions.* Thus is Abel here commended.

VI. *Believers will offer what is due to God.* It is here said of Abel, *he offered unto God*.

VII. *Expiation for sin was sought by believers from the beginning of the world.* Abel by offering a sacrifice shewed as much.

VIII. *A hypocrite may perform external worship.*

So did Cain. For this participle *παρά, than*, taketh it for granted that Cain offered.

IX. *Hypocrites can be at some cost with God.* For Cain offered.

X. *Hypocrites can bring to God of that which is their own.* For the history testifieth that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, whereof he was a tiller, Gen. iv. 2, 3.

XI. *Believers give their best to God.* This is implied under this comparative, *more excellent*, and expressly set down in the history, Gen. iv. 4.

XII. *Believers content not themselves with that which hypocrites do.* Abel's sacrifice was more excellent.

XIII. *Faith abethleth worth to the duties we do.* By faith was Abel's sacrifice the greater.

XIV. *Grace followeth not external privileges.* Cain was the elder, but Abel the better, Prov. xii. 26. See Sec. 11.

XV. *Faith is a means of gaining good testimony.* By it Abel obtained witness.

XVI. *Men may in this world be righteous.* So was Abel.

XVII. *Men's persons are first approved of God.* God witnessed that Abel was righteous, thereupon his sacrifice was accounted excellent. 'The Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering.' First to his person, then to his service, Gen. iv. 4.

XVIII. *God will that saints know his mind.* This was the end of God's testifying of Abel.

XIX. *Gifts may by men be given to God.* Abel gave gifts to God.

XX. *Saints are subject to death.* It is here said of righteous Abel that he was dead.

XXI. *Saints are subject to a violent death.* Abel was slain by his brother Cain, Gen. iv. 8.

XXII. *Saints live after death.* That particular of Abel's speaking being dead, giveth proof to this general.

XXIII. *Innocent blood crieth for vengeance after it is shed.* This is one respect wherein Abel is said to speak being dead. In reference hereunto, the difference is made betwixt the blood of Christ and the blood of Abel, Heb. xii. 24.

XXIV. *Cry of blood continueth to the world's end.* This participle, *yet*, intends as much.

XXV. *Faith causeth a good memorial after death.* By it Abel still speaketh.

Sec. 16. *Of Enoch, and his name.*

Ver. 5. *By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he had pleased God.*

The second worthy produced for exemplification of the virtue of faith is Enoch. He was indeed the seventh from Adam, Jude 14. And no doubt but that Adam himself, and the five betwixt Adam and Enoch, were all pious men and believers. But the Holy Ghost having recorded no memorable effects of their

faith, the apostle passeth them over. See ver. 32, Sec. 192.

After Enos was born, it is said, that 'then began men to call upon the name of the Lord,' Gen. iv. 26. But it is not said that Enos brought them so to do. Therefore that act cannot properly and necessarily be applied to him.

From the apostle's passing over so many betwixt Abel and Enoch, and others in other places, we may infer, that it is a point of wisdom to content ourselves with such matters as the Holy Ghost hath thought meet to relate. This is to 'be wise,' or to understand 'according to sobriety,' *ἡσυχία ἐν τῷ σωφρονισμῷ*, Rom. xii. 3.

The particular person here commended is Enoch. This is a Hebrew name, derived from a verb that signifieth to *dedicate*, and may be interpreted, *dedicated*. His condition did fitly answer his name; for of all the patriarchs he was most especially dedicated to God: as the testimony of his walking with God, and of God's taking him to himself, giveth evidence.

There were others of his name, as Cain's first son: who also gave the same name to a city that he built, Gen. iv. 18. And Abraham's grandchild by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 4, and Reuben's eldest son, Gen. xlii. 9. But the translating of that Enoch which is here mentioned, sheweth that it is he which was the seventh from Adam who is here meant.

The same faith before spoken of, even a justifying faith, resting on the promised Messiah, is here without all contradiction meant. For by it *he pleased God*.

#### Sec. 17. Of Enoch's translation.

The evidence of Enoch's faith is thus expressed, *Enoch was translated*.

Of the meaning of the word *μετετέθη*, see Chap. vi. 17, Sec. 135, and Chap. vii. 12, Sec. 67. It is applied sometimes to things translated from one kind or condition unto another, as where it is said, 'the priesthood was changed,' Heb. vii. 12. And the Galatians were removed from their former teacher, Gal. i. 6. Or from one place to another, as the patriarchs were carried out of Egypt into Sychem, Acts vii. 16. Here it implieth both. For Enoch was translated from earth to heaven, and the mortality of his body was translated into immortality. For this end of his translation is thus expressed, *that he should not see death*.

The translation here meant was both in body and soul; from earth into heaven. Such a translation as Elijah's was, 2 Kings ii. 11.

The distinct manner of translating Enoch, is not so punctually set down as that of Elijah's, 2 Kings ii. 11.

We read of Christ, that he also was taken up body and soul into heaven; but it was after his death and resurrection, wherein his ascension differed from the translation of these two, Acts i. 9.

These two, Enoch and Elijah, are the only instances

that have been given of God's extraordinary power in this kind since the beginning of the world.

Papists have fabulously recorded much of the assumption of the Virgin Mary, but without all warrant.

Those two before mentioned were before Christ's time; and that they might be special evidences of the body's fruition of eternal life, together with the soul in heaven.

Enoch was in the first age of the world, before there was distinction of Jew and Gentile; and so an instance of the glorification of body and soul to the whole world. To assure them the more thereof, while he was on earth, he prophesied of the Lord's coming to judgment, Jude 14.

Elijah was in that age wherein the partition wall stood between the Jew and Gentile; so as he was a special instance thereof to the church of Israel.

Christ's ascension was yet a more pregnant proof thereof, and that to all nations to the end of the world. For as he was seen in his body animated by his soul, to ascend into heaven; so after his ascension was he seen in that body to be in heaven by Stephen, Acts vii. 56. And by Paul, Acts xxii. 14, 17.

There shall be at the moment of Christ's coming to judgment, a like, but a more universal rapture; for all then living shall with their bodies and souls united, be rapt up to the judgment-seat of Christ. 'We shall be changed,' saith the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. 52, changed both in our place and in our condition, as Enoch was.

#### Sec. 18. Of Enoch's not seeing death.

The translation of Enoch is much amplified by this end thereof, 'that he should not see death.'

This phrase, *μὴ ἰδῆναι*, *not see death*, is a Hebraism;<sup>1</sup> death thereby is resembled to an enemy: not seeing, to an absolute freedom. He should be so far from being taken and seized upon by death, as he should not see death; death should not come near him. Thus it is said of those that have nothing to do with the kingdom of God, 'they cannot see the kingdom of God,' John iii. 3. To clear this a little further, Christ useth these two phrases, 'shall never see death,' 'shall never taste of death,' John viii. 51, 52, at the same time, as setting forth one and the same thing, one expounding the other. *Not to taste* of a thing, is to have nothing at all to do with it. *To taste* is the least degree of participation. Because that no other but only those which have been mentioned shall be free from death (for it is appointed unto men once to die, Heb. ix. 27), it is said, 'What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?' into whose sight death shall not come, and seize upon him, Ps. lxxxix. 48. The psalmist excludeth all men, except before excepted, from the privilege of not seeing death; so as it was a singular and an especial prerogative.

As an evidence that Enoch was taken away in his

<sup>1</sup> *ἰδῆναι*, *Videre ab ópaa*, Chap. iii. 8, Sec. 68.

very body, so as his soul only was not translated, and his body left on earth (for that had been, to be dead): but that his body also was translated, whereby he was freed from death, it is here added, that *ἐνζήσαστο, he was not found.*

The Hebrew thus expresseth it, *וְאֵינוּ מְצֹאִים, and he was not.* This phrase is put for such as are missing, and can hardly, if at all, be had again; being either on earth kept from one, as Simeon was in Egypt kept fast from his father; or by death taken away, as Jacob supposed Joseph to be, Gen. xlii. 36.

The LXX.<sup>1</sup> interpret that phrase, *he was not*, thus: *ἐνζήσαστο, he was not found.* Whom the apostle followeth: well knowing that it fully expresseth the sense of the text. For it is probable that they who lived with Enoch, missing him, did search for him, as the children of the prophets did for Elijah after he was taken into heaven, 2 Kings ii. 17.

This phrase then sheweth that he was no more on earth, nor ever shall be. If the living cannot be found amongst the dead, Luke xxiv. 5, much less can saints glorified in heaven be found here on earth.

This, among other arguments, doth clearly disprove the Popish conceit about Enoch and Elias, their reservation in the earthly paradise, and their being the two witnesses that shall oppose Antichrist, and be slain.<sup>2</sup> Because that which is related of Enoch is extraordinary, the apostle renders such a reason thereof as is enough to stop the mouth of any gainsayer, and to work credence in those who bear any respect to God. The reason is thus expressed, 'because God had translated him.'

This word, *μετέθεκε, translated,* is the same verb that was before used in this verse, and to be taken in the same sense.

He was translated from a mortal condition to an immortal, and from place to place, even from earth to heaven.

The Hebrew word, *הִנָּח, used in this point, signifieth to take,* and it is frequently used of taking a person or a thing to one's self: as Isaac *took* Rebekah, Gen. xxv. 20. Now it was God that thus translated him, and took him to himself, for God hath power to preserve from death whom he will, and to settle any man where he will. He hath not tied himself to those bounds wherewith he hath limited his creatures. Enoch by faith in God was translated, and we by faith do understand that he was translated.

#### Sec. 19. Of Enoch's pleasing God.

As the apostle rendered the reason of Enoch's translation, to rest in God, who translated him; so he further renders the reason why God translated him, namely, *because he had pleased God.* The causal participle, *γὰρ, for,* demonstrateth as much.

<sup>1</sup> Of the LXX., see Chap. i. 6, Sec. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Bellarm. *De Rom. Pontif.* p. iii. cap. 6. Sander. *De monst.* 26. Rhemist. *Annot. on Apoc.* xi. 3.

This is further manifested by the order of setting down this point, in this phrase, *before his translation.*

This noun, *μετάθεσις, translation,* is derived from the same verb that was used twice before. It is also used before, Chap. vii. 12, Sec. 67.

Before this act of God, Enoch did that which moved God to translate him. So much is here expressly set down in the reference of this preposition, *πρὶν, before,* and implied by the verb of the time past, *had pleased.* So as in his lifetime, before he received any recompense, he did that which was acceptable to the Lord. Work must be done before reward can be expected. See Chap. x. 36, Sec. 136.

That which Enoch did is expressed under this phrase, *ἐνζητεῖσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, pleased God.*

The verb is a compound. The simple verb, *ἀγαπᾶω* out of which it is compounded, signifieth *to please*, Gal. i. 10. The preposition, *ἐν,* with which it is compounded, signifieth *well.* So as it addeth much emphasis to the word, and implieth that Enoch was very circumspect over himself, and careful in all things to do that which was acceptable unto God; that was, well to please him. This word is used to set out God's approbation of works of mercy, Chap. xiii. 16, Sec. 146.

Enoch did the rather please God, because he 'walked before God,' and that continually; for so much doth that conjugation, *Ἰθθαελ,* wherein the Hebrew word is expressed, imply, as is largely shewed in the *Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 58.

Enoch had God always in his eyes, whether he were alone, or in company, about duties of piety, or other affairs.

Thereby he was moved carefully and conscionably to avoid what might be displeasing unto God, and diligently to do what was agreeable to the will of God.

To give further evidence to the truth hereof, it is said that he had testimony hereof. The same verb in Greek, *μαρτυρεῖσθαι,* is here used, that was before used, ver. 2, Sec. 6, and taken in that sense. He had the testimony of men and God. Of men, by bearing witness unto him, and highly esteeming him; of God, by an inward witness of God's Spirit in his own conscience, and by God's approving him.

Enoch in his lifetime prophesied of the coming of the Lord to judgment, Jude 14. Whereby it appears that he had the day of judgment in his mind; and by a consideration thereof, he might be the rather moved to seek in all things, well to please the Lord.

#### Sec. 20. Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 5.

In this verse we have a reward of Enoch's faith.

Hereof are two parts,

1. The kind of reward.

2. The ground thereof.

The kind of reward is,

(1.) Propounded in this phrase, *he was translated.*



(2.) Amplified by the end, and by the author of his translation.

In declaring the end, is set out,

[1.] The extent of his translation; he was so translated, as he *should not see death*.

[2.] The evidence thereof; *he was not found*.

The author of his translation was God, who is here named, to manifest the truth thereof; because *God had translated him*.

In setting forth the ground of his reward, is declared,

[1.] What Enoch had done; *he had pleased God*.

[2.] The time when he did it; *before his translation*.

[3.] The evidence thereof; *he had testimony*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Faith bringeth reward*. By faith Enoch had the reward here mentioned.

II. *To be translated from earth to heaven is a great reward*. In this sense it is here set down.

III. *The best lives are not the longest lives*. Enoch was one of the best of the patriarchs that lived before the flood, yet lived the fewest years of them all.

IV. *It is a great favour to be exempted from death*. Hierin God testified his favour to Enoch.

V. *They who are in heaven cannot be found on earth*. Enoch, being translated, *was not found*.

VI. *God can give extraordinary rewards*. This reward was extraordinary; therefore it is said that *God translated him*.

VII. *Work is before reward*. So much is here expressed.

VIII. *They that please God shall surely be rewarded*. This is here noted as the ground of Enoch's reward.

IX. *Who walk with God please him*. This appears by the apostle's interpreting Enoch's walking with God, to be a pleasing of him.

X. *They who please God shall not want witness*. Enoch, which did so, had testimony thereof.

Sec. 21. *Of pleasing God by faith*.

Ver. 6. *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*.

This verse hath especial reference to the last clause of the former verse, and is a proof of this main point, that Enoch by faith pleased God. The argument is drawn from the impossibility of the contrary. It is impossible without faith to please God. Therefore Enoch, who had this testimony that he pleased God, had faith. Faith in this place is to be taken as it was in the first verse, and in other verses following; and in all those places it is taken, as here, for a justifying faith, as the effects thereof, following in this verse, do prove.

Of this word, *impossible*, see Chap. vi. 4, Sec. 38.

Here it is taken on supposition of man's corrupt

nature. So corrupt is man in soul and body, in every power and part of either, and so polluted is everything that passeth from him, as it is not possible that he should of and by himself do anything that is acceptable unto God: but faith looketh upon Christ, applyeth Christ and his righteousness, and doth all things wherein he hath to do with God, in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ. Thus man by faith pleaseth God. Out of Christ, which is without faith, it is impossible to please God. This manifesteth an absolute necessity of faith. See *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 2, Part 6, on Eph. vi. 16, Sec. 8, of Faith.

That which is not possible to attain unto, is to *please God*. As the English, so the Greek word, *εὐαγε-σάσαι*, translated to *please*, is the same that was used in the former verse, *εὐαγγελλίζω*, and here taken in the same sense, with the same emphasis. It implyeth a performance in the agent, or him that doeth a thing; and an acceptance in the object, or him to whom it is done.

That object is here implied under this relative *him*; which hath reference to God, mentioned in the last words of the former verse, and in the clause next following in this verse: for it is God whom Enoch pleased, whereof this verse is made a proof, and it is he whom we ought all to please.

There are four things which must concur to please God; all which are accomplished by faith, and by nothing else.

1. The person of him that pleaseth God, must be accepted of God. 'Unto the pure all things are pure,' Titus i. 15. 'God had respect unto Abel,' Gen. iv. 4.

2. The matter that pleaseth God must be agreeable to his will, Heb. xiii. 21. The apostle thereupon exhorteth to 'prove what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God,' Rom. xii. 2.

3. The manner of doing that which pleaseth God, must be with due respect to God: and that is in these and other like particulars:—

(1.) In obedience to God: because he hath commanded it. In this case we must say as Peter did, 'At thy word I will do it,' Luke v. 5. This is to do it 'for conscience' sake,' and 'for the Lord's sake,' Rom. xiii. 5; 1 Peter ii. 13.

(2.) In humility, denying of ourselves, and all conceit in ourselves, as he that said, 'Not I, but the grace of God which is with me,' 1 Cor. xv. 10.

(3.) In sincerity, as having to do with him that searcheth the heart. Thus did Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 3.

(4.) With sedulity: like the two faithful servants with whom the Lord was well pleased; but not like the slothful servant, Mat. xxv. 20, &c.

(5.) With alacrity and cheerfulness: for God loveth a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. ix. 7.

(6.) Within compass of our calling, 1 Cor. vii. 17.

(7.) With constancy. If any draw back, God's soul will have no pleasure in him, Heb. ix. 38.

(8.) In assurance, that God, who accepteth the person, accepteth also the work that is done. Hereby did Manoah's wife infer that God was pleased with that which they did, Judges xiii. 23.

4. The end, which is God's glory, 1 Cor. x. 31.

The foresaid four general points are those four causes whereby everything is made perfect.

Faith is the means whereby all of them may be effected and accomplished.

1. By faith in Christ the person is accepted of God, Eph. i. 6.

2. Faith makes men subject themselves to God's will.

3. Faith makes men have respect, even to the manner of what they do to Godward; that it be done in obedience, in humility, in sincerity, with sedulity, with alacrity, orderly, constantly, and with assurance of God's acceptance. All these may be exemplified in Enoch.

4. Faith, of all graces, most aimeth at God's glory. Abraham, 'being strong in faith, gave glory to God.'

#### Sec. 22. *Of believing that God is.*

The apostle giveth a proof of this assertion, that it is impossible without faith to please God. His proof is this, 'For he that cometh unto God, must believe that he is.'

The proof is applied to such as come to God. This word, *προσερχόμενοι*, *he that cometh*, is metaphorical, setting forth such as have to do with God in prayer, in praise, or in any other service. Of the composition of it, and further meaning of it, see Chap. vii. 25, Sec. 104.

That which is required of such as come to God, is, *to believe that God is*. It is in vain for any to go to one whom they do not believe to be. But this is not simply and barely to be taken of the being of God: for by reason, and philosophical arguments, it may be demonstrated that there is a God, and that God is; but that which is here spoken of, is an act of faith. It must, therefore, more distinctly be taken; namely, that he is the true God, the only true God, such a God as he hath revealed himself to be.<sup>1</sup> If we repeat this title, *God*, and set it after this relative, *he*, thus, 'He that cometh unto God must believe that he is God,' the sense will somewhat more clearly appear. So as God must be believed to be as he is, or as he hath manifested himself to be. Thus Abraham believed God to be, Gen. xv. 6.

To believe God otherwise, is to make him an idol, Rom. i. 21, that is, to believe him to be nothing, 1 Cor. viii. 4.

It standeth us, therefore, in hand well to be informed about God: and that as he hath made himself

<sup>1</sup> Debitor est is qui accedit ad Deum ut credat quod sit, et iis qui querunt se futuros sit remunerator.—*Sic Tremel. Interpret. Syron.*

known to us in his word. 'Search the Scriptures,' they are they which testify of him, John v. 39.

Here might occasion be taken of setting forth God in his nature, persons, properties, and works, whereby in the word he is made known unto us.

This point is the rather to be observed, because of the necessity that lieth upon it, implied in this word, *dei*, *must*; it will be otherwise altogether in vain to come unto God.

Of the word translated *must*, as it setteth forth sometimes a necessity, sometimes a duty, see Chap. ii. 1, Sec. 3.

#### Sec. 23. *Of God a rewarder.*

The apostle setteth forth another evidence of a true believer; namely, that he believeth that God is a *rewarder of them that seek him*. So as by faith a man doth not only understand God to be the true God, as he hath set forth himself in his word; but also resteth on him for acceptance: which the apostle thus expresseth, *that he is a rewarder*, &c.

The Greek word, *μισθαποδότης*, is a compound, whereof see Chap. ii. 2, Sec. 16; word for word it signifieth a *giver of a reward*. The noun carrieth a kind of emphasis with it, and sheweth that God layeth this as a charge upon himself, and taketh it as his function, to render a reward, Ps. lxxii. 12. This is an undoubted evidence of his being well pleased with them among whom he executeth his function.

This God taketh upon him,

1. That every one might have a reward. No creature can be too great to be rewarded of him, and the greatest needs his reward; yea, he can reward whole families, churches, and nations. On the other side, God is so gracious, as he accounteth none too mean to be rewarded of him. 'He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dung-hill,' 1 Sam. ii. 8. When Dives and all his house neglected Lazarus, the Lord looked upon him, and gave his angels charge over him, Luke xvi. 21, 22.

2. That believers might be sure of their reward. For God is faithful, Heb. x. 23. He will not fail to perform what he undertaketh. This the apostle would have Christians to know, Eph. vi. 8.

3. That the reward might be worth the having. For God in his rewards considereth what is meet for his excellency to give, and accordingly proportions his reward. As a king, when he would reward a faithful servant, he contents not himself to give him a little money, but rather gives high honours and dignities, great lordships, fair possessions, many immunities and privileges, gainful offices, and other like royal rewards which becom a king to give. Instance Pharaoh's reward to Joseph, Gen. xli. 41; Nebuchadnezzar's to Daniel and his three companions; Darius's also to Daniel; and Ahasuerus's to Mordecai. As God exceedeth these and all other monarchs in greatness, so will he exceed them in this kind of goodness.

1. This giveth evidence, that 'the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,' Prov. xv. 3, and that he knoweth how to put difference betwixt the good and evil, 2 Pet. ii. 9.

2. This may encourage believers against the ignorance, impotency, forgetfulness, ingratitude, mis-conceit, envy, malice, and persecution of men.

(1.) Some men are ignorant of the faithfulness of them whom they should reward: as Potiphar was ignorant of Joseph's faithfulness, Gen. xxxix. 19.

(2.) Others are not able to do what is meet.

(3.) Others forget kindnesses done; as Pharaoh's butler, Gen. xl. 23.

(4.) Others are ungrateful.

(5.) Others wink at, and will not see that which should be rewarded; as Nabal, 1 Sam. xxv. 10.

(6.) Others envy at goodness and faithfulness; as Saul, 1 Sam. xviii. 9.

(7.) Others malign men for their goodness; as the Pharisees did Christ, Mark iii. 22.

(8.) Others persecute them; as the Jews did Jeremiah, Jer. xxvi. 8.

It is in these and sundry other respects requisite, that we believe God to be a rewarder.

The apostle setting this down as a duty, giveth evident proof that reward may be aimed at. See Chap. vi. 15, Sec. 149.

#### Sec. 24. Of seeking God.

The persons that may expect reward from God, are thus set down, *them that diligently seek him*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, but a compound one, ἐκζητῶν. The simple verb, ζητῶ, signifieth to seek, Mat. vii. 7. The preposition ἐκ, with which it is compounded, signifieth out. The compound ἐκζητῶ, signifieth to seek out, to seek till one find; to seek earnestly and diligently. Thus men are said to 'seek after the Lord,' Acts xv. 17, and the prophets are said thus to seek after the salvation promised, 1 Pet. i. 10.

To express the emphasis of the word, our English translators insert this adverb, *diligently*. To these is the reward here appropriated. Moses doth to the life thus express this point; 'If thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,' Deut. iv. 29. In reference to the reward here appropriated to such, it is said, 'They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing,' Ps. xxxiv. 10.

1. Let none but such expect reward from God.

2. Let this stir us up to use our best endeavour so to find the Lord, as we may rest upon him, and make him our reward. Of man's endeavour after that which is for his own advantage, see Chap. iv. 11, Sec. 63.

Sec. 25. Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 6.

*But without faith it is impossible to please him:*

*for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

This declareth the benefit of faith. This is,

1. Propounded.

2. Confirmed.

In propounding of it, there is set down,

1. The matter wherein that benefit consisteth, that is, to please God.

2. The necessity of the means for attaining that benefit. This is set down in two negatives, *without it, it is impossible*.

The confirmation is taken from the reward of faith. For attaining hereunto, two acts of faith are set down,

1. To believe that God is God. This is amplified two ways,

(1.) By the person that so believes, *he that cometh unto God*.

(2.) By the necessity of it, in this word, *must*.

2. To believe that God is a rewarder. This is amplified by the object, or persons whom he rewardeth, *them that diligently seek him*.

#### Doctrines.

I. *By faith men please God*. This is here taken for granted.

II. *There is a necessity of using warrantable means*. It is impossible otherwise to prevail.

III. *Men have access to God*. This is here taken for granted under this phrase, *he that cometh to God*.

IV. *God is to be believed to be as he is*. This phrase, *that he is*, intends as much.

V. *It is no arbitrary matter to believe in God aright*. A *must* is put upon it. It is a bounden duty.

VI. *God is the rewarder*. This must be believed.

VII. *God rewardeth such as seek him*. This is here plainly expressed.

VIII. *God must be sought out*. The emphasis of the Greek word implies as much. We must do our uttermost in seeking him till we find him.

IX. *Men may aim at reward in approaching to God*. For he that cometh to God must believe that he is a rewarder.

#### Sec. 26. Of Noah and his faith.

Ver. 7. *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith*.

The third worthily produced for exemplification of the vigour of faith, is Noah, who lived in two ages of the world: before the flood, and after the flood. He lived six hundred years before the flood, Gen. vii. 6, and three hundred and fifty after the flood. Thus he lived in all nine hundred and fifty years, Gen. ix. 28, 29.

The name of Noah, נח, properly signifies *rest*. A reason of the name is thus given, נחמני, נחמני. He shall

comfort us,' Gen. v. 29. The name is taken out of the two first letters of that word **נֶחֱם**, *consolatus est*, which signifieth to comfort.

Others read that phrase translated 'he shall comfort us,' thus, **נִחַם**, 'he shall give us rest' (**נִחַם** *quiescit*): both tend to the same end.

This name was given by a spirit of prophecy: for by building the ark he brought refreshing, comfort, and rest to the world; and that in these respects:—

1. Thereby was afforded a lively type of Christ, who is the comfort and rest of man.

2. By Noah was the seminary of the world and church preserved. This was a matter of great comfort and rest.

3. By the sacrifice which he offered up, 'God smelled a savour of rest,' Gen. viii. 21.

4. To him God renewed a covenant of rest and peace, no more to drown the world, Gen. ix. 9, 11.

Thus if ever any name were fit and answerable to the intent thereof, this was.

In setting out the faith of this noble patriarch, who was the last of the old world, and the first of the new world, many memorable histories are pithily and elegantly couched in few words.

That Noah's faith was a justifying and a saving faith, is evident by producing it, as he did the faith of the elders, of Abel and Enoch, for proof of the faith described in the first verse.

*Obj.* The main thing for which Noah's faith is commended is but a temporary deliverance.

*Ans.* 1. Justifying faith, even in temporal blessings, eyeth God as a Father in Christ: and receiveth the things of this world by a right from Christ, and as a pledge of heavenly things.

*Ans.* 2. The ark, in making whereof he testified his faith, was an especial type of Christ, and his preservation from the flood a type of redemption from damnation, and of eternal salvation. So as his faith was fixed on Christ, and on salvation by Christ.

*Ans.* 3. The apostle inferreth that he 'became heir of righteousness which is by faith:' and that must needs be a justifying and saving faith.

Sec. 27. *Of Noah's faith about things not seen upon God's warning.*

The ground of Noah's giving that evidence of faith, which is here set down, is thus expressed, **ἡκούσας τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου**, *being warned of God*.

This phrase is the interpretation of one Greek word, whereof see Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 14. It sheweth that his faith was founded on the manifestation of God's will.

Of the many ways of revealing God's will, see Chap. i. 1, Sec. 11.

God's will revealed, hath ever put on saints to give evidence of their faith, for it is the proper ground of divine faith. This was the ground of Abraham's faith, Gen. xv. 6, and of the faith of the Israelites, Exod. iv. 31, and of the Gentiles, Acts xv. 7.

God himself is the supreme Lord over all, and his word is the highest and surest truth that can be, whereunto all ought to subject themselves: and they who well know him, will upon his warning in faith do anything. Requisite it is that we should acquaint ourselves with the oracles of God. We have them established, printed, read, and preached unto us. Let us learn by this instance of Noah to act our faiths according to the manifold warnings of God. See Sec. 37.

That whereof Noah is said to be warned, is thus expressed, **ἀκούσας βλαπτέων**, *things not seen*. The negative carries some emphasis with it, and is oft translated 'never before,' Luke xxiii. 53, or 'not yet,' John vii. 39. Therefore these two particles, *as yet*, are here fitly added in our English.

The things not seen, here intended, were, the general deluge, and the ark for preservation of them that should enter therein. These were not seen when they were first revealed unto Noah, and when first he believed that they should be. Thus his faith doth verify that which was said in the first verse concerning faith in general, it is 'the evidence of things not seen.' The rest of the world believed not; they scorned Noah's word, and laughed at his attempting to make an ark. They are in that respect called 'the world of the ungodly,' 2 Pet. ii. 7. There were a hundred and twenty years from the first giving of the warning to Noah, unto the bringing in of the flood, Gen. vi. 3. Yet did not Noah stagger in his faith, but continued to believe till all was fully accomplished. Of faith, as it is an evidence of things not seen, see ver. 1, Sec. 4.

Sec. 28. *Of being moved with fear to duty.*

The forementioned warning of God so wrought upon Noah, as it possessed him with a holy fear of God: and thereupon it is here said that he was **ἐκταθῆναι**, *moved with fear*, to do what God required.

This phrase, *moved with fear*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, which is a compound one. Of the composition and interpretation thereof, see Chap. v. 7, Sec. 44. Here it implieth such a religious fear as kept Noah from opposing against God's charge, though it seemed very strange, and though he were mocked by the world for observing the same.

Fear, in relation to God, is a reverent respect of the Divine Majesty, opposed to all light esteem thereof, Mal. i. 6.

It worketh in man's soul two things,

1. A holy awe, whereby he is careful to please God, 2 Chron. xix. 2.

2. A holy dread, whereby he is fearful of offending God, Prov. xiv. 6, Job i. 1.

This awful dread, and dreadful awe ariseth, as from knowledge of God, so from faith in him, as he maketh known himself and his will unto us. For faith worketh fear, Exod. xiv. 31.

By such a fear as is here noted to be of Noah, we may gain assurance of a true faith; yea, it will give evidence thereof to others, for it is the ground of all duty; God, therefore, wisheth it to be in the hearts of his people, Deut. v. 29, and inviteth such to praise him, Ps. xxii. 23. We are hereupon directed to 'serve the Lord in fear,' Ps. ii. 11, and to 'work out our salvation with fear,' Phil. ii. 12.

### Sec. 29. Of preparing means of safety.

That which Noah was moved with fear to do is thus set down, he *prepared an ark*. That word, *κατασκεύασας*, which is here translated *prepared*, is the same that is used in Chap. iii. 3, Sec. 46, and turned, *builded*. There see the composition and meaning of the word. Fitly is the word *prepared* here used, in regard of the long time wherein Noah was framing the ark, which was a hundred and twenty years, as hath been before shewed. In this very sense is this word used, 1 Pet. iii. 20.

That which was to be done was such a work as required much time, and many hands to do it. And, that it might not be to finish when the flood should come, Noah, that believed that the flood would come, prepared the ark beforehand. Thus Joseph beforehand prepared food without measure against the seven years' famine that was to come, Gen. xli. 49; and David prepared in abundance for the temple, 1 Chron. xxii. 3, &c. The wise virgins also prepared oil for their lamps against their bridegroom's coming.

Surely they have but little faith, if they have any at all, who neglect to prepare for their appearing before the great Judge. How many are like the foolish virgins! Mat. xxv. 3. The unjust steward shall condemn all such, Luke xvi. 8. Well might Christ say, 'The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light;' for they will take pains in their youth that they may have a livelihood in their old age: they will beforehand lay up for their children; they will provide against a dear year. Are men as wise for their souls, and the eternal salvation of them? Very few, if any.

Let us give proof of our faith in preparing beforehand against dangers, that we may be saved when others perish, as Noah was.

### Sec. 30. Of Noah's ark.

That which Noah is here said to prepare is styled, *κατασκεύην, an ark*. Of the divers acceptions and meanings of the word, see Chap. ix. 1, Sec. 20.

This ark was the rarest fabric that ever was made to swim on water. It is probable that it was the first vessel that ever was put to sea.

1. The matter of it is said to be gopher, a kind of wood as fit, if not fitter, than our oak for such a purpose. The tree out of which that wood was taken was tall, big, and lasting. The planks thereof were so set and jointed together as they kept out water;

and for that end they are also said to be pitched within and without, Gen. vi. 14.

2. For the magnitude of it, it was the greatest vessel that ever was borne on waters. The length of it was three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty, the height thirty, Gen. vi. 15. Compare it with Solomon's temple, which was a very fair and spacious building, 1 Kings vi. 2, and you will find it far to exceed that. In height it was equal with the temple, in breadth two times and a half wider, in length five times longer.

An ordinary cubit, from the elbow to the top of the longest finger, is counted half a yard. After this ordinary cubit, it was a hundred and fifty yards long, five and twenty yards broad, and fifteen yards high.

Many think that the cubits at that time were taken according to the stature of men in those days, and that a cubit made a yard: so it would prove to be three hundred yards long, fifty yards broad, and thirty yards high. By this account it would prove to be in length above a quarter of a mile. Never was the like heard of. Much is spoken of the wooden Trojan horse; but, besides that there is no certainty whether there ever was such a thing or no, it cannot be imagined to be like unto this. That is said to hold a multitude of captains and soldiers; but this held of all kinds of creatures flying in the air or going or creeping on or in the earth.

Some, to amplify the greatness of this vessel, say, that, among other creatures, whales were also therein.

This is but a foolish conceit, for in Scripture there is no mention of any fish being therein. Neither was there any need that they should enter into it; for the element which destroyed other creatures was their proper element to dwell in, and to be preserved by.

3. For the form of it, it was flat-bottomed, from the top somewhat shelving, three stories high. It had a multitude of cabins, for several creatures, and for several kinds of food meet for each of them. It was so artificially made, as though there were a door, if not more doors than one, for all kinds of creatures to come in and out thereof, yea, and windows, or other means to let in light; yet no water from above or below could come in to annoy them. There is no mention made of masts, tacklings, rudder, oars, anchor, or other like things which are useful to other ships; for it could not be moved or guided by the art of man, but only by divine providence.

Atheists have sundry ways cavilled against it, as Apelles against the smallness of it to hold so many creatures and so much food so long a time as that is said to do. Celsus cavilled against the greatness of it, as being impossible for so great a vessel to be made for such a purpose.

Faith passeth by all such difficulties and seeming impossibilities. By faith we believe that the whole world was made of nothing.

The use of it gives an instance of God's wisdom in using means for effecting that which he intends: not

that he is tied to means; for as he made the world without means, so he can preserve and destroy whom and what he will without means.

The kind of means being such a one as hath been set forth, and as the like never was before, nor shall be, giveth further proof that God can raise up and use extraordinary means. See Chap. ii. 4, Sec. 28.

Sec. 31. *Of saving Noah's house in the ark.*

One end of Noah's making the ark is thus expressed, *to the saving of his house*. The word in Greek, *σωτηριας*, translated *saving*, is a noun, and properly signifieth *salvation*, or *preservation*. Hereof see Chap. i. 14, Sec. 159.

God intending to bring such a flood upon the earth as should sweep away the whole world, the ark so floated and swam upon the waters, as all that were therein were saved alive thereby. Now Noah, who believed thus much himself, persuaded his wife, his three sons and their wives, of the truth thereof, and moved them to enter therein, whereby they were saved. All these were of his household; therefore *his house*, is metonymically put for his household. It is not to be thought that only these were of his family. It is probable that he had a very great family; but he wrought upon none but these; none but these were persuaded to enter into the ark. So Lot could prevail with none but his wife and two daughters to go out of Sodom.

Because he was assured that all that entered into the ark should be saved alive, and he observed that none would believe him but they of his household; this is fitly set down as an end of his making the ark, *to the saving of his house*.

This word *saving*, may in this place be applied both to the preservation of their temporal lives, and also to the eternal salvation of their souls: for the ark was a type and a sacrament of their deliverance from eternal damnation. In this respect, baptism is styled in reference to the ark, *antitypes*, 'a like figure,' 1 Peter iii. 21. When two types resembling one thing are compared together, they are set out by the Greek word, translated 'a like figure.'

The ark, therefore, borne upon the waters, whereby Noah and his family were saved, and baptism, being both seals of our redemption by Christ, and of our deliverance from the destruction of the ungodly world, they are 'like figures.' Hereby it appears that they who entered into the ark, and believed as Noah did, were eternally saved. All that are baptized are not saved, though baptism be a means to help on their salvation: so neither all that entered into the ark can be concluded to be heirs of eternal salvation, for cursed Ham entered therein. Yet notwithstanding might Noah prepare it, both for the present preservation, and also for the eternal salvation, of all that should enter therein.

The saving of those that were in the ark, typified VOL. III.

that salvation which is brought to man by the mediation of Jesus Christ.

This giveth instance of the extent of God's providence over his church, in saving body and soul—the body from temporal danger, the soul from eternal perdition. Thus far may Israel's passing through the Red Sea be extended, Exod. xiv. 22, and the cloud, and the passover, and manna, and the water that came out of the rock.

This saving of Noah and his family, giveth proof that the incredulity of the multitude is no prejudice to the faith of saints. For though the whole world of the ungodly perished by the flood, yet Noah and his family were saved in the ark. 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished,' 2 Peter ii. 9. The Red Sea, that was a wall of defence to the Israelites, overwhelmed the Egyptians, Exod. xiv. 22. 'The just shall live by his own faith.' As the believer is not prejudiced by another's unbelief, so neither shall the unbeliever be saved by another's faith. 'Two shall be in one bed, the one taken, the other left,' Luke xvii. 34.

It may further from hence be inferred, that there is no salvation out of the church, for there was no preservation out of the ark. See more hereof in *Domest. Duties*, on Eph. v. 23, Sec. 23.

Sec. 32. *Of the world condemned by the ark.*

Two effects are further observed to follow upon Noah's preparing the ark; the first is in these words: *By which (ὅι ἦς) he condemned the world*.

The most immediate and proper reference that this relative, *which*, can have, is to the ark. They are both of the same gender (*ὅι ἦς καὶ τὸ πλοῦτος*).

By *καὶ τὸ πλοῦτος*, the world, metonymically are meant the inhabitants thereof, and the greater part of them. So it is oft used, John xii. 19.

Upon the fall of Adam, he and all his posterity were deprived of that glorious image wherein God first created man, and depraved with a most vicious and pernicious disposition: whereupon it is said that 'the whole world lieth in wickedness,' 1 John v. 19. And all except those whom Christ 'delivereth from this present evil world,' Gal. i. 4, are counted to be of the world. Such were all those that lived at the time of the flood, except they who entered into the ark: whereupon they are called 'the world of the ungodly,' 2 Peter ii. 9.

Noah is said to *condemn* these. The word is fitly translated, for it is a compound. The simple verb *καταδικάζω*, signifieth to *judge*, John vii. 24, 51. This compound, *κατακαταδικάζω*, by judging to *condemn*, Mat. xii. 41, 42, and xxvii. 3, Rom. ii. 1.

Noah is said to condemn the world by the ark—

1. Because it was a visible prediction of the flood: thereby they were foretold that such a judgment would fall out.

2. It shewed that they worthily perished, in that they sought not to prevent that destruction which was threatened.

3. It was a demonstration that they were far unlike to Noah, in that they regarded not that whereabout he took so much pains.

4. Noah's making of the ark was a continual preaching; yea, together with working upon the ark, he did by word of mouth foretell what would fall out, 2 Peter ii. 5.

5. The very ark was a witness of their infidelity, so as they were condemned thereby.

6. It was an occasion of aggravating their unbelief, whereby they were the rather condemned.

Thus we see that means given for preservation may prove means of destruction. As this proved true in Israel's passing through the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 16, and in their eating quails, Num. xi. 33, and in sundry other temporal means; so also in spiritual means, as the word, 2 Cor. ii. 16; the sacrament, 1 Cor. xi. 29; yea, Christ himself, Isa. viii. 14, 1 Peter ii. 6, 7, Luke ii. 34.

This ariseth from the corrupt and perverse disposition of men, who, spider-like, suck vermin<sup>1</sup> out of sweet flowers, or rather turn the sweet juice of flowers into poison.

This should be carefully heeded of us, who have means of salvation afforded unto us, that we may duly observe the proper end for which they are afforded, and make the best use that we can thereof.

This condemnation of the world teacheth us to come out of the world, and to abandon the fashion and course thereof, lest we perish with it. See more hereof, Chap. xiii. 13, Sec. 133.

This is the rather to be observed, by reason of the extent of this word, *world*, which ever have been, still are, and ever will be, the greater number. See Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 91.

The way to destruction is a broad way, Mat. vii. 13, and withal there are many byways: whereas there is only one way, and that a narrow one, encumbered with many difficulties, and so limited, as if we step out of it, we miss of life; but there are no bounds set to the way that leadeth to destruction, Judges xxi. 25. In this way everything is agreeable to nature, which is downhill. It hath always wind and tide with it. It is stretched out by applause, promotion, profit, pleasure, and other like temptations, which the devil frameth according to the particular humours of men.

Sec. 33. *Of Noah's being heir of the righteousness by faith.*

The other effect following upon Noah's preparing the ark is thus set down, *And became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.* The first copulative particle, *and*, giveth evidence that the two clauses

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'venom'!—Ed.

joined thereby have some agreement; and that is this general, that they are both effects of the same thing, yet in the kind of effect they much differ. The former was a great judgment upon the world: but this a great recompense to himself.

There was before a great reward mentioned of Noah's faith in preparing the ark, which was 'the saving of his house.' Here is a greater.

Every word in this clause carrieth much emphasis.

1. The copulative was noted before.

2. This verb, *ἐγένετο*, *became*, or *was made*, implyeth that the occasion of the reward was taken from this evidence of faith that is here set down; at least occasion was thence taken of manifesting as much.

3. This dignity, *κληρονομία*, *heir*, is no small one; it implyeth a singular and an especial prerogative.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Noah was the supreme lord of the whole world, and his sons heirs under him. There never was so absolute a monarch since Adam's time. It is said, that 'of the sons of Noah the whole earth was overspread,' Gen. ix. 9. But here is intended a greater dignity; for,

4. Righteousness, *δικαιοσύνη*, was it whereof he was an heir. Could the beauty and glory of righteousness be thoroughly discerned or conceived, it would be found to be, as indeed it is, the greatest dignity that a creature can be advanced unto.<sup>2</sup> It was man's chiefest excellency in his innocent estate; for it was the most principal part of God's image in which man was at first created, Gen. i. 27. That which is said of holiness may be applied to righteousness, Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 7.

To set out this dignity the more, the apostle useth this word synecdochically for that also which follows upon it, righteousness together with eternal life: so as an heir of righteousness is an heir of that inheritance which is obtained by righteousness. It is called 'a crown of righteousness,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. The glorious attire of glorified saints is 'the righteousness of saints,' Rev. xix. 8. Thus they are heirs of salvation. See Chap. i. 14, Secs. 159, 160.

5. This righteousness is said to be *by faith*. It was not a righteousness which arose from himself, or inherent in himself: it was, *κατὰ πίστιν*, *according to faith*, or that righteousness which he attained by faith, and received from above. It was indeed the righteousness of Christ himself, whom he beheld in the ark, that was a type of Christ. The apostle excellently setteth out the righteousness of faith, and opposeth it to a man's own righteousness. He calleth it 'the righteousness of God,' Rom. x. 3, 6.

The righteousness which is by faith is that which every believer hath, and that whereunto he is fitted by faith, and that which cannot be had without faith.

All are spoiled and for ever deprived of that in-

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. i. 14, Secs. 160, 162.

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. i. 9, Sec. 114.

herent righteousness wherein God created Adam. God, instead thereof, makes his elect heirs of a far more excellent righteousness—the righteousness of God; and leaves it not in their power to hold it, or let it go.

It is the righteousness of faith, for the continuance whereof we depend on Christ. ‘We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith,’ Gal. v. 5.

Sec. 34. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 7.*

Ver. 7. *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

In this text is a commendation of Noah's faith.

Hereof are two parts,

1. An evidence of his faith.

2. A recompense thereof.

In the evidence two things are to be considered,

1. The ground of his faith.

2. The fruits thereof.

The grounds are of two sorts, one concerning God, another concerning himself.

In that which concerned God three things are noted,

1. A charge of God, *being warned of God.*

2. The subject of that charge, *things not seen.*

3. The limitation thereof, *as yet.*

The other kind of ground, concerning himself, was a holy fear, *moved with fear.*

The fruit of his faith was in general his obedience to God. This is set out by an act, *he prepared an ark.* Here we may distinguish

The act, *prepared*; and the object, *an ark.*

This effect is amplified two ways,

1. By the advantage he brought to himself.

2. By the damage that followed thereupon to others.

The advantage is propounded, in this word, *saving*; and amplified by the extent thereof, *his house.*

The damage to others is set forth,

1. By the kind of it, in this word, *condemned.*

2. The persons condemned, under this word, *the world.*

The recompense of his faith is a great prerogative. Wherein we have,

1. The kind of it, *heir.*

2. The excellency of it. This is,

(1.) Propounded, in this word, *righteousness.*

(2.) Expounded, in this phrase, *which is by faith.*

Sec. 35. *Of observations gathered out of Heb. xi. 7.*

1. *Justifying faith manifesteth itself in temporal matters.* This faith here spoken of was a justifying faith; yet it was exercised about a corporal preservation. See Sec. 26.

II. *A good name is to be made good.* That is, he that hath a good name must answerably carry him-

self. *Noah* signified *rest*, and he was a man that procured rest. See Sec. 26.

III. *God foretold the deluge that came upon the old world.* This word, *warned*, intends as much. See Sec. 27.

IV. *God's warning is a sufficient ground for attempting anything.* This was Noah's ground. See Sec. 27.

V. *Faith is exercised about things not seen.* In such things was Noah's faith exercised. See Sec. 27.

VI. *Future visible things are not seen till they be accomplished.* This is implied under this clause, *as yet.* See Sec. 27.

VII. *Faith works a reverent respect towards God.* This is that fear that is here set down as a fruit of Noah's faith. See Sec. 28.

VIII. *Fear of God works obedience to God.* Noah, by his fear of God, was moved to do that which God warned him of. See Sec. 28.

IX. *Means for safety are to be prepared.* So did Noah here. See Sec. 29.

X. *God useth means for accomplishing his purpose.* It was God's purpose to preserve Noah and some of all living creatures on earth, when he brought a general deluge, and thereupon appointed an ark, which was a fit means for that purpose. See Sec. 30.

XI. *Extraordinary cases require extraordinary means.* The preservation of Noah and other creatures from the deluge was an extraordinary case, therefore the ark, which was an extraordinary means, was prepared. See Sec. 30.

XII. *God can make means of temporal preservation means also of eternal salvation.* The ark which preserved them from the deluge was a sacrament, to seal up their redemption by Christ. See Sec. 30.

XIII. *Faith is manifested by obedience.* Noah's preparing the ark upon God's warning was an act of obedience. He did it by faith. See Sec. 27.

XIV. *Believers may do what they see fit for the preservation of their lives.* This was one end of Noah's preparing the ark. See Sec. 31.

XV. *A governor's care must extend to the preservation of his house.* So did Noah's. See Sec. 31.

XVI. *Believers are a blessing to those that belong unto them.* Noah's household that entered into the ark did partake of that blessing through his faith. See Sec. 31.

XVII. *Such as belong to believers may miss of their blessing.* So did all the rest of Noah's house that entered not into the ark. See Sec. 31.

XVIII. *Most men are prone to reject means for their good.* So did the old world refuse to enter into the ark. See Sec. 32.

XIX. *Saints are heirs.* That which is here noted of Noah is true of all saints.

XX. *Righteous deeds are a condemnation of the wicked.* Thus Noah condemned the world. See Sec. 32.

XXI. *Means of preservation may bring destruction.*



The waters that did bear up the ark, and them that were in it, destroyed the rest of the creatures on earth. See Sec. 32.

XXII. *The inheritance of saints is righteousness.*

XXIII. *The righteousness proper to saints is by faith.* Both these are here plainly expressed of Noah's righteousness. See Sec. 33.

Sec. 36. *Of Abraham, his faith and calling.*

Ver. 8. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

The fourth worthily produced for proof of the vigour of faith is Abraham. The proof of his faith is more largely set out by the apostle than the faith of any other of the worthies, for it continueth to the end of the nineteenth verse. Only two verses are inserted—viz., the eleventh and twelfth—concerning Sarah's faith, which also tends to the amplification of Abraham's.

As the faith of others before mentioned, so Abraham's was a true justifying faith, as is evident by the apostle's explanation thereof, Rom. iv. 1, 2, &c., Gal. iii. 6. Though instances of sundry temporal things be brought in as evidences of his faith, yet many of them were types of spiritual and heavenly matters, vers. 10, 16; and withal, the temporal things noted were appendices to spiritual and heavenly.

Of the notation of Abraham's name, of the dignity of his person and excellency of his faith, see Chap. vi. 13, Secs. 91–94.

The first particular that the apostle setteth down is the warrant which Abraham had to do what he did, thus expressed, *when he was called*, or word for word, *καλεσθεως*, being called.

This is the same word that is used, Chap. v. 4, Sec. 20. It implieth a manifestation of God's pleasure, namely, that it was his will that Abraham should do that which is here said to be done by him. For it is thus in the history, 'The Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country,' &c., Gen. xii. 1, Acts vii. 2, 3. Under this word is comprised a clear manifestation of God's mind to him, as if by name he had called him. Of the divers ways of God's revealing his will, see Chap. i. 1, Sec. 11.

Hereby Abraham shewed that God's will was his rule, as was before noted of Noah, Sec. 27.

This participle, *called*, is in Greek set immediately before this noun, *Abraham*. Hence many expositors, both ancient and modern, refer it to Abraham himself, and thus translate it, *By faith he, which is called Abraham, obeyed*. So the Rhemists, in imitation of their vulgar Latin.<sup>1</sup> Thus this participle is but as a complement, which may well be left out. Besides, if we strictly consider circumstances, we shall find that he was not then called Abraham; that

name was given unto him four and twenty years after this which is here set down, Gen. xvii. 5.

Our English hath so set the words as the true sense is clearly manifested thereby, namely, that the reason of Abraham's leaving his country was God's calling him out of it.

Have papists this warrant for their pilgrimages to the place where the temple of Jerusalem was? or the sepulchre of our Saviour? or to Rome to visit the pope? or to the Lady at Loretto or at Hales? or other like places where they conceive saints' relics to be? or to their shrines here and there set up?

Sec. 37. *Of obeying God's call.*

That wherunto Abraham was called was to go out into a place. In the Greek the verb *obeyed* is put before this act of *going out*—thus: 'Ἀβραάμ ὑπακούσας ἐξῆλθεν, Abraham obeyed to go out into a place.

By that placing of the Greek words it may be thought that Abraham's going out hath reference to his obedience; but as our English have placed the words, that act of going out hath reference to God's calling him.

Both tend to the same end; for God called him to go out, and he obeying to go out, thereby sheweth that God called him thereunto, as is set down, Gen. xii. 1.

*Obj.* His father Terah took him, Gen. xi. 31. How then did he obey upon God's call?

*Ans.* One reason doth not simply cross another, for many reasons may concur to enforce one and the same point. God's call was the first and principal moving cause. Terah's taking him was the instrumental means.

*Obj.* 2. God's call was after Terah's death, so as it was also after he was come out, Gen. xi. 32, and xii. 1.

*Ans.* Though mention be made of God's call after Terah's death, yet was it before. Our English translators have well turned the word of calling into the preterpluperfect tense, thus: 'The Lord *had* said unto Abraham,' Gen. xii. 1, which well might be before Terah's death. Hereupon Stephen thus expresseth it: 'God appeared unto Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country,' Acts vii. 2, 3.

Thus, therefore, conceive the order of Abraham's departure.

1. God speaks to Abraham to go out.
2. Abraham telleth his father Terah thereof.
3. His father takes him with others to go out.
4. In their journey Terah resteth, and dieth at Charran.
5. Abraham goeth thence to Canaan.

Thus the first ground of all was God's call. This was it to which Abraham yielded obedience.

The word *obeyed* is a compound, and properly significeth to hearken and yield to a thing, or to yield

<sup>1</sup> Chrysost., Theodor., Oecum., Erasm.

<sup>2</sup> Fidei qui vocatur Abraham obediuit.—Uet. Lat.

to that which he heareth. Hereof see Chap. v. 8, Sec. 48.

This giveth a further evidence that faith worketh obedience. That which he obeyed is thus set down, *to go out into a place*. Here is no particular place set down, for it is in the end of this verse said that 'he knew not whither he went.'

This obedience was a simple obedience, merely upon the manifestation of God's will; he could not tell whether it were a better or a worse place than that out of which he went.

Such ought our obedience to be to God's call, and to any manifestation of his will. It must be a simple obedience in subjection to God's will, without inquiring after the reason thereof, or without objecting any scruples or difficulties against it. Such was Noah's faith. See Sec. 27. We must in this case do as blind men, who have skilful and faithful guides. They follow their guide, though they cannot see the way where they go. Much more we may, and must, follow God and his call.

Sec. 38. *Of the place out of which Abraham was called.*

The word *ἐξ ἧς ἐλθὼν*, translated *go out*, is a compound, whereof see Chap. iii. 16, Sec. 163. It here implieth an utter leaving and departing from a thing.

Here are two terms intended: one from which he departed; the other to which.

The former is said to be 'his own country and his kindred,' Acts vii. 3.

The other was 'a place that he knew not.'

It could not but seem to him a hard matter to leave the place of his nativity, and, as it is probable, a place wherein he had a fair inheritance. But God oft calls his to leave the dearest outward things that they have. He called his disciples to leave their father and their calling, Mat. iv. 21. He called Levi from the receipt of custom, Mat. viii. 9.

This he doth to try whether they respect him and his will more than external things, John xxi. 15. He that preferreth anything before God is not worthy of God, Mat. x. 37.

Let us herein shew ourselves to be of Abraham's faith, ready to let go anything upon God's call.

One special reason of God's calling Abraham out of his own country may be gathered from Joshua xxiv. 2, where it is said that the fathers of Abraham 'served other gods.' So as God hereby called him from an idolatrous place, lest he should be infected therewith, herein we have an instance that idolaters and idolatrous places must be left.

The very notation of the word *idolatry* giveth sufficient ground of abandoning communion with idolaters.

This word *idolatry* is taken from the Latins, *idololatria*, and the Latin from the Greek, *ἰδωλολατρεία*,

which is a compound of two nouns. One, *ἰδωλόν*, signifieth an *idol*; the other, *λατρεία*, *service*.

The former is again compounded of a substantive, *ἴδωρ*, *species*, *spectrum*, that signifieth a show, a fantasy, a ghost, or, as the vulgar speak, a hobgoblin; and an adjective, *ὅλος*, *totum*, that signifieth *whole*, or *every whit*, or *nothing but*: so as idol is but a mere show, 'an idol is nothing.'

The latter, *λατρεία*, which is *service*, from a verb, *λατρεύω*, *to serve*, which hath a notation from an increasing particle, *λα*, *particula intensiva*, and a verb, *τρέω*, *tremō*, that signifieth *fear* or *tremble*. This notation setteth out an idolater in his proper colours. He is kept in awe by that which is indeed nothing—only a mere show and fantasy.

The Lord, who meant to make Abraham a root out of which his church should sprout and grow, would not suffer him to be in danger of idolatry. Idolatry, in reference to that relation which is between God and professors, is a most heinous and hateful sin. God to them is a husband, John xxxi. 32. Idolatry is a spiritual adultery, Ezek. xxiii. 37. Adultery breaks the bond of wedlock, and gives cause of divorce, Jer. iii. 8. On this ground *Amni* is called *Lo-ammi*, Hosea i. 9. They who were the people of God in profession are accounted no people.

Sec. 39. *Of gaining by following God's call.*

The place whither Abraham was to go is thus described, *whither he should after receive for an inheritance*. The land here meant was the land of Canaan, the fertilest land in all the world, and every way fittest for habitation.

It is said that he should, *λαμβάνω*, *receive*. See Chap. ix. 15, Sec. 92. This hath reference to the giving of a thing; for receiving and giving are relates. See Chap. iv. 16, Sec. 96. In general it implieth that such as yield to God's call shall lose nothing thereby. Moses, who refused the honours of Egypt, was made ruler of the people of God, Acts vii. 35. Christ expressly saith, that he that forsaketh anything for his sake shall receive a hundredfold in this world, and in the world to come everlasting life, Mark x. 29, 30.

This is sufficient to move us to trust to the divine providence in every course whereunto we shall thereby be called. This is more to be trusted unto than all the treasures of the world, or all that men can do. Earthly treasures may be exhausted, men's purposes may be frustrated, but God's counsel and will shall stand.

That which he was to receive was not a present possession, for here is a word that sets out the time future thus: *he should after*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἕμελλον*, and intendeth the time to come; so as faith believes things future. Things to come are to faith as present. Hereby is confirmed that part of the description of faith that saith, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for;' which are things to come, Ver. 1, Sec. 3.

Sec. 40. *Of promises accomplished in men's posterity.*

It is added that Abraham should receive that place to which he went for an inheritance.

Of this word *inheritance*, and of sundry instructions and directions thence arising, see Chap. i. 14, Secs. 160, 162.

An inheritance intendeth a perpetual right to a thing, and that generation after generation, from parents to children. By God's law an inheritance was not to be removed from one stock to another, Num. xxxvi. 7, &c. This was the reason why Naboth would not part with his inheritance, though his sovereign would have purchased it of him, 1 Kings xxi. 3. It is noted as a blessing of a good man to 'leave an inheritance to his children's children,' Prov. xiii. 22.

The Scripture testifieth that God gave no inheritance to Abraham in Canaan, 'no, not so much as to set his foot on,' Acts vii. 5. This therefore hath reference to his posterity, in whom this was accomplished; but a long while after he went out of his country, even almost five hundred years, when Joshua divided the land among them, Josh. xiii. 7. So as God's promise may be accomplished in a man's posterity. It was given as a sign in the days of Ahaz, that 'a virgin should conceive, and bear a son,' Isa. vii. 14. But it was not accomplished till about seven hundred years after.

God is the Lord of times and seasons, and hath them in his power, Acts i. 7; and in his unsearchable wisdom can, and doth choose the fittest time for accomplishing every purpose, Eccles. iii. 1. The time wherein the great promise was accomplished is in this respect styled 'the fulness of time,' Gal. iv. 4.

We are taught hereby to wait for the accomplishment of such promises as are not yet accomplished, even these, and such like:

1. The recalling of the rejected Jews, Rom. xi. 26.
2. The bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles, Rom. xi. 25.
3. The destruction of Antichrist, 2 Thes. ii. 8.
4. The perfection of the church, Eph. v. 27.
5. The resurrection of the body, John v. 29.
6. Mansion places provided by Christ, John xiv. 3.
7. A kingdom, Luke xii. 32.

The accomplishment of these and other like promises, we must believe, pray for, wait for, and persevere in all these, either till they be accomplished, or so long as we live. 'Though they tarry, wait,' Hab. ii. 3. 'He that believeth maketh not haste,' Isa. xxviii. 16.

Sec. 41. *Of the kind of Abraham's obedience.*

The obedience which Abraham yielded to God's call is set down in the very word that was used in the call. God called him *יצא*, to go out, and *יצא*, he went out.

Hereby it is evidenced that true obedience is ordered according to the rule thereof, which is God's

word. Compare the charge that was given about making the tabernacle and the appurtenances, Exod. xxv., &c., with the execution of that charge, Exod. xxxvi., &c., and you will find their obedience answerable to the rule. This doth God expressly conjoin, Exod. xxv. 40. Hereof see more, Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 17.

To commend Abraham's obedience the more, this clause is added, *not knowing whither he went*.

It is probable that before Abraham came out of his country, God directed him to no particular place, nor made him any promise, but only bade him go out, and that the more to try the truth of his faith and the extent of his obedience. Thus, when he bade Abraham to offer his son for a burnt-offering, he did not tell him how he would provide another offering, after he had kid his son upon the altar, ready to be sacrificed, merely to try his faith. See more hereof in the end of Sec. 37.

Sec. 42. *Of Abraham's continuing where God called him.*

Ver 9. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.*

Abraham's obedience to God's call is yet further amplified by continuing in a strange land. He speaketh of the same faith that he did before, and setteth out a continued vigour thereof. It moved Abraham, not only once to leave his country, but though he were a long time in a place unknown, where he had no settled habitation, yet he repented not of his coming out of his country, nor thought of returning to it again, as his children in the wilderness did think of returning to Egypt again, Num. xiv. 4, but continued in a strange country all his days.

The verb *παριουσις*, translated *sojourned*, is a compound. The root is a noun, *οικος*, which signifieth a house. The simple verb, *οικω*, signifieth to dwell, 1 Cor. vii. 12. This compound, *παριουσις*, signifieth to abide in a place. The word in my text importeth two things.

1. A being in a strange land, and translated 'to be a stranger,' thus, *ὁ μόνος παριστάς*, 'Art thou only a stranger,' Luke xiv. 18.

2. An abiding or tarrying in a place. In this respect the noun, *παριστάς*, that is thence derived, is thus translated, 'When they dwell as strangers,' and thus, 'sojourning,' 1 Pet. i. 17. And another noun, *παριστάς*, *incola*, from the same verb, which is translated, 'one that sojourneth,' and 'a stranger,' Acts vii. 6, 29. It signifieth one that is settled in a strange land.

Grammarians do put this difference betwixt two words, *παριστάς*, *transmigrare*, *παριστάς*, *commorari*, compounded with different prepositions, but the same verb. The former signifieth to pass from one place to another; the latter to abide in a place. Both these significations are here intended.

In reference to the former, the land where he was is styled 'a strange land.' He had not been trained up there all his days, but was removed from another land to that.

In relation to the latter, he is said to dwell there.

This effect of faith, that he sojourned and continued to dwell in the place whither God called him, giveth instance that faith maketh men hold out. In this respect we are said by faith 'to wait,' Gal. v. 5. Faith is said to 'overcome,' 1 John v. 4. By faith men 'inherit the promise,' Heb. vi. 12. By faith we are 'saved,' Eph. ii. 8.

This is the best evidence of a true and sound faith that can be given. Hereof see more, Chap. x. 38, Sec. 146. Unbelief draws from God, Chap. iii. 12, Secs. 128, 129.

#### Sec. 43. *Of the land of promise.*

The place where Abraham abode is styled the *land of promise*. Of the word *ἐπαγγελία*, translated *promise*, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 6. It is called the land of promise because it was promised to Abraham and his posterity, Gen. xiii. 15. There is an emphasis in this Hebraism, *γῆ ἐπαγγελίας*, *land of promise*. It implieth more than if he had said, *a promised land*. For the phrase is exclusive, and implieth that of all the countries of the world, this especially was promised, and thereupon carrieth this title, 'a land of promise,' as 'a man of war,' 'a man of might,' men excellent and eminent therein.

This being added to the aforesaid effect of faith, sheweth that God's promise puts vigour to faith. He did the rather abide in that land, because God had promised to give it him. Moses doth often inculcate God's promise, to quicken the faith of the Israelites, Deut. vi. 3, and xv. 6, 8, Josh. xxiii. 5.

God's promise being the ground of faith, as hath been proved, Chap. vi. 96, it must nourish and strengthen the same.

This may inform us in one special reason of faith's fainting, which is forgetfulness of God's promise, Heb. xii. 5, Ps. cxvi. 11. If the oil fail, the lamp cannot give light.

God's promises are hereupon seriously and frequently to be meditated upon, that our faith may continue and increase.

The emphasis of this phrase, *the land of promise*, implieth that God's provision is for the best. Though he called Abraham out of one land, yet he brought him unto another, which, for excellency's sake, was styled the land of promise.

#### Sec. 44. *Of Abraham's abiding in a strange land.*

The aforesaid land of promise is also called *ἀλγεία*, *a strange country*.

This noun, *country*, is not in the Greek. For this adjective, *strange*, hath reference to the former substantive, *land*, and both these words, *strange land*,

are joined together, Acts vii. 9. But *land* and *country* set forth one and the same thing; so as the true sense is rendered in our English.

The adjective translated *strange* is the same that is turned *others*, Chap. ix. 25, Sec. 127. See there.

That which is strange to one is not his own. And he that is in a place which is not his own, is in a place *strange* to him; yea, such as are not free of a place, and thereupon have no right thereto, are *strangers*, Mat. xvii. 25.

The land or country here intended is called *strange* in a double respect.

1. In reference to the land of his nativity whence he came—for herein he had never been before; so as for the present it was strange to Abraham.

2. In reference to that possession which his posterity had thereof in and after Joshua's time. Abraham himself, and his son and grandson abode therein, but not as in their own inheritance; for they sojourned among the people of the land, who then were the proper inhabitants thereof.

This particle, *ὡς*, *as*, doth much qualify that epithet, *strange*. He doth not simply say, *A strange land*, but *As a strange land*. It was strange upon the grounds before mentioned; yet because he had a promise of it, and his posterity had the actual possession of it, it was but 'as a strange one.' He had a true right unto it, which was the gift of the great possessor of heaven and earth, who hath all lands to dispose as it pleaseth him.

Thus are we that believe on Christ as strangers in this world, and the places of our abode are as a strange land to us; yet have we a good right to that which God by his providence bestows upon us.

It is further said that Abraham *dwelt there*. The word *καταῖχας*, translated *dwelt*, is a compound of the same simple verb, *αἰκίζω*, that was before translated *sojourn'd*, Sec. 4; but with another preposition, which intends an abiding in a place, and is fitly translated *dwelt*.

Though that particle, *ὡς*, *as*, having reference to God's promise, doth much qualify the matter, yet the country being to Abraham himself, and that all his days, a strange country, he could not but meet with many difficulties—at least, he might fear many dangers in regard of the inhabitants of the land where he then dwelt. Yet his faith passed over all. For faith overcomes all difficulties; and the history giveth instance of many that he met withal, whereby he was forced twice, in a kind, to deny his wife, at least to dissemble her, both among the Egyptians, Gen. xii. 14, &c., and also among the Philistines, Gen. xii. 2, &c. He was also forced to arm all that were able in his house, and to get others to join with him, for rescuing of Lot. But in all these difficulties his eye was on God, that had promised that land, and so his faith remained invincible.

Sec. 45. *Of Abraham's abiding in tents.*

The mansion places wherein Abraham is said to dwell are here styled *συναῖς*, *tabernacles*. As in our English, so in the Greek; the same word is here used that was used before, Chap. viii. 2, Sec. 5. There see the meaning of the word.

We usually call the mansions which are here styled *tabernacles*, 'tents.' They are made of cloth stretched out and held up with poles, and fastened with cords and pins to the ground, so as they may be soon set up, soon taken down, and easily removed from place to place.

In these Abraham, and such as belonged to him, dwelt on these grounds—

1. They had no present inheritance whereon to build houses.

2. They had no assurance of long tarrying in one place. For Abraham first came out of Ur, in Chaldea, to Haran; from Haran he went to Canaan; from Canaan to Egypt; from Egypt to Canaan again; from Canaan to Gerar of the Philistines; and in Canaan he oft removed from place to place; as from Shechem to Bethel, thence to Mamre; after that to Beersheba, to Hebron, and to other places. In regard of the many and sundry places whither he removed, it is said that 'Abram journeyed in going and journeying,' Gen. xii. 9; that is, he was ever and anon journeying from one place to another. There was therefore a kind of necessity of his dwelling in tents, and he was well content therewith; for believers in this world are content with any condition wherein God in this world shall set them. The like might be instanced in the other patriarchs, in Moses, David, and sundry others. Pertinent to this purpose is this profession of the apostle, 'I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be contented,' &c., Philipp. iv. 12, 13. Of *contentedness*, see Chap. xiii. 5, Sec. 62.

This kind of habitation shewed that they were as *pilgrims*, which is more expressly set down hereafter, Ver. 13.

Sec. 46. *Of Abraham's sojourning with Isaac and Jacob.*

For further confirmation of Abraham's continuing in that strange land, this clause is added, *with Isaac and Jacob*; this hath reference to his dwelling in tabernacles. The phrase may be extended to the faith; as of Abraham, so also of Isaac and Jacob.

In the former respect it sheweth that Abraham continued to dwell in that strange land till Isaac and Jacob were both born. Thus the preposition, *μετὰ*, *with*, having reference to dwelling (as if he had said, dwelt with Isaac and Jacob), implieth a long cohabitation, which was an hundred years. This thus appears: Abraham was seventy-five years old when he came first to Canaan, Gen. xii. 1. Isaac was born when he was an hundred years old, Gen. xxi. 5.

Sixty years after was Jacob born, Gen. xxv. 26. Abraham died when he was an hundred and seventy-five years old, Gen. xxv. 7. Thus Jacob was fifteen years old when his grandfather, Abraham, died. It is probable that, so long as Abraham lived, Isaac and Jacob were of his family. It is expressly said, that Isaac brought Rebekah into the tent of Sarah, his mother, Gen. xxiv. 67.

Again, the foresaid preposition, *with*, may have reference to the mind and disposition of Isaac and Jacob, in that they did as Abraham, their father; he dwelt in tents all his days, and so did they. Thus is this preposition, *with*, used in other authors.<sup>1</sup>

In this latter tense it implieth, that Abraham so well instructed his son and grandson, as they were content to dwell as he did; and withal, it giveth a proof of the faith of Isaac and Jacob, who lived their days in tents.

As a ground and reason of their dwelling in this strange land, the last clause is added, *heirs with him of the same promise*. This is to be taken in the largest extent that may be, in reference to Abraham.

Abraham was an heir, so were they. Therefore they are called *co-heirs*, or *joint-heirs*. For this phrase, *heirs with him*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, *συγγληρονόμου*. Of the word *heirs*, see Chap. i. 14, Sec. 160.

The ground that Abraham had for that prerogative, namely, God's promise, they also had. For it is expressly said, *τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῆς αὐτοῦ, the same promise*, or, as the emphasis of the Greek articles imply, *the very same promise*. Of the promise made to Abraham, read Gen. xii. 2, 3, 7. Of the like promise to Isaac, read Gen. xxvi. 3; and of the same to Jacob, read Gen. xxviii. 13, 14.

Of this phrase, *heirs of promise*, see Chap. vi. 17, Sec. 133.

Sec. 47. *Of the city which Abraham looked for.*

Ver. 10. *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

In this verse is declared a recompense, which Abraham, by faith, expected. The first particle, *for*, sheweth that it is a reason of his abiding all his days in a strange land, even because he looked for a better place.

The verb *ἐξέδεξτο*, translated *looked for*, is a compound. Of the composition and signification thereof, see Chap. x. 27, Sec. 96. It implieth, as a hope of attaining a thing, so a willingness to tarry and wait for it. It is applied to Christ's looking for the utter overthrow of all his enemies, Heb. x. 13; and to God's waiting for the repentance of the old world, 1 Peter iii. 20.

Thus it appears that faith had Abraham wait for that which he saw not, but hoped for. Thus it is a proof of the description of faith, Ver. 1, Sec. 3.

<sup>1</sup> Δοκεῖ μετὰ ἡδυνάτος, cum Platone consentire.

That which he looked for was a city. Of a city, see Chap. xiii. 14, Sec. 138. A city is commonly taken for a distinct place compassed about with walls, and so importeth a place of safety and security. Besides, cities use to have many privileges, for the benefit of those that appertain thereunto; which makes many desire to be free thereof. It is here metaphorically used; and lest we should straiten the place intended thereby too narrowly, that which Abraham looked for is called a country, and expressly said to be a heavenly country, ver. 16, so as by this city heaven itself is meant. Canaan also, which was that country, was a type of heaven.

Heaven is styled a city, to set out the excellency and benefits thereof.

There is a fit resemblance betwixt heaven and a city in these and other like respects—

1. A city is a place of safety. It useth to be compassed with walls and gates, Neh. iii. 1, &c. In time of invasions by enemies, thither will subjects fly, as Jer. xxxv. 11. No place more safe than heaven.

2. A city is compact of many habitations; so heaven, John xiv. 2.

3. A city hath sundry degrees of persons appertaining unto it, as magistrates, officers of sundry sorts, and commoners; so in heaven is God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, angels and saints.

4. In a city useth to be all manner of provision, and other useful commodities; so in heaven, nothing is there wanting that is needful and useful.

5. A city hath statutes and orders for the better government thereof; so in heaven—as is evident by this clause of the Lord's prayer, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'—the Lord's will is perfectly done in heaven.

6. A city hath particular privileges and immunities. This is implied in this promise of Christ, 'I will write upon him the name of the city of my God,' Rev. iii. 12.

7. None but freemen may trade and keep open a shop in a city: thus none shall have anything to do in heaven, but 'they which are written in the Lamb's book of life,' Rev. xxi. 27. These are enrolled as freemen in the records of the heavenly city.

This sheweth that Abraham had good cause to abide for a while in tents, seeing he had a city whereunto he looked, and for which he hoped. That we may be content to abide in that place wherein God setteth us on earth, let us make this city our hope, and look to it, and seek to enter into it. Let us make our freedom sure unto us, and get our names to be enrolled therein.

Meditation on this city may be a good comfort and stay to such as in this world are without house and home.

This also giveth unto us just cause to inquire after the statutes, orders, and ordinances of this city, that we may conform ourselves thereto.

#### Sec. 48. Of having foundations.

The foresaid city is described, by the stability of it, in this phrase, *which hath foundations*.

Of the divers aceptions of the word *θεμελιος*, translated *foundation*, see Chap. vi. 1, Sec. 6.

A good foundation maketh an edifice firm and stable; in which respect Christ setteth forth a house that cannot be overthrown by winds, floods, or rain, to a house well founded, or set upon a good foundation, Mat. vii. 24, 25.

To amplify this point the more, the plural number is here used, *θεμελιος*, *foundations*. This number is oft used for emphasis' sake: as, 'mercies of God,' Rom. xii. 1; 'multitude of tender mercies,' Ps. li. 1; 'Christ maketh mention of 'many mansions' in heaven, John xiv. 2. This plural number implieth that none of them are without foundations.

This city and the mansions therein are thus set out with foundations, in opposition to the tabernacles or tents wherein Abraham and the other patriarchs dwelt while they were on earth. They were movable, and might be carried from place to place, and might be pulled down or overthrown; yea, also they were corruptible, and could not always last: but heaven is immovable, firm, stable, and everlasting. See Chap. xiii. 14, Sec. 139.

#### Sec. 49. Of the place made by God.

As a further commendation of the foresaid city, the author of it is thus set down, *whose builder and maker is God*. Excellent things, in Canaan's language, are said to be of God. As 'a prince of God,' Gen. xxxiii. 6; 'cedars of God,' Ps. lxxx. 10; 'mountains of God,' Ps. xxxvi. 6; 'an army of God,' 1 Chron. xii. 22.

This is here spoken in opposition to cities on earth, which are made by men. Such a difference was made betwixt tabernacles, Chap. viii. 4, 2, and Chap. ix. 11.

Here are two words used, which much set out the workmanship of God.

The former, *τεχνικος*, translated *builder*, according to the notation of the Greek word, signifieth an *artist*, one that doth a thing according to art, or artificially: for it is derived from a word, *τεχνω*, that signifieth *art*. The other word, *δημιουργος*, implieth, according to the notation of it, a *public workman*, one that so openly sets out his work as he is not ashamed thereof. It is compounded of an adjective, *δημιος*, that signifieth *public*, and a noun, *εργον*, that signifieth *work*. The governors among the Peloponnesians had their title, *δημοβουλος*, given unto them from this word. Both words in general intend one and the same thing: yet the former may point at the excellency and perfection of the work itself; the latter at the manifestation thereof, or at God's setting it out to be seen of men and angels.

The third heaven, which is the place of the

blessed, and where Christ in his human nature now is, is the place that is here said to be made by God. This is it that Abraham looked for; so as he looked far above Canaan.

Of God's making these heavens, see Chap. i. 10, Secs. 132, 134.

Sec. 50. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 8-10.*

Ver. 8. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out to a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went.*

Ver. 9. *By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.*

Ver. 10. *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

In these verses is set down a commendation of Abraham's faith. Here observe,

1. The point described.

2. The description itself, ver. 9.

The thing described is *faith*, amplified by the author or person whose faith it was, Abraham's.

The description consisteth of two effects.

One, that he went out of a place, ver. 8.

The other, that he abode in a place, ver. 9.

In setting down the former, there is expressed,

1. The cause, which was God's call, he was called.

2. The effect itself.

His calling is amplified by two terms—from whence, and whither.

The term or place from whence is implied under this phrase, *to go out*. It importeth the place where before he had lived, even his own country.

The term, or place whither he went, is set out two ways.

1. Indefinitely, *into a place*.

2. More determinately, in this phrase, *which he should after receive for an inheritance*.

Here we may observe,

1. An intended possession, *which he should after receive*.

2. The kind of possession, *for an inheritance*.

The effect is,

1. Generally set down, in this word, *obeyed*.

2. Particularly expressed, in this phrase, *he went out*. This is amplified by his absolute yielding thereto, in this phrase, *not knowing whither he went*.

In setting down the second part of the description, the thing described is repeated. *By faith*, ver. 9.

His abode is set forth,

1. By the act itself, ver. 9.

2. By the motive whereby he was incited thereto, ver. 10.

The act is set out,

1. By the kind of it, which was a sojourning, *he sojourned*.

2. By the place where he abode. This is set out,

(1.) By the excellency of it, *the land of promise*.

(2.) By his manner of abiding there. This is, [1.] Generally propounded, in this phrase, *as in a strange country*.

This general noteth out,

*First*, The condition of the place while Abraham was in it, *strange*.

*Secondly*, The qualification of it, in this participle, *as*.

[2.] Particularly expounded; wherein is declared,

*First*, His continuing there, in this word, *dwelling*.

*Secondly*, The kind of mansions wherein he dwelt, *tabernacles*.

*Thirdly*, The company. This is manifested,

*First*, By their names, *Isaac and Jacob*.

*Secondly*, By their common title, *heirs with him*.

*Thirdly*, The ground of that title, *promise*, amplified by the like privilege of all, in this participle, *the same*.

The motive whereby Abraham was incited to the foresaid effects, was his expectation of a better place. *For*, ver. 10.

His expectation is,

1. Expressed, in this word, *he looked for*.

2. Amplified by the object that he looked for.

This is,

1. Expressed, under the metaphor of a *city*.

2. Amplified, two ways.

(1.) By the stability of it, in this phrase, *which hath foundations*.

(2.) By the founder of it, in these words, *whose builder and maker is God*.

Sec. 51. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xi. 8-10.*

I. *Faith commends the best*. Abraham was one of the best that are registered in the Old Testament, and he by faith is commended, ver. 8.

II. *God is careful to establish his servants in their faith*. This was the end of changing the name of *Abram* into *Abraham*. See Chap. vi. 19, Sec. 133.

III. *God's call is a believer's warrant*. Abraham being called of God, testified his faith, as is here set down. See Sec. 36.

IV. *God oft calls to forsake the dearest that men here have*. Thus Abraham was called to leave the land of his nativity and his kindred. See Sec. 38.

V. *Places of idolatry are to be left*. This was one reason why God called *Abraham* from his country. See Sec. 38.

VI. *God will provide for such as follow his call*. This is exemplified in this phrase, *which he should after receive*. See Sec. 39.

VII. *God's promise may be performed in one's posterity*. This is implied under this phrase, *which he should after*. See Sec. 40.

VIII. *Faith believes things future*. For that was to come whereunto Abraham was called. See Sec. 39.

IX. *God makes his gifts sure.* So is an inheritance. See Sec. 40.

X. *True faith is manifested by obedience.* By faith Abraham obeyed. See Sec. 41.

XI. *True obedience is manifested in that particular which is given in charge.* God's charge and Abraham's obedience are set down in the same word. See Sec. 41.

XII. *Obedience to God must be a simple or absolute obedience.* Abraham thus yielded to follow God he knew not whither. See Sec. 41.

XIII. *Faith makes hold out,* ver. 9. As Abraham by faith went out of his country, so by the same faith he abides out of his country. See Sec. 42.

XIV. *God's promise puts vigour to faith.* Because Canaan was promised, therefore Abraham believes it, though he could not then see how he should obtain it. It is therefore called 'the land of promise.' See Sec. 43.

XV. *Faith passeth over many difficulties.* They who are in a strange land are subject to many straits, yet Abraham's faith made him abide in a strange country. See Sec. 44.

XVI. *Believers are content with any condition.* The patriarchs were content to dwell in tents. See Sec. 45.

XVII. *Believers can all their days live as God appoints them.* Abraham dwelt in tents till Jacob was born, which was all his days. See Sec. 46.

XVIII. *Believers are careful to train up their children to their mind.* Abraham brought Isaac and Jacob to dwell with him in tents. See Sec. 46.

XIX. *God's promise extends to believers and their children.* This is one end why mention is here made of Abraham's son and grandson. See Sec. 46.

XX. *Believers are heirs.* Such were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. See Sec. 46.

XXI. *God's promise is the ground of that right that we have to anything.* These were 'heirs of promise.' See Sec. 46.

XXII. *Heaven was the hope of ancient believers,* ver. 10. The city here described which Abraham looked for was heaven. See Sec. 47.

XXIII. *Heaven is a city.* So it is here called. See Sec. 47.

XXIV. *Heaven is a stable place.* It is a place that hath foundations. See Sec. 48.

XXV. *The invisible heavens were made.*

XXVI. *The heavens were God's special workmanship.* Both these two latter doctrines are intended in the last clause of this verse. See Sec. 49.

XXVII. *Hope of reward may stand with faith.* By faith this reward was hoped for. See Sec. 36.

XXVIII. *Faith makes men wait.* The word translated *looked for*, intends as much. See Sec. 47.

XXIX. *Hope of heaven makes men undergo anything.* This ariseth from the inference of this verse (wherein his hope of heaven is set down) upon the

former verses, wherein is declared what he underwent. See Sec. 47.

Sec. 52. *Of Sara, and her name.*

Ver. 11. *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive soul, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

The fifth instance produced for the proof of the vigour of faith is Sara. It is the second instance after the flood, and the first of the female sex.

Though our English vary the first word, and put *through* instead of *by*, yet in the Greek it is set down as all the other instances were, *διὰ*; and the *anaphora*, that is, the same word, in the beginning of every instance is here continued.

The faith here attributed to Sara is the same that was attributed to Abraham, and others before him; and therefore this copulative, *καὶ*, also, is added: as if he had said, Sara also had such a faith, though she were a woman, as the other worthies which were men had.

There is also a pronoun of emphasis added, thus, *αὐτῇ*, herself. As if he had said, not her husband only, by whose faith she might receive the blessing, but herself also, even by her own faith, received strength, &c.

Sara, *Σαῖρα*, was the name that was given to the woman here spoken of; but it was afterwards changed by God himself.

In Hebrew, her first name was *שרה*, *Sarai*, Gen. xi. 29. The last letter of that name in Hebrew, which is *י* (*jod*), is a limitation, and restraineth the meaning of the name. The root, *שרה*, *principium* *obtinuit, vel coaruit*, whence that name cometh, signifieth to obtain or exercise principality, Est. i. 22. Thence a noun, *שר*, *princeps*, which signifieth a prince in the masculine gender, Deut. xv. 1. and *שרה*, *domina, princess* in the feminine, 1 Kings xi. 3. The name *שרה*, *Sarai*, signifieth *my princess*; whereby her dignity was restrained to a family that might so call her.

But God turned the name *Sarai* to *סarah*, *Sarah*, Gen. xvii. 15. The same letter, *ה*, that is added in the midst of Abraham's name, is put in the end of Sarah.

Sarah hath all the radical letters in it, and indefinitely, without any limitation, signifieth *a princess*. Hereby the Lord would shew that she should be a mother of many people and nations. God's own interpretations of this name giveth proof hereto; for it is thus said, 'She shall be a mother of nations,' Gen. xvii. 16. So Abraham signified, 'a father of many nations,' Gen. xvii. 5.

There was the same end of changing Sarai her name, as there was of Abram his name; for hereby God would support the faith of the one and of the other, in that great promise concerning a numerous seed; and that the rather because the one was old,



and the other was old and barren. Thus God himself helps his children in regard of their weakness, and affords means to strengthen them and their graces, especially their faith in unlikely promises.

Sec. 53. *Of women proving God's worthies.*

This instance of Sarah giveth proof, that women may be worthies. They may be excellent and eminent in faith and other graces. Besides this particular here noted of Sarah, other worthy things also are recorded of her, as,

1. She left all other her kindred to go with her husband, Gen. xi. 31, and xii. 5; she did not look back, as Lot's wife, Gen. xix. 26.

2. After they were come into a strange land, she went from place to place with her husband, as she saw occasion, Gen. xii. 11, and xx. 2; so as Abraham may be said to abide here and go thither with Sarah his wife.

3. She revered and obeyed her husband, 1 Pet. iii. 6.

4. She did not only conceive, bear, and bring forth her son, but gave him suck also, Gen. xxi. 7.

5. She would not suffer her maid to be imperious or impetuous, Gen. xvi. 4, 5.

6. She accepted her maid upon humbling herself, Gen. xvi. 9, 15.

7. She was zealous against the bondwoman and her son, which God approved, Gen. xxi. 10, 12.

8. She in her place was diligent in entertaining the angels, Gen. xviii. 6.

To this instance of Sarah, others are added in this catalogue; as Moses his mother, ver. 23, and Rahab, ver. 31, and the women that received their dead raised to life, ver. 35.

Both the Old and New Testament are full of many instances of worthy women. Histories also, of all nations and all ages, give further proof to the point.

1. Woman was created after the same image that man was, Gen. i. 27.

2. She is redeemed by the same price, Luke i. 47.

3. She is sanctified by the same Spirit, 1 Pet. iii. 5.

4. She is co-heir with man of the grace of life, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

5. In all spiritual privileges she is all one as man, Gal. iii. 28.

1. Most unjust, therefore, and undue, are the invectives of many men against the female sex, as if they were the corruption of nature, as if they were without souls, as if they were an imperfect kind, and many the like more than monstrous absurdities.

2. This ministereth much comfort against that blemish which the first woman brought upon that sex, 1 Tim. ii. 14; yea, and against the subjection and other consequences following upon the woman's sin, Gen. iii. 16. There are but two things from which women are barred wherein men have a liberty

and power. One is, authority over a husband; the other is, to exercise a ministerial function, 1 Tim. ii. 12, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. But instead of them he hath given two great prerogatives. One is, an extraordinary spirit, whereby they have been prophetesses, as Miriam, Exod. xv.; Deborah, Judges iv. 4; Hannah, 1 Sam. ii. 1; Huldah, 2 Kings xxii. 14; and others. The other is, a power and authority over nations and kingdoms; for it is prophesied that queens shall be nurses to the church, Isa. xlix. 23.

3. This affords an admonition to husbands and other men, to esteem women as having a right to all the spiritual privileges that they have, and as theirs together with them of the grace of life, 1 Pet. iii. 7.

4. This ought to quicken up women to labour after knowledge, faith, love, and other graces, and to use all means for attaining the same.

Sec. 54. *Of Sarah's receiving strength to conceive seed.*

The particular wherein Sarah is here said to give proof of her faith is, that she received strength to conceive seed.

The word translated, *to conceive*, is in Greek a noun, *καταβολή*, and is usually put for a *foundation*. Of the derivation thereof, see Chap. iv. 3, Sec. 29. It may here be taken of receiving and retaining seed, as seed-corn is received and contained by the earth.

Some<sup>1</sup> take it for Sarah's conferring seed of her own; whereupon this question is started, whether women have seed as well as men, and a child conceived of the mixture of them both. But the resolution of such questions I leave to physicians. The meaning of the apostle is clear, that notwithstanding she had been long barren, and very aged,<sup>2</sup> having lived forty years beyond the ordinary time of women's bearing children, yet by faith she conceived seed, whereby she came to be with child, even as a child-bearing woman.

This she could not do of herself, nor by any strength or vigour of nature, and thereupon it is said that, *δύναμιν ἔλαβη*, she received strength. She believed that God, who had promised, would, above the course of nature, give her ability to conceive with child, and to bring forth a child. So as faith will work vigour where it was not before.

The apostle exemplifieth this in sundry particulars, 2 Cor. iv. 8-10; but especially is this verified in sundry cures that Christ did. Among others, take for instance the woman that was cured of her issue of blood, Mark v. 25, 26, &c.

We certainly fail of many good things that we might receive from the promises of God, for want of faith. Christ did not many mighty works in his own country, because of their unbelief, Mat. xiii. 58.

<sup>1</sup> Vide Dan. Heinsii, *Exercitiat. Sacr.* in loc.

<sup>2</sup> Ninety years old, Gen. xvii. 17.

How should this stir us up to use all means for getting, increasing, and strengthening faith, so much commended in this chapter! See for this purpose *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 17, Of Faith, Treat. 2, Part 6, Sec. 17, &c.

This gives a further proof that children are the blessing of God. See Chap. vi. 1, Sec. 105. For Sarah received strength to conceive seed, she received it from the Lord. For it was the Lord that had promised it, Gen. xvii. 16, and xviii. 10. This is expressly observed, Ps. cxviii. 3, and cxviii. 3.

1. Children, as a blessing, have been craved of God, Gen. xxv. 21, 1 Sam. i. 10.

2. They have been promised as a blessing, Gen. xvii. 19.

3. As for a blessing, praise hath been given to God for them, Gen. xxix. 35, 1 Sam. ii. 1.

4. Directions have been given well to use them, even as a divine blessing, Eph. vi. 4.

5. It hath been counted a great fault to seek them otherwise than of God, Gen. xxx. 1, 2.

6. God hath severely upbraided them that have abused these blessings, Ezek. xvi. 20, 21.

7. Want of them hath been threatened as a curse, Hosea ix. 14; and inflicted as a judgment, 2 Sam. vi. 23.

8. Children are an especial means of propagating their parents' virtues; yea, of continuing the world, and especially the church in the world; and a succession of them, generation after generation, is the only way of continuing perpetual service by mortal men to the immortal God.

It is therefore a very evil disposition to be discontent for having children. It is to be discontent at God's blessing, as the Israelites were at manna, Num. xi. 16.

This discontent is many ways manifested.

1. Some will not marry because they would not have children.

2. Others for that end marry such as are past child-bearing.

3. Others will have two beds, to forbear lying with their wives.

4. Others fret at their wives, because they bring forth many children.

5. Others, having many children, wish them dead.

6. There are that unnaturally make away their children after they are born, yea, some in the very womb.

All these fruits of discontent arise from distrustfulness. Had men faith in God's providence, they would account children an especial blessing.

Children being a blessing, we ought to pray for them, and to praise God for them when we have them, and to use them as a divine blessing, by well educating of them. Hereof see *Domestic Duties*, Treat. vi. Sec. 6, &c.

Sec. 55. *Of Sarah's bringing forth a child, being barren and past age.*

To Sarah's conceiving, it is added, that *she was delivered of a child*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἔτεκεν*,  *peperit*. We have not one English word to express the full sense of it. Some thus translate it, *she brought forth*. Of the Greek word, see Chap. vi. 7, Sec. 47.

This is added to shew the continuance of God's blessing, and of her faith. She did not only believe unto conception, but also unto delivery. Answerably God blessed her in conceiving and in bringing forth.

Concerning Sarah's faith, this giveth instance, that true faith continueth till that which is believed be accomplished.

Faith resteth on God, on his properties, on his promises, and thereupon is supported and kept from failing.

To amplify the gift of God, and faith of Sarah, this phrase is added, *when she was past age*, or, as it is in the Greek, beyond or above the time of age. The word *ἔλθια*, translated *age*, doth also signify *stature*, Luke xii. 25, and xix. 3. It is derived from a word *ἔλθω*, *quantus*, that implieth measure, Eph. iv. 13, and signifieth 'how great,' James iii. 5. But here, as in other places (John ix. 21, 23), it signifieth *age*; and the word premised before it, *καθὼς*, *time*, implieth that time wherein women, according to the ordinary course of nature, are child-bearing. The preposition, *παρὰ*, premised before both the other words, which signifieth *beside*, or *beyond*, sheweth that the time of age here meant was beyond and above that time wherein women use to be child-bearing, as was before noted, Sec. 54. This preposition is in this case translated *against* (Rom. iv. 18); thus, *παρὰ ἐλπίδα*, 'against hope,' or 'beyond,' or 'above hope.'

Our English hath fully expressed the apostle's meaning in this phrase, *when she was past age*.

The sacred history further testifieth that she was barren, Gen. xi. 30. Some here insert it thus:<sup>1</sup> 'Sarah, being barren, received strength,' &c. Hereby it appeareth that her faith passed over many difficulties, as was before noted of Abraham's faith, Sec. 44.

Sec. 56. *Of the ground of a strong faith.*

The reason of Sarah's strong faith is thus expressed, *Because she judged him faithful that had promised*.

Of the conjunction, *ὧν*, translated *because*, see Chap. ii. 14, Sec. 136. It in general intends the true ground and cause of her faith, which was her persuasion of God's truth and faithfulness in making good his word. God's promise is in itself a sufficient ground for faith; and it is the more sure ground, because he that maketh it is faithful. Yet these work not faith but in such as judge him so to be; and this will work an invincible faith.

Of the Greek word *ἠγάσαστο*, translated *judged*, see

<sup>1</sup> Claromont. Cod. Complut. Edit. Vet. Latin.

Chap. xiii. 7, Sec. 96. The word is oft translated *counted*, or *accounted*, Philip. iii. 7, 8. It implieth an assent of the mind to the truth of a thing; and here a full assent, without any doubting at all, as it is said of her husband, 'He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, &c., being fully persuaded, that what God had promised he was able also to perform.' Rom. iv. 20, 21.

*Obj.* The history maketh mention of her questioning the truth of the promise, and doubting of the accomplishment thereof, Gen. xviii. 12.

*Ans.* Distinguish times, and her doubting and believing may be reconciled. For when first she heard the message, through weakness she distrusted the event; but the promise being again repeated, and she put in mind of God's almighty power, she steadfastly believed, Gen. xviii. 11. Thus Zacharias at first believed not, but afterwards he was strengthened in faith, Luke i. 20.

Herein we have a proof that weak ones may attain to a steadfast faith. This may be by reason of further means afforded for strengthening faith, and by reason of God's blessing upon those means.

It is therefore needful and useful to continue the use of means for strengthening faith, and increasing other graces. We do not here, while we are in this world, attain to the full measure of faith, or of any other grace. We may not, therefore, give over the use of means, but continue to use them so long as we live.

Let such as are weak in faith, and subject to doubtings, take notice that weak ones may be strong in faith, and thereupon use means for strength.

Let ministers, parents, and others that have the charge of any soul under them, when they observe any of their charge weak and wavering and doubting, do their best for strengthening and establishing them, and that upon this ground, that weak ones may be made strong.

Two things are joined together, which added much to the strengthening of her faith: one was the promise, the other was his property.

The promiser is set down with some emphasis thus, *he that had promised*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ὁ ἐπαγγελισάμενος*, and it pointeth at God himself, who is here thus described, to shew the ground of her faith, which was no vain fantasy of her own brain, but an express promise, and that of God himself. Of the word translated *promised*, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 6, and Chap. vi. 13, Sec. 94.

The property that is here noted of God is *πιστός*, *faithful*. Hereof see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 177.

This epithet, *faithful*, is added to shew the height of the reason of her believing so incredible a promise, which was God's truth and faithfulness in accomplishing whatsoever he promiseth, being great or mean, likely or unlikely.

Of God's promise the ground of faith, and of

God's faithfulness a strong pillar to support it, see Chap. x. 23, Sec. 73.

Sec. 57. *Of the increase and continuance of God's blessing.*

Ver. 12. *Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as doth, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.*

The first illative particle, *ὅθεν*, *therefore*, sheweth that this verse is inferred as a consequence following upon Sarah's faith, which consequence is the recompense therefor. Whereas before she had lived ninety years without having any child at all, because she believed God's promise of giving her a son; the benefit of that promise is extended to a numerous, yea, even an innumerable off-spring.

This is a great encouragement to believe the truth of God's promises, and to rest upon the accomplishment of them.

The benefit of God's promise shall be far extended unto such, so as faith shall not lose her recompense.

The word *ἐξενήνευεν*, translated *sprang*, is of various acceptations and significations; and among others, it significth *to be born*, or *brought forth*, in reference to children that come out of the mother's womb. Our English hath well expressed the sense of it in this place by this word, *sprang*, to shew that not the immediate children of Abraham by Sarah are here only meant, (for that was only one,) but his posterity, generation after generation. Some<sup>1</sup> translate it thus, *there proceeded a posterity*.

This implieth the continuance of God's blessing, that it was not only for one child, but for posterity, generation after generation, and also it giveth evidence that God can raise great matters out of small beginnings, as the waters that came from the sanctuary increased from ankle-deep to a river that could not be passed over, Ezek. xlvii. 3, 5. This God doth,

1. To manifest and magnify his divine power.

2. To make men more thankful. Take instance hereof in Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 10. A continual increase of a blessing cansteth thanks to God to be continued time after time.

3. To keep men from being too much puffed up with the blessing of God. For if they had the fullness of the blessing at first, they would boast too much thereof; but blessing increasing by degrees prevents high conceits.

1. Hereby God brings men to use warrantable means for the increase of his blessing, whereas they observe that blessing to increase more and more. As the widow by the increase of oil was moved to call for vessel after vessel, 2 Kings iv. 5, 6.

This teacheth us to take heed of 'despising the day of small things,' Zech. iv. 10. Men are too prone hereunto. This was it that made the Jews despise

<sup>1</sup> Nati sunt posterii.—Beza.

Christ. This is it that makes many to scorn the ministers of Christ and their ministry. They are ready to scoff at the power of God manifested in such as are wrought upon by the ministry, as Tobiah the Ammonite did at the Jews for rearing up the wall of their city, Neh. iv. 3.

Sec. 58. *Of the mutual good that a believing husband and wife may do each other.*

The foresaid small beginning of a numerous issue intended is thus expressed, ἀὐτῷ ἐκ, *of one*. To shew that this circumstance is remarkable, an emphatical particle is set before it, which is the ordinary particle, καὶ, *and*; but here it intends an emphasis, which our English hath well expressed by this particle, *even*, as if he had said, *only one*.

Question is made of the person that should be intended under this word, *one*. The coherence seems to refer it to Sarah; but it is of the masculine gender, and thereupon supposed to intend Abraham. This is further confirmed by the next clause, which is also the masculine gender, καὶ ἐκζητήσας, *and him as good as dead*. Which word is applied, even in this case, to the body of Abraham, Rom. iv. 19.

They that apply it to Abraham say that thus much concerning Sarah is intended in the former verse, and therefore the apostle here joineth her husband with her, as if the copulative were to be translated *also*, and thus read, *Therefore sprang there also of one, and him as good as dead, &c.*

I take it that both of them are here meant, for husband and wife make but one person, according to the law of marriage, Gen. ii. 24. and that the masculine gender is here used, because, according to the grammar rule, it is the worthier. Certainly this numerous issue was a recompense of the faith of them both, and inferred upon the commendation of Sarah's faith, because Abraham had in this case believed in vain, if Sarah also had not believed. For the promise was appropriated to Sarah as well as to Abraham, thus, 'I will give thee a son of Sarah,' Gen. xvii. 16.

By this it is evidenced that a husband may receive benefit by the faith of his wife, and so likewise a wife by the faith of her husband, 1 Cor. vii. 14, 16. This holds especially where both husband and wife are believers, Judges xiii. 23, 1 Sam. ii. 20.

This comes to pass by reason of their near union, for by the matrimonial bond two are made one flesh, Eph. v. 21.

This ought the rather to quicken up the husband and wife to faith, and the fruits thereof, both for their own sakes, and also for the sake of their yoke-fellow.

Sec. 59. *Of God's using unlikely means.*

The foresaid faith, both of Abraham and of Sarah, is further amplified by the seeming impossibility of

having a child, implied in this phrase, *and him as good as dead*.

The root, *ἐκζητός*, *mortuus*, from whence this participle, *ἐκζητήσας*, sprouteth, significeth one that is properly and actually dead, Acts v. 10. Here it is used metaphorically, by way of resemblance, in that he had no more vigour for the begetting of children, than a dead man to do that which belongs to the living. It cannot here properly be taken, because Abraham was then living; and the apostle, speaking of this very thing, and using the same word, thus expresseth his mind, Abraham 'considered not his own body, now dead, when he was about a hundred years old,' Rom. iv. 19.

To make this the more clear the apostle useth a word of mitigation, *καὶ ὡς, καὶ ὡς καὶ*, which our English hath thus expressed, *as good as*; which implieth that he was not indeed dead, but as it were dead, and that in reference to the point in hand.

The resemblance may be taken from a tree, which when it ceaseth to bear fruit, and there is no hope that it should bear any, we say it is dead; for the vigour of a tree to sprout forth and bear fruit is accounted the life of it.

This proves that God can work not only by weak and unlikely means, or without means, but also by contrary means; for this resemblance sheweth that the living arose from the dead—yet death is contrary to life. See Chap. ii. 4, Sec. 28, of the various means which God useth.

Sec. 60. *Of hyperbolical expressions.*

The extent of God's blessing is set out to the life; first, by resemblances to *stars* and *sand*; and then simply in this word, *innumerable*.

The two metaphors are proverbial and hyperbolical, used to set out such things as cannot by man be numbered.

These two kinds, stars and sand, are innumerable to men (hereupon God, taking Abraham out in a starry night, bid him number the stars, if he were able, Gen. xv. 5), but to God they are not, for God 'tellethe the number of the stars,' Ps. cxlvii. 4.

*Obj.* Astronomers and philosophers set out the number of stars by the distinct constellations, and particular stars in their several constellations.

*Ans.* Though they may by observation set out many of the most conspicuous stars, yet there are many more which may be hid from their sight; or by reason of their closeness together, in man's appearance, cannot be set forth or numbered. Much less can the several sands of the sea be numbered. Wherefore, to make a nation as many as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea is hyperbolical.

Some only make a general resemblance betwixt Abraham's seed and the stars of the sky and sands by the sea-shore, thus, as those two are innumerable, so should Abraham's posterity be innumerable.

Neither of those senses do directly cross the other, but both may stand with the intent and scope of the apostle.

These two comparisons, stars of the sky and sand by the sea-shore, are frequently used to set forth innumerable things. 'Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven, saith the Lord,' Nah. iii. 16. It is said of Joseph, that he 'gathered corn as the sand of the sea,' Gen. xli. 49. It is said of the quails which God gave in the wilderness, that they were 'like as the sand of the sea,' Ps. lxxviii. 27. God's mercies are said to be 'more than the sand,' Ps. cxxxix. 18. The armies of the Canaanites are said to be 'as the sand that is upon the sea-shore in multitude,' Josh. xi. 4. So the army of the Philistines, 1 Sam. xliii. 5. Hushai advised Absalom to 'gather all Israel as the sand that is by the sea,' 2 Sam. xvii. 11. Thus the multitudes of widows are said to be increased 'above the sand of the sea,' Jer. xv. 8. The Babylonians are said to 'gather the captivity as the sands,' Hab. i. 9. And Solomon's wisdom is said to be 'as the sand that is by the sea-shore,' 1 Kings iv. 24.

As for the number of Abraham's offspring, it is set forth by resemblance to the stars eleven times; thrice by way of promise, Gen. xv. 5, and xxiii. 17, and xxvi. 4; twice by rehearsing that promise, Exod. xxxi. 13, 1 Chron. xxvii. 23; six times by manifestation of the performance thereof, Deut. i. 10, and x. 22, and xxviii. 62, Neh. ix. 23, Jer. xxxiii. 22, and in this place.

It is also set forth by resemblance of sands nine times; thrice by promise, Gen. xxii. 17, and xxxii. 12, Hosea i. 10; thrice by performance, 1 Kings iv. 20, Jer. xxxiii. 22, and in this place; thrice by supposition, Isa. x. 22, and xlviii. 19, Rom. ix. 27.

*Ques.* Was Abraham's seed indeed as many as stars and sand?

*Ans.* 1. Proverbial and hyperbolic phrases are not simply to be taken; and therefore it is not necessary that the things compared should in the letter be answerable unto them. They are used to set out an exceeding great number, Deut. i. 10.

2. If all that have descended from Abraham, and shall descend from him, be duly weighed, they will be found exceeding many.

3. All that profess the faith of Abraham, that is, all Christians in all generations, are comprised under the seed of Abraham, Gal. iii. 29, Hosea i. 10.

4. The apostle here sheweth that he intends no more but that they were innumerable, as he expresseth in the last word of this verse.

The foresaid hyperboles, and other like unto them, are used to make things worthy of all observation, to be the more heeded and better regarded.

1. It appears hereby, that to tax all hyperbolic speeches of falsehood and lying savoureth too much of ignorance of the arts, which the word of God ap-

proveth. Hyperbolic speeches are to move men not to believe untruths, but to make them the better to conceive the depth of truth in weighty matters.

2. That hyperboles may not be perverted and abused, these rules that follow, and others like unto them, are to be observed.

(1.) Hyperboles must be used of such things as are indeed true in the substance of them. To say of things that are in number but small, and of the increase of them there is no great admiration, they are as stars and sands, is an abuse. So to say of an army that is a little discomfited (as the army of the Israelites was before Ai, Josh. vii. 4, 5), they are beaten as small as the dust of the earth, 2 Sam. xxii. 43.

(2.) They must be used in weighty truths, which are worthy of a more than ordinary consideration. Such are all the hyperboles used in Scripture; otherwise they fail of their main and principal end.

(3.) They must, so near as may, be set out in proverbial sentences. Proverbs are, by common use and experience, well known, and the meaning of them well understood. Such are the hyperboles of this text.

(4.) Men must therein shew that they aim more at the sense and meaning of the matter, than at the sound and measure of words. This will be discerned by an indefinite expressing of them, without words of infallible certainty; such as these,—just as many as stars; full as high as heaven; every way as small as dust. Hyperboles are set forth by words of similitude and dissimilitude, rather than by words of equality and inequality.

(5.) The end of them must be to inform, not to flatter, as they did who said of Herod's oration, 'It is the voice of God, and not of a man,' Acts xii. 22. Herein Cicero much failed in his hyperbolic phrases of Pompey and Caesar.

(6.) They must be kept in measure. Though they have a far reach, yet there is a decorum to be kept. The tales of Garamantes are in this respect most absurd.

(7.) They may not be brought in comparison with God, thus, 'as true as God.'

#### Sec. 61. *Of the great increase of God's blessing.*

This last word of the verse, ἀσάριθμος, innumerable, sheweth the end of the two forementioned hyperboles, stars and sand, which was to set out the surpassing great number of Abraham's and Sarah's posterity.

The English word fitly answereth the Greek. Both of them are compounds. The Greek is derived from a noun, ἀριθμός, that signifieth number, Acts vi. 7. Thence a verb, ἀριθμεῖν, to number.

The preposition, ἀν', is privative; so as this compound setteth out that which cannot be numbered.

This giveth instance that God can increase his blessing beyond man's apprehension. This may fur-

ther be exemplified in particular persons, in whole churches, in the graces that are bestowed upon men, and in divine ordinances.

1. For persons: how wonderful great was the increase of God's blessing upon Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, Esther, Mordecai, sundry prophets and apostles, but especially upon Christ himself, who was that 'little stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth' ! Dan. ii. 35.

2. For churches: that church which at first was comprised in one family, and afterwards increased into twelve tribes, became a very great nation; but the Christian church did much more increase.

3. For gifts and graces: they use to grow as mustard-seed, which is the least of all seeds, but become a tree, Mat. xiii. 31, 32.

4. For the ordinances of God: they seem at first to many contemptible, and are counted foolishness, 1 Cor. i. 18; but they appear to be 'the power of God for salvation,' Rom. i. 16.

There is no stint that can be put to the blessing of God. This is it 'that maketh rich,' Prov. x. 22. Hence this proverb, Cast me into the sea, and give me God's blessing, and I shall do well enough.

This giveth us, in small and mean beginnings, to call and depend upon God for his increase thereof; and to be persuaded of this, that he can, and will, as he seeth just cause, give an increase according to, yea, and beyond our expectation. See more hereof, Sec. 57.

Sec. 62. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 11, 12.*

Ver. 11. *Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

12. *Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable.*

In these two verses there is a commendation of a woman's faith. In it is set down—

1. The thing commended.
2. The arguments by which it is commended.

In the former there is expressed—

1. The particular grace, *faith*.
2. The name of the person in whom that grace was, *Sarah*.

The commendation itself is taken from two arguments—

1. From the effects of her faith.
2. From the consequence that followed thereupon.

Two effects are—

1. Propounded.
2. Amplified.

The effects propounded were—

1. To conceive seed.

2. To be delivered of a child.

These are amplified three ways—

1. By the ground of them, *she received strength*.
2. By the seeming impossibility, *when she was past age*.

3. By the proper cause of all, *because she judged, &c.*

In setting down the cause, we may observe—

1. Her act, *she judged*.
2. The object of that act, which was God, who is described—

- (1.) By his goodness, in making *promise*.
- (2.) By his faithfulness, in performing what he promised.

The consequence of Sarah's faith is,

1. Generally hinted, in this particle of reference, *therefore*.

2. Particularly exemplified.

The exemplification noteth out—

1. The kind of blessing, in this word, *sprang there*.
2. The greatness of it. This is set down two ways—

- (1.) By the meanness of the beginning.

- (2.) By the greatness of the issue.

The meanness of the beginning is manifested—

1. By the singularity of the person, *even of one*.
2. By the improbability of the means, *and him as good as dead*.

The greatness of the issue is set out two ways—

1. Comparatively.

2. Simply.

The comparison is taken from two innumerable things—

1. *Stars of the sky*.
2. *The sand which is by the sea-shore*.

The simple expression of the issue is in this word, *innumerable*.

Sec. 63. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xi. 11, 12.*

I. *Women may prove worthies.* Sarah, a woman, is here put in the catalogue of God's ancient worthies. See Sec. 53.

II. *God is careful to support weak ones.* This was the end why God turned this name *Sarai* into *Sarah*. See Sec. 52.

III. *Faith works vigour.* It was by faith that Sarah manifested such vigour as is set down in this verse. See Sec. 52.

IV. *Believers receive that which they have not of themselves.* Sarah received strength for that which is here noted of her. See Sec. 54.

V. *Children are an especial blessing.* Under these phrases, *conceiving seed*, and *delivered of a child*, that blessing is meant. See Sec. 54.

VI. *Faith continueth till that which is blessed<sup>1</sup> be accomplished.* Sarah, by faith, did not only conceive

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'believed' ?—Ed.

seed, but also was delivered of a child. See Sec. 55.

VII. *A weak faith may become strong.* Sarah, who at first doubted, is here noted to be strong in faith. See Sec. 56.

VIII. *No difficulty hinders the virtue of true faith.* Sarah had been long barren, and was past age, yet by faith was delivered of a child. See Sec. 56.

IX. *Persuasion of the truth of God's promise makes it powerful to the believer.* Sarah's judging God to be faithful, was it that made the promise effectual to her. See Sec. 56.

X. *God's promise is the ground of faith.* This moved Sarah to believe, because God had promised. See Sec. 56.

XI. *God's faithfulness is an especial prop to faith.* Sarah judged God to be faithful, and thereupon believed. See Sec. 56.

XII. *Faith hath a recompense.* The inference of the twelfth verse upon the eleventh, by this particle, *therefore*, gives proof hereof. See Sec. 57.

XIII. *A numerous offspring is a blessing.* This ariseth in general from the main scope of this verse, and in particular from this word *spring*. See Sec. 57.

XIV. *God can with small means effect great matters.* Out of *one* he raised an innumerable company. See Sec. 57.

XV. *Husbands and wives may prove a blessing each to other.* This ariseth from the change of the gender. He had before spoken of Sarah in the feminine gender; but he applies the blessing to her husband in the masculine gender. See Sec. 58.

XVI. *God can bring his purpose to pass by unlikely means.* Sarah's husband was as good as dead, yet an innumerable issue proceeded from him. See Sec. 61.

XVII. *Old age makes men as dead.* In this respect is Abraham said to be as good as dead. See Sec. 57.

XVIII. *Hyperbolical speeches are not unbarful.* These phrases, *as the stars, as the sand*, are hyperbolical, yet used by the apostle. See Sec. 60.

XIX. *God can increase his blessing beyond man's apprehension.* This word, *innumerable*, and these metaphors, *as the stars, as the sand*, prove as much. See Sec. 61.

Sec. 61. *Of persevering in faith.*

Ver. 13. *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

The apostle, from the beginning of this verse to the seventeenth, inserteth a general commendation both of those whom he had named, and of others also.

This commendation is propounded in this verse, and amplified in the three verses following.

Some extend this general phrase, *ὅσοι πάντες, these all*, both forwards and backwards. Forwards, to such as were named before; backwards, to such as are named in the other part of the chapter. He useth this relative, *these*, because he wrote this epistle, and expressed all the names in this chapter, before they to whom it was sent should read it. So as to them he might say, *all these* that are set down in this catalogue. This is the rather supposed to be the extent of this phrase, because it is agreeable to the two last verses of this chapter.

By this it appeareth that true faith exerciseth the like vigour in all of all sorts; for under this general particle, *all*, sundry sorts of persons are comprised—as male, female, old, young, great, mean, and other sorts.

It is the same Spirit that worketh in all, and sheweth forth his power in all, 2 Cor. iv. 13.

The perseverance of all the believers here intended is set down in this phrase, *died in faith*. This word, *ἀπέθανον, died*, is in Greek a compound; whereof see Chap. vii. 8, Sec. 1.

It here implieth that their faith continued all the days of their life, so long as they had use thereof, even till death, when in soul they attained to the fruition of that which they believed.

The faith wherein they died is the same that is described in the first verse—a justifying, saving faith. In this faith they are said to die, because they possessed not the things promised in this life.

The preposition *κατά, secundum*, translated *in*, properly signifieth *according to*,—implying that their faith remained in them till death.

*Obj.* It is expressly said of Enoch, that he was 'translated that he should not see death,' ver. 5.

*Ans.* 1. This may be taken of all that died, as it is said that Jacob brought all his seed with him into Egypt (Gen. xlv. 7), namely, all that were with him; for Joseph was before him in Egypt.

2. The phrase may be taken synecdochically for the greatest part, only one being excepted. Thus it is said that Athaliah destroyed 'all the seed royal,' yet Joash, the youngest of the king's sons, was not destroyed, 2 Kings xi. 1, 2.

3. Though Enoch did not die as others, yet he was translated, and his mortality turned into immortality, which was a kind of death.

4. As long as he lived he continued to live by faith, which is the main thing here intended.

5. While he lived he had not the fruition of what he believed.

Of persevering in faith, which is the main thing here intended, see Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 68.

Sec. 65. *Of believers resting on that which they enjoy not.*

To amplify their continuing in faith, the apostle addeth this clause,—*not having received the promises.*

The word *λαβόντες, received*, is the same that was

used, Ver. 8, Sec. 39. It implieth an actual possessing and enjoying of a thing.

The other word, *ἐπαγγελίας*, *promises*, is that which is used, Ver. 9, Secs. 43, 46. It is here taken metonymically for the things promised.

And because they were many, the plural number is used, *promises*: as, 1. A numerous seed; 2. The land of Canaan; 3. Christ himself; 4. Heaven also.

Besides, the same promise was oft repeated: as to Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, xv. 5, and xxii. 17; then to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 3, 4; after that to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 13, 14. None of these, nor any of their children that came immediately from their loins, enjoyed the particulars promised while they lived on earth. In this respect they *died in faith*, still believing that every promise should in due time be accomplished.

*Quest.* How can believers that lived before Abraham be here intended, whenas the special promises of seed and Canaan were not made unto them?

*Ans.* 1. The blessed seed, Christ Jesus, which is the principal seed intended, was made to them all, Gen. iii. 15.

2. The truth typified by Canaan, which was heaven, was by faith expected of them all; and the ark did in a manner typify the same.

3. They also had special promises, which were equivalent.

4. It is not necessary that every proof should be applied to every believer. This general is true of them all,—*all died in faith*. To prove this, some proofs belong to some, other to others.

By this proof—*not having received the promises*—it is evident that faith resteth on that which it enjoyeth not. Hereof, see Ver. 1, Sec. 4.

*Sec. 66. Of believers embracing promises afar off.*

Though believers enjoy not what they do believe, yet by faith they see them; therefore he addeth, *But having seen them*. This conjunction *ἀλλὰ, but*, manifesteth a distinction between *receiving* and *seeing*. They received not the things which they saw.

Of the word *ἰδόντες* *ab ὧν αὐτά, translated seen*, see Chap. ii. 8, Secs. 68, 72.

Men see two ways—

1. With the eyes of their body.

2. With the eyes of their soul; whereof there are two sorts:

(1.) The eye of the understanding, Eph. i. 18.

(2.) The eye of faith, Heb. xi. 27.

It is the spiritual sight that is here meant, and that in both the former respects; for they well understood what things were promised, and withal they believed that they should be accomplished; but with their bodily eyes they did not see them.

This word that is added, *παραβλέποντες, afar off*, joined with the former verb of *seeing*, is a metaphor taken from seamen, which use to see the countries whereunto they are sailing afar off.

It is a fit metaphor: for the world is as a sea, the church therein as a ship, saints as passengers in that ship; heaven, and other things promised, are as the country whereunto they sail. Well may it be said of those that are here intended, that they saw them *afar off*, because they lived in the former ages of the world.

Besides, a long date was put to the accomplishment of most of the promises, in which respect they were *afar off*.

This doth much illustrate their faith, that a long date for accomplishing what was promised did not weaken it.

For it is further added, that they were *persuaded* of them. Of the word *πεισθέντες*, which we translate *persuaded*, see Chap. vi. 9, Sec. 56. It here implieth confidence in the accomplishment of what is promised, and assurance of enjoying the same. This assurance the apostle doth exemplify in Abraham, Rom. v. 19.

Hereby we are given to understand that faith worketh assurance. Full assurance is expressly attributed to faith, Chap. x. 22, Sec. 65.

In regard of that assurance, it is said of these believers that they *embraced* them. Of the notation of the Greek word *ἀσπασάμενοι*, see Chap. xiii. 24, Sec. 191.

It is ordinarily translated to *salute*, Rom. xvi. 5, and the noun derived from this verb, *ἀσπασμός*, signifieth *salutation*, Luke i. 29.

In salutations men use to embrace one another. Fitly and properly is it here translated *embraced*. The phrase implieth a thankful and joyful resting on a thing. In testimony hereof, God's people, when a special promise was brought unto them, were wont to 'bow down and worship,' Exod. iv. 31.

*Obj.* They received not the promises; how could they then embrace them?

*Ans.* 1. We must distinguish betwixt possession and expectation. In present possession they did not receive the promises, but in an assured expectation they did. For faith gives a being to things future, ver. 1.

2. This here may metaphorically be taken, following the former metaphor of seeing things afar off. For mariners, and others that sail to a country, so soon as they espy that country, though afar off, seem joyfully to embrace it.<sup>1</sup>

This verifieth that which was noted, Ver. 1, Sec. 4, of faith giving an evidence to that which is not; for faith resteth on God's word, which is as true as if it were a deed. What is promised is altogether as true as if it were accomplished.

*Sec. 67. Of believers confessing their mean estate.*

The patriarchs well knew what their present condition was, as is implied under this word, *confessid.* 'Italiam læto socii clamore saluant.'—*Virg. Æneid.* iii.



Of the composition and meaning of the Greek word *ἐκδηλοῦντες*, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 27, and Chap. xiii. 15, Sec. 144. It here implieth a free and open profession of that condition wherein they were, and giveth evidence that believers are not ashamed of that condition wherein they are, though it be a mean and despicable condition.

This may be exemplified in Abraham professing his present estate; yea, and Jacob too, Gen. xxiii. 4, and xlvii. 9. Oft doth the apostle thus make profession of his imprisonment, and of his chain and bonds, Eph. iii. 1, and iv. 1, and vi. 20.

Faith pierceth through the thick clouds of all meanness in this world, and beholdeth that glory which is prepared for believers: and in that respect makes the believer not ashamed of a present mean condition, but ready on all occasions to make profession thereof.

Were we thoroughly acquainted with the invisible, spiritual, and celestial prerogatives that belong to believers, and did we believe them, we should not be ashamed of any mean condition in this world, but, as occasion requireth, be ready to make profession thereof.

#### Sec. 68. Of *strangers* and *pilgrims*.

That condition which the aforesaid believers confessed is expressed in these two words, *strangers*, *pilgrims*. Of the former, *ξένος*, *strangers*, see Chap. xiii. 2, Sec. 14.

The other word, *παρακλήτοι*, *pilgrims*, in Greek is a compound. The root *παρά*, whence the simple noun is derived, signifieth *people*.

The word used here is a double compound; for there are two prepositions, *ἐν*, *παρά*, with which it is compounded. It signifieth a going from people to people, or from place to place, as pilgrims use to do. It is translated *strangers*, 1 Pet. i. 1; and *strangers* and *pilgrims* are joined together, 1 Pet. ii. 11.

They do in general imply one and the same thing; yet they may be distinguished. For strangers are so called in regard of their situation, which was out of their country; but pilgrims in regard of their condition, which was to travel towards their country.

Hereby we have instance that saints are as strangers. This was prefigured in the patriarchs, Exod. iv. 4, Gen. xv. 13, Ps. xxxix. 12. The apostle intimateth as much of Christians, 1 Pet. ii. 11.

*Obj.* Wicked ones are strangers as well as saints.

*Ans.* 1. They are not so in their opinion, Ps. xlix. 7, 9, 11; Luke xii. 18.

2. Saints are strangers here in reference to their proper country, which is heaven. In that respect wicked ones are not strangers.

We that would give evidence that we are true believers must be as strangers; and that in these respects,

1. We must 'use this world as not abusing it,' 1 Cor. vii. 31.

2. We must pass by wrongs, as Isaac did, Gen. xxvi. 18.

3. We must be content, though we want, Phil. iv. 11.

4. If we abound, we must be the more thankful, 1 Chron. xxix. 15.

5. We must not be 'busybodies in other men's matters,' 1 Pet. iv. 15.

6. Our speech, attire, and conversation must shew that we are of another country, Phil. iii. 20.

7. We must 'abstain from fleshly lusts,' 1 Pet. ii. 11.

8. We must love strangers, Deut. x. 19.

9. We must do good while we are here, Gal. vi. 10; we shall hereby gain love.

10. We must be willing to die, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2.

The addition of this other metaphor, *pilgrims*, to *strangers*, giveth proof that saints are as well *pilgrims* as *strangers*.

Hereupon Jacob styleth the course of his life a 'pilgrimage,' Gen. xlvii. 9.

Here they have no resting-place, Heb. xiii. 14.

Besides sundry of the directions before given concerning strangers, these may be added concerning this metaphor of *pilgrims*.

1. That we still press on towards our country, Phil. iii. 14.

2. That we cast off every weighty thing, Heb. xii. 1.

3. That we be inquisitive after the way, as Jehoshaphat was, 1 Kings xxii. 5, Isa. xxx. 21.

4. That our eye be upon heaven, as they who desired a heavenly country, ver. 16.

Howsoever these two metaphors, *strangers*, *pilgrims*, may seem a great discouragement, yet the word affordeth many comforts to uphold our spirits in these conditions, as,

1. We have a city to come, Heb. xiii. 14.

2. Here we are freemen and citizens in reference to that city, Eph. ii. 19.

3. We have an excellent guide, Jesus Christ, Heb. xii. 2.

4. We have a goodly company, Heb. xii. 1.

5. We have a sufficient light, which is God's word, Ps. cxix. 105.

6. We have excellent attendants, God's angels, Ps. xxxiv. 7, and xci. 11.

7. We have sufficient provision.

8. God taketh especial care of strangers and pilgrims, Deut. x. 18.

9. This condition is not long. The days of our pilgrimage are but few, Gen. xlvii. 9.

10. There is a rest to come, Heb. iv. 9, Rev. xiv. 13.

#### Sec. 69. *Saints' meanness only on earth.*

By way of limitation the apostle addeth this last clause, *on the earth*, Ps. cxix. 19. To that end other

like clauses in other places are added ; as where Abraham acknowledgeth himself a stranger, he addeth this clause, 'with you,' Gen. xxiii. 4 ; and where Jacob mentioneth the days of the years of his pilgrimage, he thus expoundeth that phrase, the days of the years of my life, Gen. xlvii. 9.

1. This world is the time and place of probation. After it is the time and place of remuneration.

2. God affords this limitation to shew that this condition of strangers and pilgrims is not the main end whereunto we are ordained.

Let this limitation teach us not to overween this world, which is the time of our being on earth ; but rather to be content and patient while we are on earth, and to be willing to depart from it.

Sec. 70. *Of professing one's condition.*

Ver. 14. *For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country.*

This causal, γὰρ, for, giveth evidence that this verse is a reason of that which went before. The most proper reference that it can have is to the last clause of the former verse. For this phrase, *they that say such things*, is a general expression of the confession of the patriarchs, that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth. The argument may be thus framed :

They who profess that they are strangers and pilgrims on earth, declare plainly that they seek a country :

But the patriarchs say such things :

Therefore they declare plainly that they seek a country.

This participle, λέγοντες, saying, or, they that say, intendeth both the truth of the thing, and also the truth of their heart. As they are indeed strangers and pilgrims, so in their minds they know it, and in the sincerity of their heart they acknowledge it.

This phrase, *declare plainly*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἰσαριθμοῦσα*. Of the notation of that word, see Chap. ix. 24, Sec. 124.

It signifieth so conspicuously and clearly to set out a thing, as others may plainly discern it, so as no doubt can be made of it. Our English therefore, to manifest the emphasis thereof, have added this word, *plainly*, 'declare plainly.'

This word is used of those that came out of the graves after Christ's resurrection, Mat. xxvii. 53. It is there translated, *appeared*.

Here then it is manifested that a true profession is an evident declaration of one's mind. I say *true*, because so much is here intended, and because if a profession be not true, but dissembled, men are deceived thereby ; and that is declared which is not so. The Shechemites were deceived with the feigned profession of the sons of Jacob, Gen. xxxiv. 13, &c. ; and Abner and Amasa with the feigned profession of Joab, 2 Sam. iii. 27, and xx. 9, 10.

Now that is a true profession which ariseth from

the judgment well enlightened, and from the heart rightly affected. Thus, 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness ; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,' Rom. x. 10. Thus saith the psalmist, as he was a type of Christ, 'Thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness,' Ps. xl. 8, 9.

Thus in all ages have saints, by an open profession, made declaration of their mind, as Josh. xxiv. 15, Ruth i. 16 ; and the people of God after their return from captivity, Ezra v. 11 ; and the apostles in all their epistles, Rom. i. 1.

The heart is as a treasure. If it be a good heart, and a true heart, the mouth will utter good and true things, Mat. xii. 35. Hereupon the wise man saith that 'the heart of the wise teacheth his lips,' Prov. xvi. 23.

Contrary to this is the profession of many, whose heart thinketh one thing, and their tongue utters another. For,

1. Many are forward to promise what they intend not, as Saul promised his elder daughter to David, 1 Sam. xviii. 17 ; and the Jews, who promised liberty to their servants, Jer. xxxiv. 16.

2. Flatterers, who give to men more than their due, as they who said to Herod, 'It is the voice of a god ;' and the Herodians, who professed that Christ taught the way of God in truth, Mat. xxii. 16, which they did to entangle him.

3. Complimenters, who, to get repute to themselves, complain of others' injustice, and profess that integrity in themselves which is not, as Absalom, 2 Sam. xv. 3, 4.

4. Hypocrites, who draw near God with their mouth, but remove their heart far from him, Isa. xxix. 13.

All these, and other like them, pervert the end of speech, which is plainly to declare the intent of the heart. One man knoweth not the things of another (1 Cor. ii. 11), namely, such things as he inwardly conceiveth. By a man's own profession of them, they are made known to others. Though there be other means of making known a man's mind, as writing, and signs of sundry sorts, yet the most usual and ready means is speech. And for this end especially is an articulate and distinct speech given unto man.

It becomes us therefore, who are informed in the mind of God, and in our own condition, plainly to declare to others as much, and that as occasion is offered, for the glory of God and good of others ; and to be so faithful and constant therein, as it may be said of us, *ἰσαριθμοῦσα*, they declare plainly.

Sec. 71. *Of seeking what we desire.*

Upon that mean condition wherein the patriarchs were on earth, it is said that they seek a country. The word, *ἰζητοῦσα*, translated seek, is a compound. Of

the emphasis thereof, see Chap. xiii. 14, Sec. 139. It implieth an earnest seeking, and that with desire to obtain what they seek for. It is attributed to Herod's seeking after Peter (when he had escaped out of his clutches), Acts xii. 19. It setteth out a believer's earnest seeking after that which he desireth. Such was his seeking who said, 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after,' Ps. xxvii. 4. And again, 'With my whole heart have I sought thee,' Ps. cxix. 10.

1. Faith, as it works assurance of attaining that which it desires, so a persuasion also of the course that it taketh, and means which it useth for that end. And this puts life in seeking after it.

2. Faith hath a holy heat in it, and it adds fervour to other graces. This makes believers the more earnest in seeking till they find.

Surely they deceive themselves who pretend faith, yet are secure and careless in seeking out that which they pretend to believe. Herein lieth a main difference betwixt the true believer and him who only is enlightened in the benefit of that which is to be believed. They may desire that which is good for themselves, but they seek it not aright—as Balaam, who desired to 'die the death of the righteous,' Num. xxiii. 10.

For our better direction in that kind of seeking, I will distinctly set down both the aberrations in seeking, and also directions for so seeking, as we may obtain. 'Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss,' saith an apostle, James iv. 3.

Men use to seek amiss in the means, in the matter, and in the time.

1. They fail in the means, who use either no means, or indirect means. They use no means who rest upon a bare hope, and a vain wish, as Balaam, Num. xxiii. 10. Or so rest upon supposed predestination, as they inquire not after the way to salvation. They rest in false means who use any other means than such as are prescribed in God's word. As ignorant persons, who think it enough to have a good meaning; and superstitious persons, who rest upon outward performances; and idolaters, who trust to means of their own, or other men's inventions.

2. They fail in the manner, who seek feignedly or carelessly. They seek feignedly who either outwardly seem to seek heaven, but inwardly have their hearts set upon this world, namely, the profits and glory thereof. All hypocrites seek feignedly. As a painted man is no man, so a hypocritical seeking is no seeking. They seek carelessly who are slothful in seeking, who 'do the work of the Lord negligently,' Jer. xlviii. 10, and such as are negligent in hearing and cold in prayer. As good not at all as so loosely.

3. They fail in the time, who seek not soon enough, or long enough. They seek not soon enough, who neglect the present opportunity. See Chap. iii. 7, Sec. 76. They seek not long enough, who wax weary,

and leave off before they find what they seek. See Chap. x. 38, Sec. 148.

Most that miss of finding, fail in one of these aberrations of seeking.

Directions for right seeking are such as these:—

1. In general, that we set ourselves to do something. Though our doing be no matter of merit, yet it may be a means of obtaining our desire.

2. Inquire after the right means. These are, in the ease that we have in hand about a country, principal and subordinate. The principal means is Christ himself, John xiv. 6. Subordinate means are the word and sacraments, and other divine ordinances. In these is Christ to be found.

3. Seek sincerely. 'With my whole heart have I sought thee,' saith he who found the Lord, Ps. cxix. 10. 'Whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord,' Col. iii. 23.

4. Seek with all diligence, 2 Pet. i. 10, Mat. vi. 33. See Chap. iv. 11, Sec. 64.

5. Lay hold of the first opportunity. See Chap. iii. 7, Sec. 75.

6. Persevere in seeking till thou obtain. See Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 68.

#### Sec. 72. *Of the country of believers.*

That which the patriarchs sought is here said to be a country. The Greek word, *πατρίδα*, is derived from another noun, *πατήρ*, that signifieth a father, so as it implieth the place where our father dwelt, and where he was born. It is in this respect called 'the land of one's nativity,' Gen. xi. 28. It is also put for the place where one hath been brought up. Thus, though Christ were born at Bethlehem in Judea, yet Nazareth, where he was brought up, was called his country, Luke iv. 23, 24; yea, it is put also for the place of a man's present habitation, whereunto upon all occasions he hath resort. Thus Capernaum, where Christ dwelt after he was thrust out of Nazareth, was called his country, Mark vi. 14.

The place here intended is called a country, because it is prepared by our Father as a perpetual habitation. It is expressly said to be 'a heavenly country,' ver. 16. Thereby he means heaven itself. It is here called a country, in opposition to the condition wherein the patriarchs were when they sought this. They were then *strangers*, out of the land of their nativity and place of habitation. They were also *pilgrims*, travelling to a country. They then, 'professing themselves to be strangers and pilgrims, did plainly declare thereby that they sought a country.'

They being men of understanding, and of great faith, give us hereby to understand that there is a country for such as are strangers and pilgrims on earth. The substance of this point is set out by sundry other metaphors, as 'a kingdom,' Luke xii. 32; 'a city,' ver. 16; 'an house,' 2 Cor. v. 2; 'a building,' 2 Cor. v. 1; 'an habitation,' Luke xvi. 9; a

place of 'mansions,' John xiv. 2; 'an inheritance,' 1 Pet. i. 4.

This God thus disposeth to shew that the condition of believers in this world is not that main end whereunto God hath ordained them. This world is Christ's school. It is the place and time of education, and for probation, that we may be fitted for the city, country, and kingdom here intended.

1. Knowledge hereof and faith herein is sufficient to uphold us against all the hardness and hazards that we may meet with in this world.

2. It is a forcible motive to patience, contentment, and other like graces. Who would not be content a while, having assurance of such a country?

3. This is of force to dissuade us from settling our rest here on earth. Will a traveller who hath a country to go into, and a fair inheritance therein, set up his rest in a strange land?

4. Knowledge of this country should put us on to walk in the way which leadeth thereunto. God's word giveth us a good direction herein, Ps. cxix. 105.

5. This is a great encouragement against death, which is the very gate through which we go into this country.

Sec. 73. *Of believers' disrespect of things below.*

Ver. 15. *And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.*

This text may here be brought in, to prevent this objection, the country which they sought might be that whence they came. This the apostle proveth to be most improbable, in that they had opportunity to have returned thither, if they had been mindful of it.

Of the Greek conjunction, *μὲν*, translated *truly*, see Chap. vii. 5, Sec. 37.

It is sometimes translated *verily*. It is a word that doth somewhat heighten the thing affirmed.

This phrase, *they had been mindful*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἐμνημόνεον*; of the meaning whereof, see Chap. xiii. 3, 7, Secs. 24, 95. The mindfulness here meant is a remembrance of former things, with desire to enjoy them again.

The word *country* is not expressed in the Greek, but understood in the relative particle, *ἐκθεν*, *thence*; for it is of the same gender that the word *country* is. And the verb *ἐξῆλθον*, *came out*, is the same that was used of Abraham's coming out of his country, ver. 8.

This country, then, was the place where they were born and brought up; where their kindred, alliance, and other friends were; where they had, or might have had, houses, lands, and hereditaments, and many more external delights, profits, preferences, and contents, than in the place where they were.

But this giveth proof that believers do not much respect the things here below. Like instances might be given of Lot, Gen. xix. 26, of Ruth, Ruth i. 16, and of the disciples, Mat. xix. 27, and of these Hebrews, chap. x. 34, and of all sorts of martyrs.

Faith persuades the soul of better things than this world affords, Heb. x. 35, 2 Cor. iv. 17. No marvel, then, that they do not much respect things below.

1. False, therefore, is that pretence which they make of faith whose hearts are wholly and only set upon this world and the things thereof. They are contrary to things above, 1 John ii. 16. And can contraries stand together?

2. Surely, when the heart is once brought to condemn the world, sound faith is wrought therein, especially if it be upon persuasion of a better. Very reason makes a man choose that which he is persuaded is the better.

Sec. 74. *Of the patriarchs' neglecting opportunities of returning to their country.*

The patriarchs' foresaid disrespect of their country is much amplified by this phrase, *they might have had opportunity to have returned.*

There is a little particle joined with this verb, *ἔχον*, *had*, *ἔχοντες*, which shews it to be of the potential mood, and is rightly interpreted *might have had*. Some Greek copies, and the Syriac and vulgar Latin, and sundry interpreters, read it the indicative mood, thus, *they had*, but not so properly.

Our English have also fitly interpreted this noun, *opportunity*, which signifieth a fit season; for the Grecians do put such a difference betwixt two words, *καιρός*, *ζῆλον*, which signify *time*, as we do betwixt *season* and *time*, Acts i. 7.

The patriarchs may be said to have had opportunity of returning to their country in these respects:

1. There were many external allurements to move them to return.

2. There were no external impediments to hinder them. The Canaanites, among whom they dwelt, did not seek to hold them, as the Egyptians did the Israelites in Egypt; nor did their countrymen use means to keep them out after they were gone.

3. They had no great external allurements to keep them where they were.

4. They were not held back by any external employments.

5. In that long time that they lived as strangers, they might have taken some season or other—if not in cold of winter or in heat of summer, yet in spring or autumn, if not in times of scarcity, yet in time of plenty—to have returned.

6. They had time and means to accommodate themselves with all things needful, for all that belonged unto them, to help them in their journey.

But this neglect of worldly opportunities was an evidence that their hearts were not set upon this world, but that they sought another country. This the apostle doth clearly exemplify in Moses, ver. 21.

The world hath an adamantine force to draw men's hearts to it, and a gluish quality to hold them close to it.

This is a conviction of such as omit no opportunity of heaping honours, offices, and livings one upon another, of gaining goods excessively, of pursuing pleasures without heed, that they have not another country to seek after.

Let us learn to give such evidence of seeking after another home, by taking off our hearts from this world, and passing by the opportunities which others take of gaining the world.

Sec. 75. *Of believers desiring the better.*

Ver. 16. *But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

This verse doth plainly declare what country it was that the patriarchs sought; so as it hath an especial reference to ver. 14.

Of these two particles, *νυν* *ōz*, but now, see Chap. viii. 6, Sec. 22.

They imply an assumption of one thing upon the rejection of another.

The patriarchs desired not a country on earth, but a better in heaven.

The verb, *ἐπιθυνοῦσαι*, translated *desire*, is derived from another, *ἐπιθυῶ*, *porrigo*, that signifieth *to reach out*. It is applied to stretching out of the hand with desire of having such and such a thing; and it implies an earnest desire—yea, it includes a care in using means for obtaining that desire.

The philosopher opposeth the Greek word, *ἐπιθυνοῦσαι*, *appetere*, which signifieth *to desire*, to another, *ἐπιθυῶ*, *flagere*, which signifieth *to shun, or fly from*.

It is applied to the desire of a covetous man (1 Tim. vi. 10), which useth to be great. It is also applied to a desire of the ministerial function (1 Tim. iii. 1). A noun, *ἐπιθυμία*, *libido*, which signifieth *lust*, that is, an earnest desire, is derived from this verb, Rom. i. 27.

This is here noted as a fruit of faith, which earnestly desireth what it doth desire. For true faith is placed upon such objects as draw the heart of man thenceunto.

Hereby we may know whether our desire of spiritual and heavenly things be of faith or no.

That which the patriarchs so desired is said to be a *better country*. The word *country* is not in the Greek, but by the elegance of that tongue understood under this word *better*, which hath reference to the word *country*, ver. 14.

Of this epithet, *καίτερον*, *better*, see Chap. i. 4, Sec. 39.

The country here meant is styled *better*, in opposition to that earthly country which they left. It is thus indefinitely set down better, because the excellency of it cannot be expressed. Wherein any country hath an excellency, therein this is better.

This general giveth us to understand, that be-

lievers, in neglecting anything here below, aim at a better.

These Hebrews 'took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had a better substance,' Heb. x. 34.

Martyrs accepted not deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection, ver. 35. David preferred the law 'before thousands of gold and silver,' because it was better, Ps. exix. 72. The like is said of wisdom in reference to rubies, Prov. viii. 11.

Christ is 'made wisdom' to believers, 1 Cor. i. 30. And they have 'the spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of Christ,' Eph. i. 8, 17.

How preposterous is the censure of wrongdoings concerning believers, who account believers egregious fools in that very respect wherein their wisdom is most manifested!

For it is an especial point of wisdom well to discern the things that are most excellent, and answerably to desire them.

Let us herein give proof of our faith, by understanding what are the better things; and by affecting them so as we may desire the better, and endeavour after the better, Phil. iii. 7, 8, &c.

Sec. 76. *Of heaven the hope of believers.*

That the apostle might plainly declare what kind of country it was that they sought, he thus expresseth it—*that is, a heavenly*. This phrase, *τοῦτον*, *that is*, is a general note of explanation, whereof see Chap. x. 20, Sec. 58. In general, it sheweth that ambiguous points are to be made clear and plain.

This word, *heavenly*, doth distinctly shew the kind of country.

Of the word translated *heavenly*, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 15. It is a compound, and emphatical; word for word it may be translated *supercelestial*, above the heavens, namely, the visible heavens. It is that place which is called 'the third heaven,' 2 Cor. xii. 2.

Hereby it appeareth that heaven was the aim of ancient believers. Jacob expected as much, Gen. xlix. 18, and Job, chap. xix. 26, and David, Ps. xvii. 15.

In heaven is the best manifestation of God's presence; there the beatifical vision is to be enjoyed; there is Christ in his human nature; there is an unmixed society of saints; there is fullness of glory. What can be desired that is not there?

A due consideration hereof would put us on to sundry duties.

1. It will raise our hearts aloft, and make us soar above this world, Col. iii. 1, 2.

2. It will conform the whole man to those in heaven, Phil. iii. 20, Mat. vi. 10.

3. It will enlarge the heart to all thankfulness, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4.

4. It will direct us to a wise choice of the best treasure, Mat. vi. 20.

- 5. It will wean us from this world, and make us the less esteem it, 1 Cor. vii. 31.
  - 6. It will support us in all losses, Heb. x. 34.
  - 7. It will encourage against all fears, Luke xii. 32.
  - 8. It will keep from fainting, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 18.
  - 9. It makes death welcome, Phil. i. 21, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2 Tim. iv. 7.
  - 10. It moderates mourning for believers departed, 1 Thes. iv. 14.
- Of heaven the reward of saints, see Chap. x. 34, Sec. 131.

Sec. 77. *Of God's not being ashamed of believers.*  
So well did God approve of the foresaid desire of the patriarchs, as he was moved thereby to give evidence of his special respect unto them. That that which follows is a recompense of the foresaid desire, is evident by this illative conjunction, *ὥς, wherefore*. Thereof, see Chap. iii. 7, Sec. 73.

This particle doth oft set out an evidence of a cause; as when we see trees bud, we say, therefore they have life; or when there is a smoke in the chimney, therefore there is fire.

Here it setteth forth a consequence of their faith, they so and so believed, 'therefore God was not ashamed of them.'

By this it is evidenced that the faith of believers is not in vain. As in sundry other particulars, so in earth, this is manifested. But most of all in this which here followeth, *God is not ashamed to be called their God*. Of the word, *ἐπαισχύνομαι*, translated *ashamed*, see Chap. ii. 11, Sec. 108. To speak according to the meaning of the word, God blusheth not through shame of them, as if he thought himself disgraced by them. This is spoken of God, *ἐπαισχύνομαι*, after the manner of man. It implieth a joyful acknowledgment of them, as a father of a gracious son. The negative expression, *οὐκ ἐπαισχύνομαι*, is not *ashamed*, hath an emphasis, and implieth that their disposition was no matter of disgrace, to make God ashamed of them. The like is noted of Christ, that 'he was not ashamed to call them brethren.' Chap. ii. 11, Sec. 108. Sundry points there delivered may be here applied.

Sec. 78. *Of God's being the special God of believers.*  
The evidence whereby it is manifested that God was not ashamed of them, was this: *to be called their God*. The Greek *ἐπαισχύνομαι* is a compound. Of the simple verb which signifieth *to call*, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 13. The preposition with which it is here compounded signifieth *to*, or *upon*. This compound word is oft used to set out the surname, or some title added to a man's name, as *Joses*, who was surnamed *Barnabas*, Acts iv. 36; and *Judas*, surnamed *Iscaariot*, Luke xxii. 3. Thus this title, *their God*, is a kind of surname.

It implieth that the Lord is in special manner the God of believers—such are the members of his church. This special relation is applied to God in all persons of both numbers; as,

My God, *אֱלֹהֵי*, Ps. xxii. 1; thy God, *אֱלֹהֶיךָ*, Ps. l. 7; his God, *אֱלֹהֵיו*, Num. xxv. 13; our God, *אֱלֹהֵינוּ*, Ps. xlviii. 14; your God, *אֱלֹהֵיכֶם*, Gen. xliii. 23; their God, *אֱלֹהֵיהֶם*, Lev. xxi. 6; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Exod. iii. 6; the God of Elias, 2 Kings ii. 14; the God of Daniel, Dan. vi. 26; the God of Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, Dan. iii. 28; the God of Israel, Exod. v. 1; the God of the Hebrews, Exod. v. 3; the God of the Jews, Rom. iii. 29; the God of the Gentiles, Rom. iii. 29; the God of Jeshurun, or of the righteous, Dent. xxxiii. 26; the God of the living, Mat. xxii. 32.

Of the special relation, see Chap. viii. 10, Sec. 67.

This affords matter of admiration, exhortation, direction, and consolation.

1. If the psalmist had cause to admire God's goodness, in regard of that dignity which God conferred on man at his first creation, Ps. viii. 1, how much more ought we to admire this dignity! In this respect, said the disciple of Christ, 'How is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?' John xiv. 22. In us, as we are of ourselves, there is no more than in others, it is God's grace which makes the difference.

2. Just cause there is of exhorting one another to get assurance of this dignity: it is a matter worthy our best diligence.

(1.) It distinguisheth a true justifying faith from all other kinds of faith.

(2.) It emboldeneth us to go to God in all our needs. 'I will go to my father,' saith the prodigal, Luke xv. 18.

(3.) It makes us rest upon God for all needful provision and protection, Ps. xci. 2, 3.

(4.) It enlargeth the heart in prayer and praise, Ps. xviii. 2, 3.

(5.) It makes us cleave to God when others fly from him, Ps. xli. 5-7.

3. For direction. Take notice of the fruits of God's special favour to thee. For God bestoweth common favours upon all of all sorts, Mat. v. 45. Yet he hath special favours for those whose God in peculiar he is; as,

- (1.) All spiritual blessings, Eph. i. 3.
- (2.) Sundry particular graces: as,
  - [1.] Understanding of God's will, Col. i. 9.
  - [2.] Justifying faith, Rom. v. 1.
  - [3.] Saving hope, Rom. viii. 24.
  - [4.] Brotherly love, 1 John iv. 18.
  - [5.] Repentance, Acts ii. 38.
  - [6.] New obedience.
  - [7.] Patience, James v. 11.
- (3.) The effects of these, as, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, comfort in spirit.

All these, and others like unto them, proceed from the spirit, whereby we are united to Christ, and so may be assured that God is our God in special.

4. Nothing can minister unto a man sounder and greater comfort than this prerogative, that God is his God. What can such a one want? What danger need he fear? What good may not be expected? What can more be desired? Wherein may a man more solace himself? Wherein may he be more confident? On this ground we may well say, 'Our lines are fallen to us in a fair place,' Ps. xvi. 5, 6.

#### Sec. 79. *Of God's preparing a city.*

An evidence that God was not ashamed to be called the God of the patriarchs is thus expressed, *for he hath prepared for them a city.* This causal, *γὰρ, for,* implieth a reason; and the reason is taken from God's care of them. He was careful to provide for them a place where they might ever be with him. This also might be a reason why they sought the aforesaid heavenly country, even because God had prepared it as a city for them to abide in.

The verb, *ἡτοίμασεν*, translated *prepared*, is derived from a noun, *ἡτοίμας*, that signifieth *ready*, or *prepared*, Mat. xxv. 10. It implieth a precedent act, Mat. xxvi. 19, John xiv. 2, 3. Thus God is said to prepare, because in his eternal counsel he did appoint it for them, Mat. xx. 23, 1 Cor. ii. 9, Mat. xxxv. 24. This God did,

1. In regard of himself, to give evidence of his free grace in ordaining so great a matter for those who were not yet born, and in that respect could not be imagined to deserve anything, Rom. ix. 11.

*Obj.* It might be prepared to be bestowed on such as might afterwards merit it.

*Ans.* 1. This clean thwarts the end of God's promise, which was the glory of his grace and mercy, Eph. i. 6, Rom. ix. 15.

2. As God prepared the place, so likewise the persons for whom it was prepared, who are styled 'vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,' Rom. ix. 23.

2. God prepared this place beforehand, to encourage men to walk in that way wherein they may attain to this place. A reward prepared and set before one much puts him on to do what he can for attaining thereto. This encouraged Moses, ver. 26, yea, and Christ himself, chap. xii. 2.

This preparation puts us on to sundry duties:

1. To inquire after this place, that we may know what is prepared for us, Jer. vi. 16.

2. To search after the way and means whereby we may attain thereto. God's word is a good help herein, Ps. cxix. 105.

3. The way being found out, to walk in it, Isa. xxx. 21. The two former are in vain without this, Luke xii. 48.

4. To keep straight on in this way, for there are

divers by-paths. We must therefore turn neither to the right hand nor to the left, Deut. v. 32, Heb. xii. 13.

5. To go on in this way well prepared, and that with the whole armour of God, Eph. vi. 13, &c. Wise travellers will not go abroad without a sword. Thieves and wolves are emboldened to set upon him that hath no weapon.

6. To persevere and hold on in this way till thou come to this city, otherwise thou mayest miss of it, Mat. x. 22.

The place which is prepared for them is styled *a city.* By city is here meant that heavenly country, whereof before, Sec. 76. This addeth some more emphasis. There was not only in general a country, but more particularly a city, for them to be free of. Heaven is styled a city by reason of the fit resemblance betwixt it and a city; whereof, see Ver. 10, Sec. 47.

#### Sec. 80. *Of the persons for whom the heavenly city is prepared.*

There is a relative particle, concerning the persons for whom the aforesaid city is prepared, that wants not emphasis: it is thus expressed, *αὐτοῖς, for them.* It hath reference to those whose faith is here commended; even those concerning whom it is said, 'God is not ashamed to be called their God.' Thus it appeareth that heaven is prepared for God's peculiar people. These are they whom Christ calleth 'a little flock,' to whom 'it is their Father's pleasure to give them a kingdom,' Luke xii. 32; and they whom Christ styleth 'the blessed of his Father.' The usual notes of distinction betwixt persons give further proof hereof; as 'elect,' Col. iii. 12; 'heirs of salvation,' Heb. i. 14; 'heirs of the kingdom,' James ii. 5; 'heirs of the grace of life,' 1 Pet. iii. 7; 'children of the resurrection,' Luke xx. 36; 'children of the kingdom,' Mat. xiii. 38.

*Obj.* Such as shall be cast out into utter darkness are also styled children of the kingdom, Mat. viii. 12.

*Ans.* They are so called, not in regard of their spiritual condition or disposition, but merely in regard of their seeming profession and external vocation.

God prepareth a place for a peculiar people, to shew that what he doth towards the children of men he doth upon his own mere good pleasure, Mat. xi. 28, Luke xii. 32, Rom. ix. 23.

1. This doth much amplify that great privilege of the Lord's being God to a peculiar people, and of that reward that followeth thereupon. It is not a common privilege for all of all sorts, but for them that believe. This was it that enlarged Christ's heart to give thanks unto God for those on whom this privilege was conferred, Mat. xi. 28.

2. This teacheth believers to be content with their

present condition, and not to envy the wealth, and honours, and other privileges of them for whom this city is not prepared.

3. This inciteth us to 'give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.' If once we gain assurance that the Lord is in special our God, we may rest upon it that we have a right to this city, that it is prepared for us, that we are ordained to it, that we shall be admitted into it, and ever abide in it.

Sec. 81. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 13-16.*

Ver. 13. *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

14. *For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.*

15. *And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.*

16. *But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.*

The sum of these four verses is a commendation of the patriarchs.

Hereof are two parts :

1. The substance of the commendation, vers. 13-15.

2. A consequence following thereupon, ver. 16.

The substance is,

1. Propounded, ver. 13.

2. Confirmed, ver. 14, 15.

In propounding it are set down,

1. The persons commended, *these all*.

2. The point for which they are commended; which is,

(1.) Expressed.

(2.) Illustrated.

Two things are expressed.

[1.] The kind of grace for which they are commended, *faith*.

[2.] Their continuing therein, in this word, *died*.

The point is illustrated two ways :

[1.] Negatively ; thus, *not having received the promises*.

[2.] Affirmatively ; and that by four effects :

First, *They saw the promises afar off*.

Secondly, *They were persuaded of them*.

Thirdly, *They embraced them*.

Fourthly, *They confessed their present condition*.

Their condition is,

First, Described by two metaphors, *strangers, pilgrims*.

Secondly, Limited, in this phrase, *on the earth*.

The last of the four effects is confirmed, vers. 14, 15 ; wherein we have,

1. The kind of argument, ver. 14.

2. The force thereof, ver. 15.

The kind of argument is taken from their intentment. In setting down whereof,

1. Their profession is repeated, in this phrase, *they that say such things*.

2. Their intentment is declared.

The declaration is,

(1.) Generally hinted, thus, *declare plainly*.

(2.) Particularly expressed.

In the expression is noted,

[1.] Their endeavours, *they seek*.

[2.] The object that they seek, *a country*.

The force of the argument consisteth in their forbearing to return.

This is set out by way of supposition ; wherein is set down,

1. The kind of supposition.

2. A consequence inferred thereupon.

In setting down the kind, we may distinguish,

(1.) The act supposed, *if they had been mindful*.

(2.) The object of that act. This is,

1. Generally propounded, *that country*.

2. Particularly exemplified, *from whence they came out*.

In the consequence is manifested,

1. What they might have done ; they might have returned.

2. The ground thereof ; they had opportunity to do it.

The consequence following upon their foresaid faith was a remuneration, ver. 16.

Here observe,

1. The ground.

2. The kind thereof.

The ground is,

1. Propounded.

2. Explained.

In propounding the ground is noted,

1. Their desire.

2. The thing desired, which was, *a country*.

That country is illustrated,

1. Comparatively, *a better*, namely, than that which they left.

2. Simply, in this word, *heavenly*.

The kind of remuneration consisteth of two parts.

1. A special relation betwixt God and them.

2. An especial provision for them.

In setting down the relation, we may observe,

1. The inference of it, in this illative conjunction, *wherefore*.

2. The substance of it. This is set out,

(1.) By the matter, *God is their God*.

(2.) By the manner of expressing it, and that two ways.

[1.] He is not ashamed thereof.

[2.] He is willing to be so called.

The provision is set out,



1. By the divine act, *God hath prepared.*
2. By the subject that is prepared, *a city.*
3. By the persons for whom, *for them.*

Sec. 82. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xi. 13-16.*

I. *Faith manifesteth her vigour in all sorts of people.* This general particle, *these all*, giveth proof hereunto. See Sec. 64.

II. *True faith fails not.* For believers die in faith. See Sec. 64.

III. *Believers rest on that which they enjoy not.* This phrase, *not having received the promises*, giveth evidence hereof. See Sec. 65.

IV. *Believers see things afar off.* So did the patriarchs. See Sec. 66.

V. *True faith produceth assurance.* The word *persuaded* intends as much. See Sec. 66.

VI. *Faith gives evidence to that which yet is not.* This metaphor, *embraced*, implies as much. See Sec. 66.

VII. *Faith makes men not ashamed of their condition.* They who freely confess their condition are not ashamed of it. See Sec. 67.

VIII. *Saints are strangers.* So they are here called. See Sec. 68.

IX. *Saints are pilgrims.* Thus also are they here called. See Sec. 68.

X. *The mean condition of saints is only in this world, for it is on the earth.* See Sec. 69.

XI. *A true profession is an evident declaration of one's mind.* Thus much doth the apostle infer from the profession of the patriarchs. See Sec. 70.

XII. *Believers seek after that which they desire.* The apostle inferreth this from the patriarchs' desire. See Sec. 71.

XIII. *There is a country for saints who are strangers and pilgrims.* They that professed themselves strangers and pilgrims sought this country. See Sec. 72.

XIV. *Believers do not much respect things below.* This phrase, *if they had been mindful of that country*, giveth instance thereof. See Sec. 73.

XV. *Neglect of worldly opportunities is an evidence that the heart is not set on the world.* Hereby the patriarchs shewed that their heart was not set upon their earthly country. See Sec. 74.

XVI. *Believers aim at better things in neglecting things present.* By the patriarchs' neglect of their own country, the apostle infers that they desired a better. See Sec. 75.

XVII. *Heaven is the aim of believers.* That country which believers of old desired is here styled heavenly. See Sec. 76.

XVIII. *Man's respect to God is an evidence of God's respect to man.* This ariseth from this illative particle, *wherefore*. See Sec. 77.

XIX. *God accounteth believers on him no disgrace unto him.* He is not ashamed of them. See Sec. 77.

XX. *The Lord is in special manner the God of believers.* He is called their God. See Sec. 78.

XX. *Heaven is a true city.* So it is here called. See Sec. 79.

XXI. *Heaven is beforehand prepared.* For God hath prepared it. See Sec. 79.

XXII. *Heaven is prepared for a peculiar people.* See Sec. 80.

XXIII. *Believers' recompense is answerable to their damping.*

XXIV. *Believers' recompense far exceeds their damping.*

The believers mentioned by the apostle left their own country, and had another prepared for them, and that other was a heavenly, which was far better. Of these two, see Chap. x. 34, Sec. 130.

Sec. 83. *Of God's trying Abraham.*

Ver. 17. *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son,*

18. *Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:*

19. *Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

In these three verses the apostle produceth a further confirmation of Abraham's faith. The verses betwixt the tenth and the first of these may be included in a parenthesis, and so these verses follow upon those which before set forth the faith of Abraham in particular. Two evidences were given before of the truth and soundness of his faith.

One was, his leaving of his own country, ver. 8.

The other was, his sojourning in a strange country, vers. 9, 10.

This is a third evidence, and though the last, yet not the least of the three, but rather the greatest; yea, the greatest of all that are given of others' faith. I suppose I may further say, the greatest that ever was given by any mere man.

Of the kind of faith, and of the name of the person, Abraham, see Ver. 8, Sec. 36.

This instance of Abraham's obedience, together with others going before and following after, being attributed to faith, in this phrase, *by faith*, sheweth that faith puts one on to any kind of obedience, even to do that which otherwise he would not.

For faith persuades the soul of God's sovereignty, wisdom, righteousness, faithfulness, power, truth, providence, and other excellencies.

We may from hence infer an especial reason of the scantiness of men's obedience, namely, want of faith.

The idolater that will not leave his idols, or the swearer his oaths, or the voluptuous person his pleasures, or the lustful person his lusts, or the proud person his strange attire, or other sinners their sins, want faith.

Among other motives, this is an especial one to stir us up to get, preserve, and exercise faith.

Herein appears the greatness of his faith, that he believed the promise of Isaac's seed, and yet by faith is ready to null that promise by sacrificing Isaac before he had any seed at all. How admirable is the power of faith!

This phrase, *πειρασθῆναι*, when he was tried (or being tried), sets forth the mind of God in that case—namely, that God enjoined him to offer up Isaac, not simply that he should so do, but to try whether he were willing, upon God's command, to do so or no. Abraham then knew not that God commanded him to offer up Isaac merely upon trial.

The apostle, that relates as much, setteth down this end of God, because the event did demonstrate as much; but before the event, nor Abraham nor any other did know the mind of God. But the history that was penned after God's mind was manifested, doth expressly say, that 'God did tempt Abraham,' Gen. xxii. 1. Therefore the apostle might well say that Abraham was tried; for to tempt is to try.

Of the meaning of the word here used by the apostle, and of divers kinds of trying or tempting, see *The Guide to go to God*; or, *An Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, on the sixth petition, Sec. 170. Of the many ways of tempting man, see Chap. ii. 18, Sec. 185.

The trial or proving here meant, hath reference to God's charge about offering up Isaac, Gen. xxii. 2. *Obj.* It was an unnatural murder to do so.

*Ans.* 1. God's will is not only the rule, but also the ground of goodness; whatsoever God willeth is, in that respect, good and just.

2. A special charge of God doth dispense with a general law, and that in regard of particular and present circumstances. Witness the Israelites' spoiling of the Egyptians, Exod. xii. 35, 36; and the wounding of the man of God, 1 Kings xx. 35, 36.

3. God did not intend the taking away of Isaac's life; he meant to prevent Abraham therein.

*Quest.* 1. Did God know Abraham's mind, that he would indeed have sacrificed his son if he had not been prevented?

*Ans.* Surely he did, even as he did know the patience and faith of Job. 'He understandeth our thoughts afar off,' Ps. cxxxix. 2.

*Quest.* 2. What need was there that God should try Abraham?

*Ans.* 1. For Abraham's own sake, that he might the better know the power of that grace which God had conferred on him; for as God tries some to discover their weakness unto themselves (so he tried Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31), so he tries others to manifest that grace that is in them, as he did the Canaanitish woman, Mat. xv. 25.

2. For the sake of others, that Abraham might be an example to them. It pleased God to call out Abraham to be a father of the faithful; therefore he would shew to all ages what grace he had conferred

upon him—what a worthy father, and what a worthy pattern he was.

By this it is manifest that God tries his best children. He began with Adam, and that in his innocency, and hath continued so to do in all ages. Among others, Abraham was oft tempted, as appears by these texts: Gen. xii. 1, 11, xiii. 7, xiv. 14, xv. 13, xvi. 5, xvii. 24, xviii. 12, 13, xix. 24, xx. 2, and xxi. 11, but never so sorely as in this particular.

Two special ends there be hereof:—one, to manifest the grace that is in his children, as in the case of Job; the other, to discover inward corruptions, as in the case of Hezekiah.

We may not therefore think it strange that God's children are tried.

We ought rather so to purge out our corruptions, and so to labour for strength of grace, as our trials may be our glory.

#### Sec. 84. *Of the benefit of a true intent.*

Upon the trial, it is said that Abraham offered up Isaac. The word, *προσέφερεν*, translated *offered*, is the same that is used for slaying and offering up of sacrifices. See Chap. v. 1, Secs. 6, 7. So is the Hebrew word, Gen. xxii. 2. It is set down in the time past, as if he had actually offered him up, by reason of the truth of his intention; for Abraham did fully intend to offer him up, in that he knew no other concerning the purpose of God. So as a true intent is, in God's account, as a real act. So was David's intent to build God's house; it was therefore commended, 1 Kings viii. 18; and rewarded, 2 Sam. vii. 16. Hereupon the apostle saith, that 'if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not,' 2 Cor. viii. 12. Witness the poor widow, Luke xxi. 3.

1. God searcheth the heart, Jer. xvii. 10.

2. He desireth the heart, Deut. v. 29.

3. He hath most and best respect to the heart, Ps.

li. 6. Hereof see more, Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 126.

1. This is a matter of great comfort to honest hearts, Isa. xxxviii. 3. Though we be hindered from external acts, yet God accepts the inward intent.

2. Give therefore to God that which he doth above all desire, Prov. xxiii. 26.

#### Sec. 85. *Of Abraham's receiving the promises about Isaac.*

To amplify this evidence of Abraham's faith, both Abraham himself is described, and also his son about whom he was tempted.

Abraham is described, in this phrase, *he that had received the promises*. This description is joined to Abraham's name by the copulative *and*, which doth not here join different persons, but distinct properties of the same person, as his name and his privilege. His name, *Abraham*; and this privilege, *he received the promises*. In this respect the copula-

tive and is emphatical; and, to express the emphasis, it may be translated *even*—even he that had received, &c.

This phrase, *received the promises*, is the same in our English that is set down negatively, Ver. 13, Sec. 65; but the Greek verb receive is one (*λαμβάνει*) in one place, and another (*ἀναλαμβάνει*) in the other. In this place the Greek word is a compound. The simple verb, *λαμβάνει*, signifieth to take or receive. This compound, *ἀναλαμβάνει*, hath a further emphasis: it intendeth a receiving to one's self, and a good entertaining of a thing. It is but once more used in the New Testament, and applied to Publius his entertaining Paul and his company, and thus translated, 'who received us,' Acts xxviii. 7.

The promises here intended were made by God immediately to Abraham himself. Abraham heard them with his own ears, from God's own mouth. They were not brought to him by an uncertain messenger, or by common report, but by the surest evidence that could be, in which respect (as he had just cause) he applied them to himself, and steadfastly believed the truth of them, that they should be assuredly accomplished. Thus he received them to himself.

Of the composition and meaning of the word translated *promises*, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 6. Here, under the word promises, are comprised, not only general promises made to all believers—that God will be their God, and that God would bless them and provide for them (which were likewise in special made to Abraham, Gen. xii. 7, xv. 1, xvii. 7)—but also such particular promises as this act of offering Isaac seemed to cross, namely this, that God would establish his covenant with Isaac for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him, Gen. xvii. 19. Isaac was that seed which God intended, in whose posterity Canaan should be possessed, Gen. xii. 7, and whose posterity should be for number as the stars, Gen. xv. 5, and that seed with whom God would establish his covenant, and in whom all nations should be blessed, Gen. xvii. 7. The accomplishment of these and other like promises depended upon the preservation of Isaac's life, at least till Isaac should have a child, in whom the hope of the said promises might be continued till they should be fully accomplished; for Abraham then, who in special received these promises, to offer up him by whom they should be accomplished, must needs be an evidence of more than ordinary faith; and this privilege of receiving the promises a great amplification hereof. It giveth instance that no obstacle can hinder the vigour of true faith.

I suppose that a greater instance cannot be given than this of Abraham's receiving the promises; and yet doing that which seemed to take away the effect and fruit of all the promises. Though the act in itself had been a matter of great admiration, yet had it not been so great for any other to have done it, as for him who had received the aforesaid promises.

Sec. 86. *Of this title Isaac.*

The description of him that is said to be offered up is yet a further amplification of Abraham's faith.

First, his name is here expressed, which was יִצְחָק, *Isaac*. This is set down,

1. For distinction's sake from other sons; for at that time he had another son by his maid, which was Ishmael.

2. For amplification's sake; for it shews him to be a son of joy. This name Isaac is derived from a verb, צָחַק, that signifieth to laugh. It is applied to Abraham's expression of his joy when God promised this son, Gen. xvii. 17; and to Sarah's expression of her distrust, as of an impossible thing, Gen. xviii. 12; and to Ishmael's manifestation of his deriding humour, and translated *mocking*, Gen. xxi. 9. It hath the very letters that Abraham's laughter is expressed withal, יִצְחָק, Gen. xvii. 17. In relation thereto was this name first instituted; yet also it had relation to future times, as is evident by this phrase prophetically uttered by Sarah, 'God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me,' Gen. xxi. 6. Thus the very name of the child addeth much to the trial. It was a child of joy—of joy to parents, and of joy to others, even to all his posterity, and to the whole church of God in all generations.

Sec. 87. *Of the relations betwixt Abraham and Isaac.*

The foresaid child of joy is further described by the special relation that was betwixt him and Abraham; and that in sundry branches.

1. He was a *son*, in general a son of man. To have sacrificed him had been murder.

2. He was *his son*. Thus he had a special charge of him; in which respect that act might seem to be inhuman.

3. He was *his own son*; begotten of him, not adopted, as Eliezer was, Gen. xv. 2. This makes it seem unnatural to offer him up.

4. He was his *only-begotten son*; and so there was no hope of another in that kind. This made it seem the more strange.

5. In the history this clause is added, *whom thou lovest*, Gen. xxii. 2.

The LXX do there translate that phrase by a word, ἀγαπητός, that signifieth one on whom all love is cast. See Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 17. Yea, they double that word of affection, thus, 'Thy beloved son, whom thou lovest.' He was a beloved one, both in his father's affection, and also by his own desert.

If we add to these relations sundry circumstances expressly noted in the history, about Abraham's going about this strange act, we shall find his faith the more rare; for,

1. He 'rose up early in the morning,' a note of his alacrity.

2. The place where he was to offer up his son was

three days' journey from him ; an evidence of his constancy.

3. The wood wherewith Isaac should be burnt upon the altar was laid on Isaac's shoulders. Isaac himself carried it.

4. Abraham himself carried the fire to kindle it.

5. The child in this journey asketh his father where the offering was ; which question could not but pierce the bowels of a tender father.

6. The father and child being both come to the top of the mount, the father erects an altar, layeth wood thereon, binds his son, layeth him on the altar upon the wood, stretcheth forth his hand, and takes the knife to slay his son.

Was ever the like heard ? Yet behold more.

Sec. 88. *Of promises appointed to Isaac.*

It is added, ' Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called.'

This hath express reference to God's promise concerning Isaac when Ishmael was to be cast out, Gen. xxi. 12. This promise was made to Abraham, to comfort him against that grief which afflicted him upon the thought of casting out Ishmael. It is as if God had said to Abraham, What needest thou be so perplexed for parting with Ishmael ? Thou hast Isaac ; Isaac shall abide with thee ; Isaac, Isaac, I say, and none but Isaac, is that particular person who shall bring forth that seed, even that blessed seed, which I have promised thee, wherein all nations shall be blessed.

If casting out Ishmael grieved Abraham, what did it to think of sacrificing Isaac ?

Of the meaning of this word *seed*, see Chap. ii. 16, Sec. 161.

This seed, that is here referred to Isaac, intendeth, 1. That posterity which God had chosen for his church, Gal. iv. 23, 26-28.

2. Christ Jesus, the Saviour of mankind, Gal. iii. 16.

The word, *καλεῖσθαι*, which we translate *called*, is the same here that is used, Chap. ii. 11, Sec. 107. There see the emphasis of it. It here implieth that from Isaac should proceed that which is accounted and taken for the blessed seed promised to Abraham.

The apostle sets out the same thing in another word thus, *λογίζεσθαι*, are *counted* for the seed, Rom. ix. 8. In regard of the promise of a blessed seed annexed to Isaac's person, a greater trial could not have been than this. Job endured much ; but he had express promises to support and comfort him. Abraham's fate was against the promises. To have offered up all his cattle, all his servants, the son of his concubine, yea, his dear wife, and his own self, had not been so great a trial—no, not to have offered up all the world, as to offer up Isaac ; Isaac living, a blessed seed and offspring might have come from him, though Abraham himself and all others had been offered up ;

but Isaac being taken away without seed, nor Abraham, nor any in the world could be saved. The salvation of Abraham, of Isaac himself, and of all mankind, was put in hazard by this temptation. Thus this circumstance doth of all other most amplify the faith of Abraham, and giveth demonstration of the high pitch thereof.

In this case what might one think ? Here is a promise and a commandment that seem to thwart one another.

The promise, that from Isaac should descend a blessed seed.

The commandment, that Isaac should be offered for a burnt-offering before he had any seed.

What now might Abraham think ?

To sacrifice Isaac was to disannul God's promise.

To refuse to sacrifice him was to disobey God's commandment.

What mortal wight could in this case have reconciled these two ?

But Abraham was assured that the charge was divine, given by God himself. He resolves therefore to perform it. Yet he believes the promise. He knows not how it should be accomplished ; but believes that it should be accomplished.

Hereupon, in the height of his faith, he saith to his son, ' God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering,' Gen. xxii. 8. Oh, admirable, oh, incredible faith !

Of all patterns of yielding absolute and simple obedience to God's command, this is the most remarkable. Noah's obedience in building the ark (Sec. 27), and Abraham's, in leaving his country and dwelling in a strange land (Secs. 37, 41), were good patterns, but not comparable to this. This therefore is the more thoroughly to be pondered.

First, The Lord who commands is so absolute and supreme a Lord, as no question ought to be made of his command, and the reason thereof, Rom. ix. 20.

Secondly, So just and equal in the matter are all the things which God commands, as no just exception can be taken against them, Ezek. xviii. 25.

Thirdly, So wisely in regard of the manner doth God order his commands, as it will be a man's wisdom to yield obedience thereunto, Dent. iv. 6.

Fourthly, The ends of God's commands are the best that can be, namely, the manifestation of his own glory, and procuring good to his people.

How doth this readiness of Abraham to sacrifice his son condemn the whole world, who, upon his command, will not sacrifice their filthy lusts !

Let us so acquaint ourselves with God and his excellencies, that any notice of his will may be enough to put us on to fulfil it.

Sec. 89. *Of God's revealing his will unto his saints.*

Before the appropriating of the aforesaid seed to Isaac, this preface is premised, *of whom it was said,*

The preposition, together with the relative to which it is joined in Greek, *πρὸς ὃν*, most properly sometheth to whom. Thus it is applied to Abraham, mentioned in the former verse. Most copies and most translations so apply it; and our English, who translate it of whom, and so apply it to Isaac, do note the other reading in the margin thus, or to.

The history whereunto this hath relation thus setteth it down, 'God said to Abraham,' Gen. xxi. 12.

As for sense, both the one and the other reading tend to the same scope, and give an especial instance of his revealing his counsel to his saints. The word, *ἐλάλησεν*, translated *it was said*, is the same that was used, Chap. i. 1, Sec. 11, *λάλησας*; and translated *spoke*: it implieth God's revealing and making known his mind. It was a part of God's secret counsel that the blessed seed should in Isaac be called; and that he here makes known to Abraham. This God hath done from the beginning, Gen. iii. 15; and so from time to time. 'Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets,' Amos iii. 7. Hereof see more, Chap. i. 1, Sec. 11.

1. This instructeth us in that good respect which God beareth to his people. To make known one's counsel and secret beforehand to any, is accounted a great favour. It useth not to be done but to friends. Samson's wife there inferred that he loved her not, because he would not open his mind to her, Judges xiv. 16. But God openeth his whole mind to his saints.

2. The best use we can make of this favour is to acquaint ourselves with that which God revealeth to us of his mind. His word is the storehouse wherein the records and revelations of his will are laid up. Therefore 'search the Scriptures,' John v. 39.

Sec. 90. *Of God's special determining whom to bless.*

The express naming of Isaac, and that to difference him from all others, and to make him the stock of the blessed seed, giveth instance that God hath in special determined whom to bless, and on whom to bestow this or that privilege. The apostle teacheth us from this very promise to make this inference, thus: 'Not because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called—that is, the children of the promise are counted for the seed,' Rom. ix. 7.

The writing of men's names in the book of life, Dan. xii. 1, Philip. iv. 3, Rev. xxii. 23, giveth further proof hereunto. Like to which is writing men's names in heaven, Luke x. 20; and this title, *elect*; and this seal, 'The Lord knoweth them that are his,' 1 Tim. ii. 19; and that golden chain whereof the apostle maketh mention, Rom. viii. 29, 30.

1. Thus God doth to give evidence that all blessing comes from him, and from his free grace.

2. To make such as have evidences of this his special love, to rest on him the more confidently.

Two errors are hereby discovered:

1. That election is indefinite, of no special persons, but of such as shall believe and repent, and persevere therein.

2. That election is uncertain; so as it cannot be affirmed of any that they are elect while here they live.

To what tends the one and the other position, but to make God's counsel depend on man's will?

The special determinate counsel of God is a matter of great consolation to such as have evidence of their election. They may rest upon it, that God will so order all things as in that course which is prescribed in his word; and by such means as are there revealed, he will bless them, and bring them to eternal life. In the midst of all the storms and tempests of this world, this is of force to uphold us.

Sec. 91. *Of the extent of God's blessing to the seed of believers.*

This phrase, *σπέρμα, thy seed*, or, *the seed that I will give to thee*, hath reference to Abraham. The word *seed* is collective, and compriseth under it an undetermined issue or posterity; and it setteth out the extent of God's promise and blessing, reaching not only to Abraham's immediate son, but also to the seed of his son; as if he had said, I have given thee a son, even Isaac. But that is not enough: from this Isaac shall a seed sprout, which shall be accounted *thy seed*: so as God extends the blessing of his saints to their posterity, and that from generation to generation. This God himself doth thus explain to Abraham: 'In blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven,' &c., Gen. xxii. 17. It is hereupon said, 'The generation of the upright shall be blessed,' Ps. cxii. 2, Prov. xx. 7.

This God doth to manifest the riches of his mercy, and that high account wherein he hath his saints. He thinketh it not enough to confer blessing upon one, but extends it to his seed, age after age.

1. This is a good inducement to parents to be pious themselves, that God in the riches of his mercy may extend his blessing to them and their posterity.

2. It giveth also just cause to children to rejoice in their pious parents, and to bless God for them: for they may expect divine blessing to descend to themselves also, if at least they walk in the steps of their pious parents. Yea, they may plead their relation to their parents, as the psalmist did, Ps. cxvi. 16.

Sec. 92. *Of the seed promised in Isaac.*

Isaac is made the stock of the blessed seed, but the privilege is applied to Abraham in this relative, *thy*, especially as it hath reference to the verb *called*, thus, *καλεῖσθαι σὺ*, shall be called to thee: that is, ac-

counted unto thee for that seed, which, as a blessing, hath been promised to thee; so doth the apostle expound it in this phrase, the children of the promise, *λογίζεσθαι*, are *counted* for the seed, Rom. ix. 8.

This importeth an especial prerogative; and so it was in sundry respects.

1. It was that numerous seed that was promised, Gen. xv. 5.

*Obj.* That seed is nowhere called by Isaac's name.

*Ans.* 1. They are styled 'the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' Jer. xxxiii. 26.

2. They are expressly comprised under this name, Isaac; and they are styled, 'the house of Isaac,' Amos vii. 16. Indeed, there is a change of two Hebrew letters, which is usual in other words; both names set out the same thing.

3. They are frequently called by the name of Isaac's son, which was Israel, and this is all one.

4. The like may be objected against Abraham, for his name is not put for the posterity.

2. It was that truly and properly blessed seed who was blessed in himself, and in whom all nations are blessed; even Jesus Christ, Gal. iii. 16.

3. It was that confederate seed with which God entered into special covenant, Gen. xvii. 7; and to which appertained the prerogatives mentioned, Rom. ix. 4, Gen. xvii. 19.

4. It was that spiritual seed which, by reason of faith, are called 'the children of Abraham,' Gal. iii. 7, and 'the Israel of God,' Gal. vi. 16. For proof hereof read Rom. ix. 7, &c.

The word *λογίζεσθαι*, translated *shall be called*, intendeth two things,

1. A real performance of a thing.

2. A manifestation thereof. It here, then, intendeth that God's purpose shall in time be manifestly accomplished. In this sense it is said of Christ, before he was born, 'he shall be called the Son of God,' Luke i. 35. This is expressly in the sense affirmed, Acts xiii. 32, 33.

1. Perfect is the purpose and counsel of God; therefore it shall stand, Ps. xxxiii. 11.

2. The truth of God is unchangeable; it is as his essence, Mal. iii. 6, James i. 17. See Chap. vi. 18, Sec. 135, &c.

1. This teacheth us to acquaint ourselves with the counsel of God, so far as it is revealed; for 'revealed things belong to us and our children,' Deut. xxix. 29.

2. In faith to pray for the accomplishment thereof. Certainty of accomplishing that for which we pray is a strong motive to pray for it. See a worthy pattern hereof, Dan. ix. 2: and the ground hereof, Ezek. xxxvi. 37.

3. With patience to wait for it, Hab. ii. 3.

Sec. 93. *Of yielding the dearest to God.*

From all the forementioned relations betwixt Abraham and Isaac, and circumstances about Abraham's

going to sacrifice Isaac, we may well infer that the dearest are to be yielded up to God; for that which was to be offered up was,

1. A *child*. A child is one of the dearest things that one can have. A child compriseth under it all love. Of all temporal blessings, none more desired, Gen. xv. 2, and xxx. 1; none more lamented when it is taken away, Gen. xxxvii. 35, Jer. xxxi. 15. For what do men take more care? about what do they take more pains? on what do they bestow more cost?

2. A *son*. Among children a son hath the pre-eminency. A son is most desired, most cared for, and the loss of it most lamented, 1 Sam. i. 14, 2 Kings iv. 14. All children of promise have been sons.

3. His *own son*: begotten of him; not an adopted son. Such a son is as a man's own bowels. Very nature draws a parent's heart to his own son. 'What, my son? and what, the son of my womb?' Prov. xxxi. 2. 'He that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir,' saith God to Abraham, Gen. xv. 4.

4. His *only-begotten son*. This was more than one of many. Where there are many, a parent's love is divided: one only child draws all love to him.

5. A *son of his old age*; even when he was out of hope of having a child, Gen. xv. 3, and xviii. 12. In this respect he must needs be the dearer. Parents use most to affect such children. Joseph and Benjamin were of all Jacob's children the dearest to him; not only because they were the children of his choicest wife, but also of his old age, Gen. xxxvii. 3.

6. He was *grown to some years*; for he was able to carry such a burthen of wood as required the strength of a young man, even so much as might consume a burnt-offering to ashes, and that up a hill. Thus it appears that the greatest pains, care, and fear of his education was past. He was not only a child of hope, but also a child of proof. Good hope worketh a deep impression in a parent about the loss of a child; but good proof a far deeper. Very good proof had this young man Isaac given of his good disposition and conversation; for this it was that profane Ishmael scoffed at him, Gen. xxi. 9, Gal. iv. 29.

7. A *beloved son*, Gen. xxii. 2. Had his father hated him, or not most entirely loved him, the force of all the former degrees had lost their force; for nothing not loved can be deemed dear; but anything, be it never so mean, if it be loved, is accounted dear and precious.

8. An *Isaac*. A child that, when first he was promised, made Abraham through great joy to laugh, Gen. xvii. 17; a child that made Sarah laugh, as being a thing too good to be true, Gen. xviii. 12; a child that made not only his mother when he was born, but also all that heard of him, to laugh for joy, Gen. xxi. 6.

9. A child *promised to be a stock of a numerous seed*, which should be multiplied as the stars and sand, Gen. xxii. 17 : and from whom kings should descend, Gen. xvii. 6.

10. A child of *promise*; of the greatest promise that ever was made to man—a promise of blessing, and of blessing to all nations, Gen. xxii. 18.

Another like instance cannot be given among men. The instance of Job's blessing God when he took away his cattle, servants, children, and all, cometh the nearest to this. Though they were taken away by other means, and not offered up by Job's own hands, yet Job's willing submitting of himself to the good guiding providence of God, was as much accepted of God as if he had offered up all to God with his own hands; and thereupon, as God returned Isaac to Abraham, so he returned other children, servants, and goods to Job. Another instance may be of the disciples, who forsook all and followed Jesus, Mat. xix. 27. Thus much is required of all, Mat. x. 37, Luke xiv. 26.

The grounds of our yielding thus far to God are such as these :

1. The supreme sovereignty of God, whereby he hath power to command us and all ours; and what he may command we must yield, 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

2. The right that God hath to all we have. All comes from him. We hold all from him, and for him, to be at his dispose, 1 Chron. xxix. 14, Rom. xi. 36.

3. The might and power that God hath to take away all, will we will we, Dan. iv. 35. Willingly to yield what he will have, is to make a virtue of necessity.

4. The due which, in way of gratitude, we owe unto God. Besides our being, life, health, and every other good thing which we have received from him, he hath given us his Son, who is infinitely more worth than all we can give to him. In this respect they that hold anything too dear for God are not worthy of God.

5. The bounty of God, who can and will beyond comparison recompense whatsoever is given to him, Mat. xix. 29. None shall lose by giving to God.

1. This discovereth the folly and impiety of such as hold anything too dear for the Lord; who are loth to let go such things as they delight in, though they be entreated for the Lord's sake. Such are most in the world, who entertain some lust or other. Can it be imagined that such would offer up an Isaac?

2. It manifests the weakness of their faith, who are discontent and impatient upon the loss of goods, children, husbands, wives, friends, or anything dear unto them. As God's word declareth his approving will, so events his determinable will and counsel. To be discontent at that which by the divine providence falleth out, is to do as much as in us lieth to withhold it from God; it sheweth what we would

do if we could. But patience and contentedness is a kind of obedience; God accepteth it as if we ourselves offered up to him what is taken from us.

3. This pattern of Abraham teacheth us to deny ourselves in everything which is as dear to us as ourselves, for the Lord's sake, Mat. xvi. 26.

4. We ought hereupon to observe what God would have of us. This we may know partly by God's word, and partly by his ordering providence. What we find to withdraw our hearts from God, we ought to withdraw our hearts from. If God be poised against all things else, we shall find no comparison betwixt them. All other things are 'as the small dust of the balance' compared to him. They are as 'nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity,' Isa. xl. 15, 17.

#### Sec. 94. *Of God compared with Abraham in offering up his Son.*

This instance of Abraham's offering up Isaac doth lively set before us God's great and good respect to man in offering up Christ Jesus for us.

For the further clearing hereof, I will first endeavour to shew the likeness betwixt them, and then the infinite difference.

The likeness shall be exemplified in the particular circumstances before mentioned—

1. Abraham offered up a child; so was Jesus God's 'child,' Acts iv. 27.

2. Abraham a son; so God, Luke i. 35.

3. Abraham his own son; so God, Rom. viii. 32.

4. Abraham his only-begotten son; so God, John iii. 16.

5. Abraham had no hope of any more; there is no possibility that God should have any more, Heb. i. 5.

6. Abraham's son was a son of promise; much more God's Son, Gen. iii. 15.

7. Abraham's son was a son of proof; so was God's Son most of all, John xvii. 4.

8. Abraham's son was a beloved one; so God's Son, Mat. iii. 17.

9. Abraham's son was an *Isaac*; Christ a *Jesus*, Luke ii. 10.

10. Abraham's son was the stock of the blessed seed; much more the Son of God, Mat. xxi. 9.

The difference betwixt these was—

1. In the persons offering and offered.

2. In the motive wherewith the one and the other was set on work.

3. In the manner of doing the one and the other.

4. In the benefits that redound from the one and the other.

1. The persons offering were God and Abraham—the Creator and a creature. There can be no such difference betwixt any one creature and other; not betwixt a man and a worm; no, nor betwixt an angel and a man; yea, I may further add, not betwixt an angel and a devil.

There was as great a disparity betwixt the persons offered, Jesus and Isaac. Isaac was a mere man, a sinful man, a man that deserved death; death was a debt once to be paid, Heb. ix. 27; but Jesus was true God, Rom. ix. 5; he was 'God manifest in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16; he was perfectly pure, and that as God, 1 John i. 15, and as man also, Heb. vii. 26; he was no ways guilty of death in himself, nor subject to death, further than he voluntarily subjected himself, John x. 18.

Isaac was indeed a begotten son, but begotten of man, and part of his substance. Jesus was the only-begotten of God, the same in substance with the Father, John x. 30.

Isaac was a beloved son, whom his father loved, Gen. xxii. 1. Jesus was infinitely more beloved, and that of God, Mat. xvii. 5.

Isaac was a child of joy. Of Jesus, when he came into the world, an angel thus saith, 'Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people;' and thereupon a multitude of the heavenly host thus praised God, 'Glory to God in the highest,' &c., Luke ii. 10, 14.

Isaac was a child of blessing. But why? Even because Jesus was of his seed, Gal. iii. 16. Jesus is he in whom truly and properly Abraham himself, Isaac, and all others are blessed.

Most of the excellencies of Isaac consist in this, that he was a type of Jesus; but Jesus is the truth of all types, and the truth far surpasseth the types.

2. The motive which put on God to offer up his Son went far beyond that wherewith Abraham was moved to offer up his son. Abraham was tried—he was tried by an express charge from God, Gen. xxii. 2. He might not therefore forbear to do it; it was a bounden duty; necessity lay upon him; he had sinned if he had refused it. But there was no such motive to put on God to offer his Son. He was under no such command. It was his own good pleasure and superabundant love that moved him, John iii. 16. Besides, Abraham might expect approbation and remuneration from God; from whom could God expect any recompense?

3. There was as great a difference in the manner of the one and the other's offering his son. Abraham laid the wood to burn the sacrifice on Isaac to be sacrificed; the cross whereon Christ was to be crucified was laid on Jesus, John xix. 17. Isaac was bound to be laid on the altar; but Jesus was nailed to the cross, John xx. 25. Isaac was offered up only in his father's intent and purpose; but Jesus was actually and really offered up. If Isaac had been offered up, it would have been but a speedy death; but Jesus was put to a torturing and cursed death, Gal. iii. 13. What tongue can utter, what heart can conceive, the bitterness of the agony wherunto Jesus was brought! He was a surety for sinners; and as

a surety, having all the sins of all the elect laid on him, he was offered up.

4. The benefit of the oblation of the one and of the other do differ as much as the other points. The benefit of Isaac's being offered, was a proof of the father's obedience to God, and of the son's patience. These were indeed very acceptable to God, and they were abundantly rewarded by him, Gen. xxii. 12, 16, 17; but by the offering up of Jesus, an atonement is made for sin, God's wrath is pacified, his justice satisfied, his favour procured, and he that had the power of death, the devil, vanquished; the law, as an indictment against us, cancelled, the curse thereof removed; we freed from damnation, and made heirs of eternal salvation.

Nothing that ever was done in the world gives such cause of admiration.

There never was, nor can be, the like matter of gratulation.

The offering up of Jesus is the only true ground of all consolation.

This is such a pattern of imitation as cannot possibly be paralleled.

Of all things it most confirms this main point—*nothing is to be held too dear for God.*

#### Sec. 95. Of Isaac's yielding to be offered up.

There are about this offering up of Isaac sundry circumstances which do much set out Isaac's patience in yielding to be offered up.

1. His age. Some say that this was in the thirty-seventh year of his age. That was the year of Sarah's death; for Sarah was ninety years old when Isaac was born, and a hundred and seven and twenty when she died.

Others, in the five and twentieth; others, in the fifteenth year of his age.

There are no certain proofs for any of these; but this is certain, that he was of a good growth and strength, in that he could carry up hill such a burden of wood as was enough to have burnt him to ashes, Gen. xxii. 6.

2. The age of his father, who was a hundred years old when Isaac was born, Gen. xxi. 5, so as he must at this time be much above a hundred years.

3. The solitariness of these two, who were alone, and nobody with them; for Abraham left the company that came with him and his son below the hill, and that afar off, Gen. xxii. 4, 5; thus there was none at all to assist Abraham in doing what he was about.

4. Abraham bound Isaac, and laid him on the altar upon the wood, Gen. xxii. 9. This could not be without Isaac's voluntary submitting of himself, for he was strong enough to have resisted his old father, and to have kept himself from being a sacrifice; but it is more than probable, that when they came to the place where Isaac was to be offered up,



Abraham made him acquainted with God's charge, for no other motive could have made him yield himself so far as he did. Had it not been for that charge, prudence, piety, justice, charity, humanity, and other like virtues had moved him not only to dissuade, but also to hinder his father from such an unnatural act. That, therefore, which moved the father to attempt such a fact, moved also the son to yield unto it, which was God's charge.

Hereby it appeareth that what God will must be endured. 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,' 1 Sam. iii. 18; 'Let the Lord do to me as seemeth good to him,' 2 Sam. xv. 26. In this the pattern of Christ goes beyond all others, who in his bitter agony said to his Father, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt,' Mat. xxvi. 39.

This giveth instance of the extent of that obedience which we owe unto God, which is not only readily to do what he requireth, but also patiently to endure what his pleasure is to call us unto.

God hath a greater power over us than the potter over the clay, Isa. lxiv. 8. But the potter may order the clay as it pleaseth him, Jer. xviii. 4-6. The Lord may beat, may bruise, may break us after his own pleasure. No man may open his mouth against God, Rom. ix. 20, 21.

But such is the wisdom of God, as he will not use his power further than may be fit. He best knoweth when peace, when trouble, when ease, when pain, when liberty, when restraint, when life, when death is fittest, Isa. xxviii. 24, &c.

Yea, such is the goodness of God, as that shall be an ingredient in all his dealings with his children. 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God,' Rom. viii. 20.

In these and other like grounds we see just cause to submit to the good pleasure of God, even in suffering. Hereof see more, Sec. 88 in the end, and Chap. v. 8, Sec. 48.

Sec. 96. *Of reasoning with one's self about the grounds of faith.*

Ver. 19. *Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

The inward ground or reason of that great evidence, which is before given of Abraham's faith, is here noted to be a persuasion of God's power in raising the dead.

The word, λογισάμενος, translated *accounting*, implieth a reasoning or discoursing with one's self about a matter. It is derived from a noun that signifieth both speech and reason, 1 Cor. ii. 1, 1 Pet. iii. 15; and also an account, Luke xiv. 2.

This verb is thus interpreted, 'they reasoned,' Mark xi. 31.

Here it implieth that Abraham seriously consulted with himself about the seeming difference betwixt

God's promise and God's command; but holding this for an undoubted principle, that God's promise should be accomplished; and in his reasoning meditating on God's infallible truth, unsearchable wisdom, incomprehensible mercy, almighty power, and other divine properties, this cometh to his mind—if there be no other way for accomplishing God's promise but that which is extraordinary, he will work a miracle rather than fail of his promise; God will raise Isaac from the dead, for he is able so to do.

Abraham did not simply and absolutely believe that Isaac should be raised from the dead, for he had no promise so to believe; and the text saith not that he accounted that God would raise him, but that he was *ὀυαρίσ, able so to do*. Fitly, therefore, doth the apostle insert this copulative conjunction *καί, and*, which in this place carrieth emphasis, and is well translated *even*; as if he had said, Abraham believed that though Isaac were offered up, and burnt to ashes, yet even then could God raise him up again.

This, then, is the intendment of Abraham's consultation and resolution with himself, that God would, some way or other, accomplish his promise concerning Isaac. Thus much is evident by this answer of Abraham to his son, 'God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering,' Gen. xxii. 8. Not that he knew what would fall out, but that he knew and believed that God could and would work above that which he himself could imagine. Now because Abraham made full account to sacrifice his son, and being sacrificed, he must needs be raised from the dead, that in him the promised seed might be called; therefore he believed that God was able to raise him up even from the dead.

By this account or reasoning which is here noted of Abraham, the apostle giveth us to understand that a due discourse of the mind, on the grounds of faith, doth much establish faith. The apostle doth largely exemplify this in Abraham's faith, concerning the birth of Isaac, when he and his wife were both old, Rom. iv. 19-21. So Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 9-12. So Moses, Exod. xxxii. 10, 12, 13. So Joshua, Josh. vii. 7-9. So David, oft in the Psalms discoursing of God's promises, of his mercies, of his power, of his truth, and of his former works, and pleading them before God, was much strengthened in faith.

A due discourse and meditation brings to mind and memory the grounds of faith. Whilst those grounds are fresh in memory they work on the heart; and by affecting the heart the soul is settled and quieted; and a settled and resolved soul adds much to the vigour of faith.

This directeth such as are well instructed in the grounds of faith seriously and frequently to meditate thereon. See more hereof in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16. Of Faith, Treat. 2, Part 6, Sec. 71.

This doth more specially direct Christians in time

of temptation, when the soul is heavy and perplexed with doubts and fears, to reason with themselves, as if they had to do with others; and by arguments to endeavour to convince the soul of those sure grounds which the word affordeth for settling our faith on God. Hereof see the *Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 11, Sec. 43, 7.

Sec. 97. *Of resting on God's power for strengthening of faith.*

That which Abraham in his reasoning did especially fix upon for strengthening his faith was God's power, which is thus expressed, *ὅτι δυνατός ὁ Θεός, that God was able.* For God's power is an especial prop to faith. The faith of saints hath in all ages been much strengthened hereby, Rom. iv. 21, Dan. iii. 17, and vi. 20.

This therefore hath been pressed to that end, Gen. xviii. 14, Luke i. 37, Jer. xxxii. 27, Mark x. 27.

Consideration of God's power is an especial means to remove all stumbling-blocks that lie in the way of a believer, and to take away all doubts and fears. If travellers be well guarded, if soldiers have a good convoy, if men be in a sure castle, they will not fear. God's power is the best guard, the safest convoy, and surest castle that any can have.

*Quest.* May a believer so rest on God's power as to expect what God is able to do?

*Ans.* No. God is able to do more than ever he will, Mat. iii., and xxvi. 53.

Besides, God's promises are the proper ground of faith. We have no ground to expect more than God hath promised, though God be able to do more.

*Quest.* How then is God's power a prop to faith?

*Ans.* It assureth that God, who is able, will do what he hath promised, though heaven and earth seem to make against it.

This doth more particularly direct us how to fix our meditation on God for strengthening our faith, and that, among other divine excellencies, on the power of God. See more hereof in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 4, Of Faith, Sec. 26.

Sec. 98. *Of faith's prescribing nothing to God.*

The apostle's indefinite expression of the ground of Abraham's faith in this phrase, *ὅτι δυνατός ὁ Θεός, that God was able*, giveth evidence that faith prescribes nothing to God. It rests upon this, that God is able to make his word good. Abraham prescribed nothing when he said, 'God will provide,' Gen. xxii. 8; nor Jehoshaphat, when he said to God, 'Our eyes are upon thee,' 2 Chron. xx. 12; nor Daniel's three companions, when they said, 'Our God is able to deliver us,' Dan. iii. 17; nor Christ, when he said, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt,' Mat. xxvi. 39.

1. Faith works in a man such an esteem of God, as

it persuades the soul that God is the wisest, and best knoweth what to do.

2. Faith looks beyond all subordinate means, knowing that God is tied to none, and thereupon dares not prescribe any.

1. This sheweth that it is a fruit of infidelity to prescribe time, means, or any circumstances to God. This makes them faint, and fail in faith, when in their appearance means fail; as the Israelites did in the wilderness.

2. If we would well acquaint ourselves with God and his excellencies, we would so trust to God's power as to submit to his will, and wait his good pleasure.

Sec. 99. *Of the resurrection from the dead as an evidence of God's power.*

The particular whereupon Abraham pitched his faith concerning God's power was, 'raising from the dead;' for faith herein emboldens a believer to anything. Abraham is hereby emboldened to offer his son for a burnt-offering. Martyrs have hereby been emboldened to endure what tyrants and persecutors could inflict upon them. 'Many were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection,' ver. 35. This emboldened Daniel and his three companions, Dan. iii. 17, and vi. 10. On this ground the apostle saith of himself and other believers, 'We stand in jeopardy every hour,' 1 Cor. xv. 30.

Resurrection from the dead implieth a full restoration of that which may seem to be lost. Hereby the widow of Zarephath's son, 1 Kings xvii. 23, and the Shunammite's, 2 Kings iv. 36, were restored again sound, as before they died. So all that were raised by Christ and his apostles, and, above all, Christ himself; so all believers at the general resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. 42, &c.

Among other evidences of God's power, meditate on this especially. It is the greatest that ever God gave. Where mention is made of this instance, mention also useth to be made of God's power. Eph. i. 19, 20, Rom. i. 4, and vi. 4, 1 Cor. vi. 14. Death is that that tameth the stoutest. What are armies of men, troops of beasts, yea, all creatures gathered together, what are they to death?

If death seize on them, where is their strength? When death cometh, we say, There is no hope. He that is able to deliver from death, what can he not deliver from? There is no meditation like to this.

Sec. 100. *Of believers receiving what they give to God.*

In regard of that true intent and full purpose which Abraham had to sacrifice his son, he is said from thence to receive him, *ὅθεν ἐχοικίνατο.*

This relative, *from whence*, hath reference to the word which in our English goeth immediately before, namely, *the deed*.

To receive him is to have him restored again to life,

as the widow of Zarephath, the Shunammite, the widow in the Gospel, Luke vii. 15, and others, received their sons being dead.

The phrase is here fitly used, in that it giveth an instance of God's returning to men what they offer to him. To this purpose tend those proverbs: 'What a man soweth, that shall he reap,' Gal. vi. 7. 'Whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive (*χομισται*) of the Lord,' Eph. vi. 8. 'That which a man hath given, the Lord will pay him again,' Prov. xix. 17. Thus is the word in my text used, 1 Peter i. 9, Exod. v. 4.

This God doth, either in the very same, as Isaac was returned the very same. So Daniel, and his three companions, and all that were raised from the dead.

Or he doth it by a like, and that too the better; as he gave to David a Solomon, instead of the child born in adultery. For David, by ceasing to mourn for that child when the event had manifested God's will, shewed that he willingly yielded him to God, 2 Sam. xii. 20, 24, 25.

Thus Hannah, giving her Sammel to God, had many more children, 1 Sam. ii. 20, 21; so Job, chap. xlii. 10, &c. Joseph, upon loss of his master's favour, through God's disposing providence obtained the king's favour, Gen. xli. 40.

Yea, God returns with advantage, as many of the forenamed instances do shew. And Abraham here receives Isaac as a type of the resurrection. For advantage in God's returnings, note Mat. xix. 29, Heb. x. 34.

The Lord, in his dealings with children of men, hath respect to himself, to his own goodness, bounty, and glory every way.

He needeth not our gifts, nor will he be beholden to his creatures. They shall have as much, yea, and far more, than they bring to him.

1. How great is their folly that withhold from God anything that God would have! They hereby stand in their own light, and hinder their own good. Will children deal so with their parents? or servants with their masters? or subjects with their governors? Yet these may require such things as may be pre-judicial to their inferiors, which God will never do.

2. Let us learn to understand what is the good will of God, pleasing and acceptable unto him, Rom. xii. 2, Eph. v. 17, and then be willing to part with anything for him. What greater motive can we have than God's return?

Sec. 101. *Of the meaning of this phrase, 'in a figure.'*

Because Isaac was not indeed slain, the apostle adds this phrase, *ἐν παραβολῇ, in a figure, or in a parable.*

Of the composition and meaning of the Greek word translated *figure*, see Chap. ix. 9, Sec. 48.

Many of the ancients<sup>1</sup> interpret this as a type of

<sup>1</sup> Chrysost., Theophyl., &c.

Christ's rising from the dead, thus: As Isaac was as a sacrifice laid upon the altar, but rose from it alive; so Christ was offered up a sacrifice, yet restored to life again.

Both these parts of the comparison are true in themselves; neither will I deny but that the one might be a type of the other.

Others<sup>1</sup> expound it as a resemblance of the general resurrection, because the word translated *figure* implieth a resemblance.

Our ancient English translation thus turns it, 'In a certain similitude of the resurrection;' so also Erasmus.<sup>2</sup> This may in some respects be a fit resemblance, thus: As Isaac, laid for dead on the altar, was by God's voice raised; so such as are dead in the grave shall be raised by the voice of Christ.

Nor this last, nor the other interpretation, nor any the like, are pertinent to the apostle's intent, which is to shew how Abraham received his son from the dead, who was not indeed dead, namely, in a similitude and likeness, or as our later English translators, 'after a sort,' or, 'in a figure.'

Judicious Calvin, who used in expounding Scripture to have an eye to the penman's scope, and to the main intent of the place, and thereby came the better to discover the mind and meaning of the Holy Ghost, thus expounded it;<sup>3</sup> and many have since followed him; and questionless this is the proper sense of the place; and it giveth a further confirmation of that which was cited before, Ver. 17, Sec. 84, about a true intent, namely, that what is truly intended is in a manner effected.

Sec. 102. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 17–19.*

Ver. 17. *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son.*

18. *Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:*

19. *Accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

The sum of these three verses is a further declaration of the power of faith.

Hereabout two things are expressed:

1. The party whose faith is commended, *Abraham.*

2. The proof of the power of his faith. This is first propounded; secondly, amplified.

In propounding the point is noted,

1. The occasion of the proof, *when he was tried.*

2. The kind of proof, *he offered up.*

3. The subject offered, *Isaac.*

In the amplification there is,

1. A further description of the parties concerned; which are of two sorts—agent and patient.

<sup>1</sup> Theodoret.

<sup>2</sup> Unde illum etiam resurrectionis typo reduxit.—*Erasm.*

<sup>3</sup> Nomen *παραβολῆς* pro similitudinis nota accipitur.

2. An express declaration of the inward motive that put on Abraham to give this proof of his faith.

The agent or person that offered up is described by a double relation.

1. By his relation to the promises; thus, *he that had received the promises.*

2. By his relation to the sacrifice, which was, *his only-begotten son.*

Here is set down a fourfold gradation—1. A son; 2. His son; 3. A begotten son; 4. His only-begotten son.

The patient is also described by a double relation:

One, to his father, in the foresaid phrase, *his only-begotten son.*

The other, to his posterity, ver. 18. In setting down this latter relation is noted,

1. The ground thereof, which was God's appointment, in these words, *to whom it was said.*

2. The kind thereof. Herein observe, (1.) The parties betwixt whom this latter relation passeth. These are,

[1.] The stock, *Isaac.*

[2.] The sprouts, in this word, *seed.*

(2.) The manifestation thereof, in this word, *shall be called.*

The inward motive that put on Abraham to give the aforesaid proof of his faith is declared, ver. 19. About it we may observe,

1. The substance thereof.

2. An inference made thereupon.

The substance setteth out,

1. An act of Abraham, in this word, *accounted.*

2. The object of that act. This is,

(1.) Generally propounded, in this phrase, *that God was able.*

(2.) Particularly exemplified; thus, *to raise him up from the dead.*

In the inference there are two points,

1. A benefit received.

2. The manner of receiving it.

The benefit is, 1. Propounded; 2. Amplified.

It is propounded in this word, *received.*

It is amplified, 1. By the object, *him;* 2. By the danger, in this word, *from whence.*

The manner of receiving the benefit is thus expressed, *in a figure.*

Sect. 103. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xi. 17-19.*

1. *Faith puts on to do what otherwise would not be done.* It is here said that Abraham did that which certainly he would not otherwise have done, *by faith.* See Sec. 83.

II. *The best may be tried.* We may well judge Abraham to be the best man that lived in his days; yet is he here said to be *tried.* See Sec. 83.

III. *A true intent is accepted for the deed.* In this

sense it is here said that Abraham *offered up.* See Sec. 84.

IV. *Believers in special manner receive divine promises.* Thus Abraham, the father of believers, is described, *he received the promises.* See Sec. 84.

V. *No obstacle hinders true faith.* Many and great were the obstacles which might have hindered Abraham from what he did; but by faith he passed over all. See Sec. 85.

VI. *Isaac was a son of joy.* His name intends as much. See Sec. 86.

VII. *Simple and absolute obedience is to be yielded to God.* Such was Abraham's obedience. See Sec. 83.

VIII. *God reveals his secret counsel to his saints.* This is gathered out of this phrase, *of whom it was said.* See Sec. 89.

IX. *God hath a determined number to bless.* This is implied under Isaac's *seed.* See Sec. 90.

X. *God's blessing is extended to the seed of believers.* This is here plainly expressed. See Sec. 91.

XI. *Our dearest are to be given to God.* Who or what could be dearer to Abraham than Isaac? yet Abraham was ready to offer up Isaac to God. See Sec. 93.

XII. *God's offering his Son far surpasseth Abraham's offering his son.* See this exemplified, Sec. 94.

XIII. *Passive obedience is to be yielded unto God.* This is gathered from Isaac's submitting himself to be bound and laid upon the altar. See Sec. 95.

XIV. *A due meditation on the grounds of faith much establisheth faith.* That accounting which is here noted of Abraham gives proof hereunto. See Sec. 96.

XV. *God's power is an especial prop to faith.* Meditation hereon, namely, *that God was able,* established Abraham's faith. See Sec. 97.

XVI. *Faith prescribes nothing to God.* Abraham believed that God was able to make good his promise, though he knew not how. See Sec. 98.

XVII. *Faith in the resurrection of the dead emboldens to anything.* This was it that emboldened Abraham to offer up his son. See Sec. 99.

XVIII. *God returneth what is given to him.* Abraham offered up his son to God, and from God he received him again. See Sec. 100.

XIX. *God can raise the dead.* Abraham believed thus much, and answerably from hence he received his son. See Sec. 99.

XX. *What is truly intended is as performed in God's account.* The word translated *in a figure,* intends as much. See Sec. 101.

Sec. 104. *Of the commendation of Isaac.*

Ver. 20. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*

The sixth instance for proof of the vigour of faith, is of Isaac's faith; it is the third instance given after the flood, and that of the second great patriarch;

whose name, by reason of God's covenant made in special to him with his father and his son, was brought into God's style; thus, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,' Exod. iii. 6.

The proof of his faith is an especial act, in blessing his son.

His faith here mentioned is such a faith as was described, ver. 1, and exemplified in all the worthies before mentioned. It was a true, justifying faith, which extends itself to celestial, spiritual, and temporal blessings.

Of Isaac's name, see Sec. 86.

Much hath been spoken of Isaac, as he was a son, in relation to his father Abraham. Here he is to be considered as a father, in relation to his two sons.

1. Of the three patriarchs, Isaac was the longest liver; for Abraham lived 175 years, Gen. xxv. 7, Jacob 147, Gen. xlvii. 28, but Isaac 180, Gen. xxxv. 28.

2. He was, of the three patriarchs, the most continent. He never had but one wife. With her he long lived most comfortably. Isaac's sporting with Rebekah his wife, Gen. xxvi. 8, giveth instance of that matrimonial delight they took one in another. The ancient Liturgy hath fitly culled out this couple as a pattern for man and wife, in this phrase, 'As Isaac and Rebekah lived faithfully together.'

3. It is probable that he attained to more wealth than his father or son; for he 'received a hundred-fold of that which he sowed, and he waxed great, and he had such possessions as the Philistines envied him,' Gen. xxvi. 12-14.

4. He lived more quietly, and had more rest than the other two patriarchs. He was not forced from place to place, as the others were. We read only of his being forced by famine to go to Gerar, Gen. xxvi. 1.

5. Fewer failings are noted of Isaac than of either of the other two. We read only of the weakness of his faith in dissembling his wife, Gen. xxvi. 7, and of his overmuch indulgency to his profane son Esau, Gen. xxvii. 3.

Indeed his name, after his death, was least spoken of. I take the reason to be this, that he neither was the first root, as Abraham was, nor had immediately issuing from him the heads of the twelve tribes, as Jacob had.

Sec. 105. *Of Isaac's faith in blessing his children.*

The act whereby Isaac manifested his faith is expressed in this verb, *בִּלְבָּשׁ*, blessed.

Of the composition and various acceptance of this verb *blessed*, see Chap. vii. 1, Sec. 12.

It is here taken for a prophetic prediction, and paternal confirmation of the future estate of his children.

This act of Isaac was partly extraordinary, as he was a prophet like to his father, Gen. xx., endued with an extraordinary spirit, whereby he could cer-

tainly foretell what should befall his children in future ages; it was also partly ordinary, which he did as a father, and that by desiring and praying for the good of his children.

The extraordinary giveth proof that true faith puts on believers to make known the mind of God, howsoever it may seem pleasing or distasteful to men.

Isaac, in his fatherly affection, had a great mind to confer the main blessing upon his eldest son, Gen. xxvii. But God, by a special instinct, revealed unto him that Jacob should have that blessing; accordingly, he blessed the younger. His faith moved him to deny himself in yielding to the Lord.

This act of Isaac, as he was a father, and blessed his children, giveth instance that it is the duty of parents to bless their children. See more hereof in *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Sec. 59.

By just and necessary consequence, it will hence follow that children ought to seek their parents' blessing. Hereof also see *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 5, Of Children, Sec. 9.

Sec. 106. *Of Jacob's and Esau's names, relation, and different blessing.*

The parties blessed are set down by name, *Jacob* and *Esau*.

The name יַעֲקֹב, Jacob, is derived from a noun, יָקָב, that signifieth a *heel*. He was so called, because, in coming out of the womb he held his brother by the heel, Gen. xxv. 26.

The verb יָקָב, whence that noun is derived, signifieth to *supplant*, or to trip down, which is oft done with the heel. Hereupon this notation of Jacob's name is confirmed by these words of his brother, 'Is he not rightly called Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times,' &c., Gen. xxvii. 36. So as this name *Jacob* signifieth a supplanter.

Two notations are given of Esau's name, עֵשָׂו. One is taken from a Hebrew word, עֵשֶׂר, that signifieth *hair* or *hairy*. In this notation there is a transmutation of the two first letters, and a taking away of the last letter. It is said that 'Esau was an hairy man,' Gen. xxvii. 11, and thereupon this notation of his name is given. The other notation is taken from a Hebrew verb, עָשָׂה, which signifieth to *make*; and they say that he was called Esau because he came out of the womb as a full made man, or as a grown man, full of hairs on his body. He was also called אֶדְוִם, *Edom*, which signifieth *red*, Gen. xxv. 25. And this both in allusion to the colour with which he came out of his mother's womb, and also in reference to his disposition, which was bloody and cruel. Yea, also, the name *Edom* was given by way of derision, in reference to the colour of the broth for which he sold his birthright, Gen. xxv. 30.

Thus we see how both their names were fitted to occasions. See more hereof in *Domest. Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Sec. 20.

These two children were brothers, coming out of the same womb, *uterini*. They were of the same father and mother—twins, and that of one birth—only one came out before the other, namely, Esau, and in that respect was counted and called the elder, Gen. xxvii. 1. Thereupon the birthright belonged to him, till he sold it for a song, as we say, even for a mess of broth; or, as the apostle expresseth it, 'for one morsel of meat,' in which respect he is styled 'profane,' Heb. xii. 16.

Though Esau was the elder, yet is Jacob set before him; for he was a gracious son, and in God's account more honourable than his elder brother; for grace adds more honour than all outward privileges and dignities can do. Hereof see more, Ver. 4, Sec. 11.

Both these sons, though they were of different dispositions, are here said to be blessed by their father, but with different blessings. The father neither did nor would bless the profane son with that blessing wherewith he blessed his pious son; whereupon he saith, 'I have blessed him,' (meaning the younger,) 'yea, and he shall be blessed,' Gen. xxvii. 33. But Esau was blessed with temporal blessings, Jacob with temporal and spiritual also.

Thus there are blessings for all, of all sorts. Hereupon it is said that God 'satisfieth the desire of every living thing,' Ps. cxlv. 16. And our heavenly Father is said to 'cause his sun to rise on the evil and on the good,' Mat. v. 45. In this respect the living God is said to be 'the Saviour of all men,' 1 Tim. iv. 10.

This the Lord doth to manifest his bounty, and to try if wicked ones may be wrought upon by mercy; and by consequence, to aggravate their just condemnation.

1. Christ teacheth us herein to set our heavenly Father before us, and to 'bless them that curse us,' Mat. v. 44.

2. This teacheth us to put difference between blessings, and not to rest upon God's fatherly love, in that he doth bestow temporal blessings upon us. These may be given in wrath, and taken away in wrath, as a king was given to Israel, and taken away from them, Hosea xiii. 11. They are spiritual blessings that are the sure evidences of God's fatherly favour.

Sec. 107. *Of Isaac's faith about things to come.*

The subject-matter, whereabout Isaac blessed his two sons, is expressed in these general terms, *περί μελλόντων*, concerning things to come. These things to come had respect to the posterity of both these. The posterity of both of them were blessed with temporal blessings, in these phrases, 'The dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine,' Gen. xxvii. 28, 39. There was this difference, that Jacob's posterity should be lords over Esau's, which continued from David's time, 2 Sam. viii. 14,

till the reign of Jeroboam, 2 Kings viii. 20, when the posterity of Esau 'brake the yoke from off their neck,' as Isaac had foretold, Gen. xxvii. 40.

That faith which Isaac had in the inspirations and revelations of the Lord concerning future things, settled his heart in assurance of the accomplishment of them, and thereupon he blessed his sons thereabout. The like did Noah, Gen. ix. 26, 27, and Jacob, Gen. xlix. 1, &c.

Such is God's truth, as his promises are as performances, and predictions as accomplishments.

It would be useful hereupon well to acquaint ourselves with the promises of God, even such promises as concern things yet to come, and to rest upon them so far as they may concern ourselves, and likewise to assure our posterity of the accomplishment of them after our days, and to persuade them with patience to wait for them, and with confidence to rest upon them. Herein may we bless our posterity, as Isaac did his.

Sec. 108. *Of the resolution of, and of the observations from, Heb. xi. 20.*

Ver. 20. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*

In this verse is set down another commendation of faith. Hereof are two parts,

1. The persons who are here concerned.
2. The evidence of faith.

The persons are of two sorts,

1. A father, who is set out by his name *Isaac*.
2. His two sons, concerning whom we may observe, (1.) Their names, *Jacob* and *Esau*.

(2.) Their order, the younger before the elder.

The evidence of Isaac's faith is manifested,

1. By his act, *he blessed*.
2. By the subject-matter thereof, *concerning things to come*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Faith extends itself to spiritual and temporal blessings.* In both these did Isaac here give evidence of his faith. See Sec. 106.

II. *God is careful to establish the faith of his saints.* For this end was Jacob blessed by his father. See Sec. 105.

III. *Parents may and must bless their children.* This act of blessing, attributed to Isaac in reference to his sons, giveth proof hereof. See Sec. 105.

IV. *Names of old were fitted to special occasions.* So were the names of Jacob and Esau. See Sec. 106.

V. *Grace maketh more honourable than outward privileges.* In this respect is Jacob set before his elder brother. See Sec. 106.

VI. *There are blessings for all of all sorts.* Jacob and Esau were of different dispositions, yet both of them were blessed. See Sec. 106.

VII. *Faith persuades the heart of things to come.*

On this ground did Isaac bless his sons concerning things to come. See Sec. 107.

Sec. 109. *Of Jacob and his prerogatives.*

Ver. 21. *By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.*

The seventh instance of the vigour of faith is manifested in the faith of Jacob.

The faith here mentioned is such a faith as was the faith of other worthies before mentioned.

Of Jacob's name, see Sec. 106.

Jacob had another name, which was *Israel*. This of the two was the more honourable, and all his posterity was called thereby, and thereby distinguished from all other nations. Hereof see more in *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 8, Sec. 5.

Though Jacob were the last of the three patriarchs, and was brought to more trials than his fathers, and his life were the shortest of them all, yet had he these prerogatives above the rest:

1. He had more children. Isaac had but two only; Abraham had but one by his first and dearest wife, he had another by his maid Hagar, Gen. xvi. 15, and six more by Keturah his concubine, Gen. xxv. 2; but Jacob had twelve sons, besides his daughter, Dinah.

2. All Jacob's children were God's confederates, in covenant with him: all of them were holy ones (though they had their failings, as Abraham himself and Isaac had.) Nor all Abraham's sons, nor both the sons of Isaac were so.

3. Jacob's twelve sons were twelve heads of so many tribes, into which the church was distinguished.

4. Jacob had the honour to prevail over man and God. In reference to the former he was called *Jacob*, and in reference to the latter he was called *Israel*, Gen. xxxii. 28.

5. By the name *Israel* the church of God was styled, Ps. lxxiii. 1; yea, the true church among the Gentiles also, Gal. vi. 16.

Sec. 110. *Of Jacob's trials.*

Though Abraham were brought to one greater trial than Jacob, which was the offering up of his son (whereof see Sec. 93), yet the trials of Jacob in number exceeded those whereunto both the other patriarchs, his father and grandfather, were brought. They were these that follow, and such like:

1. Jacob had war in his mother's womb, Gen. xxv. 22.

2. His good father set his heart more upon profane Esau than upon himself; which could not be but a great grief to him, Gen. xxv. 28.

3. He was forced to get the blessing by deceit, Gen. xxvii. 6, &c.

4. He was thereupon in fear of his life, by reason of Esau's envy, Gen. xxvii. 41.

5. He was sent, with his staff alone, without other company, a long journey, Gen. xxviii. 5, and xxxii. 10.

6. He was fain to serve an apprenticeship for a wife, Gen. xxix. 18.

7. He was deceived in his wife, though he had served for her, Gen. xxix. 25.

8. His wages were changed ten times, notwithstanding his hard service, Gen. xxxi. 40, 41.

9. By his wives' importunity he was forced to go in to their maids, Gen. xxx. 3, 9.

10. He was forced to fly by stealth from his uncle, Gen. xxxi. 20.

11. He was in great danger by his uncle's pursuing him, Gen. xxxi. 23.

12. He was also in danger by his brother Esau's pursuing him, Gen. xxxii. 6.

13. His daughter was ravished, Gen. xxxiv. 2.

14. His sons so cruelly slaughtered and plundered a city as the nations round about might have been incensed to have destroyed them all, Gen. xxxiv. 25, &c.

15. His eldest son defiled his concubine, Gen. xxxv. 22.

16. He lost his beloved Rachel in his journey, and in her travail, Gen. xxxv. 19.

17. The rest of his sons so envied Joseph, whom he most loved, as they sold him to strangers, and made Jacob believe that he was torn with beasts, wherewith Jacob was as much perplexed as if indeed it had been so, Gen. xxxiv.

18. Simeon, another of his sons, was given by him for lost, Gen. xlii. 36.

19. He was forced, to the great grief of his heart, to let go his youngest son, the son of his old age, even Benjamin, Gen. xliii. 11.

20. Through famine he was forced, with all his family, to go into Egypt, Gen. xli. 5.

On these and other like grounds he might well say, 'Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been,' Gen. xlvii. 9.

Behold here into what trials a true saint may be brought, and withal consider how his faith and patience remained light and sound.

Behold also how God recompensed his trials in the privileges which he gave him above the other patriarchs: whereof see Sec. 109.

Sec. 111. *Of Jacob's blessing Ephraim and Manasseh.*

Jacob's faith is here commended, by such an act as Isaac's faith was, in this word, *εὐλόγησας*, *blessed*. Hereof see Sec. 105.

The parties whom he blessed were not his immediate sons, but his son's sons, the sons of Joseph—for Joseph was his youngest son save one; so as Jacob was a grandfather to these whom he is here said to bless. Hereby we are given to understand that grandfathers ought to bear such respect to their children's children as to their own. The like is noted of a grandmother; for 'Naomi took the child of her

daughter-in-law, and laid it in her bosom,' &c., Ruth iv. 16.

Grandfathers are as fathers. In the right line there are no degrees. If Adam were now living he should, so far as he was able, take care of the whole world, as he did of Cain and Abel.

1. This instructeth us in the extent of a grandfather's duty.

2. This directeth children to manifest a childlike affection to their grandfathers and grandmothers, and that by reverence, obedience, all manner of subjection, and recompense also.

In setting down the persons blessed, the apostle useth an indefinite particle, *ἐκαστον*, which signifieth *every one*, which may intend many sons; but because the history maketh mention only of two, Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. xlviii. 20), our translators, for perspicuity's sake, have translated it *both*. It is probable that at that time he had but these two sons. Other sons that he should have after these had a kind of general blessing, Gen. xlviii. 6.

These two here intended were Ephraim and Manasseh. Ephraim was the younger, but purposely named before his elder brother Manasseh, because God intended more honour to him, See Ver. 4, Sec. 11.

*Ephraim*, אפרים, according to the derivation of the word פרה, *fructum edidit*, signifieth *fruitful*. This reason Joseph himself rendereth of that name, that 'God had caused him to be fruitful in the land of his affliction,' Gen. xli. 52. That name might also be given by a prophetic spirit, for he proved the most fruitful of all Jacob's sons; the tribe of Ephraim was the greatest tribe. Ephraim is of the dual number, because Joseph then had two sons.

*Manasseh*, מנשה, signifieth *נשה*, *oblitus est*, *forgetful*. That name was given by the father in memorial of that advancement whereunto God had brought him, and thereby 'made him forget all his toil,' &c., Gen. xli. 51.

These two were by this blessing made heads of two distinct tribes, whereby it came to pass that Joseph had two portions, which was the privilege of the eldest son, 2 Chron. v. 1; for Joseph was the eldest son by [her] whom Jacob first and most loved, and who was his true wife.

Though Manasseh and Ephraim were the two particular persons blessed, yet they are not expressed by their own names, but by that relation which they had to their father, and thus styled *יְהוֹשֻׁעַ*, *the sons of Joseph*. Joseph is here named—

1. For honour's sake; for it was an honour to Joseph to have two sons blessed as two distinct heads of several tribes; which honour none of the brethren of Joseph had.

2. To shew a ground of that blessing, which was because they were the sons of Joseph, hereby God would manifest that his goodness extends itself to

the children of believers. Joseph was a believer possessed with a true fear of God, who by no trials could be drawn from his God; therefore, though he might seem to be cast out of the church, yet is he preserved as a head and stock thereof among others; and his children, though born of a woman that was a stranger and in a strange land, are here naturalised by Jacob, and made free denizens of the church—yea, stocks out of which the church should sprout. Thus said God to Abraham, 'I am thy God, and the God of thy seed,' Gen. xvii. 7; and an apostle saith to believing Christians, 'The promise is unto you, and to your children,' Acts ii. 39.

Sec. 112. *Of taking care of posterity at the time of our death.*

The time of Jacob's blessing the sons of Joseph is here said to be *when he was*, ἀποθνήσκων, *a-dying*. Of the composition and meaning of the word translated *dying*, see Chap. vii. 8, Sec. 51.

The participle here used implieth not only the moment of giving up the ghost, but also the near approach of death, manifested by old age, sickness, or any other like occasion.

The circumstance of the time here noted, sheweth that the time of a man's departing out of this world is a seasonable time to think of posterity, and to do what lieth in his power for their good. In the history it is said, that 'the time drew nigh that Israel must die'; and again, 'It was told Joseph that his father was sick' (Gen. xlvii. 29, xlviii. 1), when Jacob took order about matters after his death. So Isaac, when he intended to bless his sons, thus saith, 'Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death,' Gen. xxvii. 2. When God had told Moses that he should be gathered to his people, then Moses thought of a successor, Num. xxvii. 13, 16. Yea, Moses himself rendered this reason concerning his declaration of the future estate of Israel, that he was 'a hundred and twenty years old, and could no more go out and come in among them,' Deut. xxxi. 2. This reason Joshua rendered on the like occasion: 'I am old and stricken in age,' Josh. xxiii. 2. At such a time God appointed such a duty to Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 1. Yea, Christ himself, when he was upon the cross, takes care for his mother, John xix. 27. So Peter at such a time manifesteth his care of the churches, 2 Peter i. 14; and other apostles.

1. The duty itself of taking care for posterity is an evidence of a holy zeal of God's glory, and of true love to his church, in that it contenteth us not to promote the one and the other in ourselves or in our own time, but also endeavour to have it done by others after our time.

2. The time of one's death is in this respect the fittest, because, if that time be let slip, there remains no time after it for us to do anything. 'There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the



grave,' Eccles. ix. 10. 'When the night cometh, no man can work,' John ix. 4.

3. The time of a man's departure is the most seasonable time, because the words of a dying man make the deeper impression.

1. How many are there who, as if the world were only for themselves, take no care for their posterity! They neither care to instruct, nor to direct, nor to pray in reference to future times, nor to make their will. About making a will, see Chap. ix. 16, Sec. 94. See also *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Sec. 62.

2. A general instruction may be here raised for all who are mortal, and ought to learn to die daily—to daily to testify a care of posterity by instruction, exhortation, encouragement in good things, admonitions against evil, and predictions of such things as we have good ground beforehand to make known. See Sec. 119.

Sec. 113. *Of Jacob's worshipping upon his staff.*

Another effect of Jacob's faith is thus set down, *and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff*. The copulative *and*, sheweth that this act hath reference to Jacob's faith, as well as the former of *blessing*. By faith he blessed Joseph's sons, and by faith he worshipped God. His faith wrought in him a due respect to God, to yield unto him due service, as well as care of his posterity.

God is the proper object of faith; to honour whom faith doth much put men on.

Hereby we may gain evidence of the truth of faith. This latter effect hath reference to these words, 'Israel bowed himself upon the bed's-head,' Gen. xlvii. 31.

Of the Hebrew word, *יִשְׁתָּחֲוֶה*, translated *bowed himself*, and of the Greek word, *προσκύνησας*, *worshipped*, see Chap. i. 6, Secs. 74, 75.

By worshipping, the apostle here meaneth an action of piety done to God, in testimony of thankfulness for that oath whereby Joseph had bound himself to bury him with his fathers. His heart being cheered with the assurance which his son had given him thereof, he lifeth it up to God, and worshipped him; and to testify his reverent respect to God in worshipping him, he boweth his body towards or upon the bed's-head; not upon any superstitious conceit of the place, as if his bed's-head had stood east, or towards the mount where Jerusalem should be built, or many other like respects, but to shew how he reared up himself purposely to bow his body.

Some take the bed's-head to be his bolster, or pillow, whereupon he raised up himself.

Because a word coming from the same root, *נָחַה*, *inclinarit*, Prov. ii. 2, and consisting of the same letters, differing only in the points under them, signifieth both a *bed*,<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings iv. 10, and a *staff*,<sup>2</sup> Num.

<sup>1</sup> *נִיחָה*, *lectus*, 2 Kings iv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *נִיחָה*, *baculum*, Num. xvii. 2.

xvii. 2, some interpret the word, a *bed*; others, a *staff*. The Hebrew text useth that word which signifieth a *bed*, Gen. xlvii. 31. The LXX translate it by a word which signifieth a *staff*. Because there was no difference in sense, but rather a fit exposition of the word, the apostle quoteth the words of the LXX. See Chap. i. 3, Sec. 72. Both words, *bed* and *staff*, do fully set out the meaning of the Holy Ghost; and to the life do manifest the old man's desire to testify the inward devotion of his soul by a reverent composing of his body to worship God; for rising up on his bed's-head, he leans on his staff, and so bows his body in worshipping God. He was in his bed, and raised himself to sit upright against his bed's-head; and that, in bowing his body, he might be supported, he leaned upon his staff, and so worshipped. The word *leaning* is not in the Greek text, but implied under the preposition, *ἐν*, translated *upon*, and fitly inserted by our translators to make the sense of the place more clear. The word, *ἀκροῦ*, translated *top*, signifieth the uppermost part of a thing, as the *tip* of a finger, or the uttermost part.

This instance of Jacob, in worshipping God, gives evidence of the disposition of a true saint, which is a readiness on all occasions to worship God. Hereof see more in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 17, Sec. 112.

The apostle's expressed mention of Jacob's reverent gesture in worshipping God, manifested by his 'leaning on the top of his staff,' giveth us to understand that it well becometh a worshipper of God to manifest the inward devotion of his soul by a fit composition of his body.

Thus God is honoured in soul and body.

Others are provoked to do the like.

Our own spirits are the more affected therewith.

See more of this point in *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 9, Secs. 22, 29.

Of using a help for our weakness in worshipping God, as Jacob did by leaning on his staff, see *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 12, Secs. 48, 51.

Sec. 114. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 21.*

Ver. 21. *By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.*

The sum of this verse is, faith's proof.

The proof is drawn from a double effect.

The former hath respect to men, which was *blessing* them.

The latter hath respect to God, which was a *worshipping* of him.

The former is illustrated by the parties, and by the time.

The parties were he that blessed, *Jacob*; and they who were blessed, the *sons of Joseph*.

The time was, when he was *a dying*.

The other effect, of worshipping, is amplified by his manner of doing it, thus, *leaning upon the top of his staff.*

*Doctrines.*

I. *A grandfather must be as careful of the children of his son as of his own.* So was Jacob. See Sec. 111.

II. *God's goodness extends itself to the children of his saints.* This is here exemplified in the example of Joseph. See Sec. 111.

III. *It is an honour to be the parent of children under God's covenant.* For honour's sake is Joseph here mentioned in reference to such sons. See Sec. 111.

IV. *Parents may and must bless their children.* Jacob is here accounted as a parent. See Sec. 111.

V. *Approach of death is a season to seek the good of posterity.* This phrase, when he was dying, intends as much. See Sec. 112.

VI. *Saints are ready on all occasions to worship God.* Instance Jacob. See Sec. 113.

VII. *Inward devotion must be accompanied with an answerable composition of body.* Thus did Jacob manifest his. See Sec. 113.

Sec. 115. *Of Joseph and his name.*

Ver. 22. *By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones.*

The eighth instance of the vigour of faith here produced is of Joseph.

His faith is of the same kind that the faith of the others was.

The name *Joseph*, *אֲבִיר*, *alidit*, is derived from a verb that signifieth to add, and this reason is rendered thereof by his mother, 'the Lord shall add to me another son,' Gen. xxx. 24. His mother had been long barren; and her sister, who was another wife of Jacob, had many children, which aggravated her grief for her barrenness; but at length 'the Lord remembered her, and hearkened to her, and opened her womb,' and gave her this son. Hereupon, either by a prophetic spirit, or upon strong confidence that God would yet give her another son, she gave this son this name *Joseph*.

The name, therefore, was an evidence of Rachel's faith. It fell out according to her faith; she had another son, though he cost her dearly, even her life.

Joseph, whose faith is here commended, is worthy due consideration, and that in three especial respects.

1. In regard of the trials whereunto he was brought.

2. In regard of the graces wherewith he was endowed.

3. In regard of the dignities wherewith he was honoured.

There is not a history of any other wherein the rare passages of the divine providence are more

clearly manifested than the history of Joseph, both in regard of that low estate whereunto he was brought, and also of that high dignity whereunto he was advanced.

Sec. 116. *Of Joseph's trials.*

1. Joseph, being young, was hated of his brethren, and so hated as they could not give him a good word; and that not for any desert of his, but because his father loved him, even deservedly, Gen. xxxvii. 4.

2. He, coming to inquire of the welfare of his brethren, they, upon the first sight of him, conspire to slay him; but, being kept from that unnatural fratricide by the eldest among them, they strip him, and cast him into a pit, where, when he had lain some while, they take him up, and sell him to strange merchants for a slave, Gen. xxxvii. 23, 24, 28, Ps. cv. 17.

3. He was brought into Egypt by the foresaid merchants, and there sold to the captain of the guard, Gen. xxxix. 4.

4. In his master's house he was impudently tempted by his mistress.

5. He was falsely accused and maliciously slandered by her that tempted him.

6. He was unjustly cast into prison, Gen. xxxix. 7, &c.

7. In prison they so manacled and fettered him as they hurt his feet with iron fetters, Ps. cv. 18.

8. The kindness that he shewed to a fellow-prisoner, whom he desired to remember him, was forgotten, Gen. xl. 23.

9. He was kept all his life, after he was once sold, out of the visible church, which was his father's family, in a strange land, where he had his wife, and where he died, and where his bones remained for a long while, Gen. l. 26.

Who may think himself free from trials, whenas such a man as Joseph had such trials as he had?

Sec. 117. *Of the graces that were in Joseph.*

The graces wherewith Joseph was endowed were many and excellent, such as these that follow:

1. Faith: this is here in special commended.

2. Fear of God: this he himself doth profess of himself, Gen. xlii. 18.

3. Faithfulness: this was manifested in all his relations, as—

(1.) To God, by declaring that which God had made known to him in dreams, Gen. xxxvii. 5.

(2.) To his father, by bringing to him the evil report of his brethren.

(3.) To his master, who trusted him over all he had, Gen. xxxix. 6.

(4.) To his mistress, in dissuading her from unfaithfulness, Gen. xxxix. 8.

(5.) To the king, for what he did was to the king's emolument, Gen. xlvii. 20.

4. Chastity, which was brought to a thorough proof, Gen. xxxix. 10.

5. Sincerity: he could not in secret be brought to sin, Gen. xxxix. 11.

6. Patience under crosses, Ps. cv. 18, 19.

7. Bearing with wrongs, Gen. i. 21.

8. Forgiving injuries, Gen. i. 17, 19.

9. Overcoming evil with goodness, Gen. xlii. 25, and i. 21.

10. Wisdom in ordering his affairs. This was manifested—

(1.) In his master's house, Gen. xxxix. 4.

(2.) In the prison, Gen. xxxix. 22.

(3.) In the kingdom, Gen. xli. 39, and xlvii. 14.

11. Providence against future wants, Gen. xli. 48.

12. Bowels of compassion, Gen. xlii. 24, and xliii. 30.

13. Reverence to his father, and that when he was advanced to outward dignity above his father, Gen. xlvii. 29, and xlviii. 12.

14. Obedience to his father, Gen. xxxvii. 14, 15, and xlvii. 31.

15. Recompense to his father, and that—

(1.) While his father lived, Gen. xlvii. 12.

(2.) When he was dead, Gen. i. 2.

16. Care of posterity, and that—

(1.) In reference to his own children, Gen. xlviii. 1, &c.

(2.) In reference to his brethren and their children, Gen. i. 24.

Joseph may be a pattern for servants, children, brethren, subjects, governors, prisoners, exiles, such as are unduly slandered and wronged, yea, and for all saints.

#### Sec. 118. *Of Joseph's prerogatives.*

The prerogatives wherewith Joseph was honoured and blessed, were these following:—

1. His comely feature, Gen. xxxix. 6.

2. His father's love, Gen. xxxvii. 3.

3. His birthright, 2 Chron. v. 1, 2.

4. God's blessing on his affairs, Gen. xxxix. 2, 23.

5. The favour of all that were over him, Gen. xxxix. 4, 21, and xli. 38.

6. An extraordinary divine spirit, Gen. xxxvii. 6, &c., xl. 8, and xli. 25.

7. High honour, even next to the king, Gen. xli. 40.

8. Ability and opportunity of doing good, Gen. xli. 57.

9. A reservation of his own and children's right to the church of God, though he lived most of his days in a strange land, where he was a prime governor, and where his children were born and brought up, Ps. xlviii. 6.

10. A reputation to be as his father Jacob, and other his forefathers, a stock and head of the church,

the members whereof are styled, 'the sons of Jacob and Joseph,' Ps. lxxvii. 15.

11. A numerous progeny, Gen. xlix. 22. Two tribes issued from him, and one of them, namely Ephraim, was more numerous than most of the other.

12. The many years that he lived, which were a hundred and ten, Gen. i. 22.

13. An honourable laying him in a coffin, wherein he continued hundreds of years, Gen. i. 26.

14. The carrying of his bones in the aforesaid coffin with the Israelites when they were delivered out of Egypt, Exod. xiii. 19.

15. His burial in that part of Canaan which by lot fell to Ephraim, and became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

In these prerogatives of Joseph, we have an instance of the providence and bounty of God towards such as fear him.

#### Sec. 119. *Of sorrowful speeches of dying men.*

The first point of the commendation of Joseph's faith is about the time of shewing it forth, thus expressed, *τελευτών, when he died, or dying.*

In the Greek another word is used than was in the former verse, *ἀποθνήσκων*, translated 'when he was a dying,' but of the same signification: both of them are participles of the same tense. The root, *τέλει, finis*, from whence this word cometh, signifieth *an end*; for death puts an end to our life here in this world. The negative is used of that which never shall have end, as 'their worm dieth not,' Mat. ix. 44. It here intendeth the very same thing that was implied of Joseph's father, in this phrase, 'when he was a dying.'

The phrase in this text hath reference to that which Joseph himself said (Gen. i. 24), *אני כח, 'I die, or, 'I am dying.'* This Joseph saith in regard of his age, being a hundred and ten years old, and in regard of the weakness of his body, and some sickness that befell him, and readiness of his mind to yield to the good pleasure of God. Having apparent signs of the near approach of his departure, he used that phrase to move them the rather to attend to that which he should say unto them, for the words of a dying man use most to be heeded. The prefaces which dying men have used give good proof to the point. Read for this purpose Gen. xlix. 1, 2, Deut. xxxii. 1, Josh. xxiv. 1, 2, 1 Sam. xii. 3, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 1 Kings, ii. 1–3.

Then the speeches of understanding and wise men use to be most pertinent, most hearty, most impartial, and most profitable. Then they consider what lessons are fittest to be remembered after death.

1. As this is commended in others of former times, so it ought to be our care in our days to consider what may be fit to give in charge to our posterity, or to counsel and advise them concerning

future times, even after our departure, especially in regard of those that are under our charge, and those to whom we have any special relation.

2. This is a motive to such as are present at the time of the departure of such persons, to give more than ordinary heed to their directions, exhortations, admonitions, and other kind of speeches.

Hereof see more in *Domest. Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Sec. 58.

Sec. 120. *Of believers persuading others that which themselves believe.*

The first evidence of Joseph's faith here specified is this, *he made mention of the departure of the children of Israel*. In the history this is thus expressed, 'God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land,' &c., Gen. i. 24. Hereof he was confident, by reason of the express promises which God had made to his forefathers, Gen. xv. 13, 14, xxvi. 3, and xlvii. 4.

Hereby we have an instance that they who do themselves believe God's promises are careful to persuade others of the truth of them. This was the end of that mention that he made of the point in hand.

The Greek word, *ἐμνημόνευσε*, here used, is the same that was before used, ver. 15, and translated *mindful*; and it is also used, chap. xiii. 7, and translated *remember*.

The *making mention* here intended is a calling to mind such a thing as should afterward come to pass; which he would have them now to take notice of, and hereafter to remember. The like to this is noted of Moses, Dent. xxxi. 3, Josh. xxiii. 5, 6, 1 Chron. xxii. 11, 2 Chron. xx. 20, 2 Cor. v. 11.

The like is noted of other prophets and apostles; and it is the duty, and ought to be the practice of all ministers; yea, and of other saints.

Faith, apprehending the truth of God in his promises, worketh in the heart a zeal of God's glory, and love to others. These graces are operative, and put on men to communicate to others what they know and believe themselves, as Andrew and Philip, John i. 41, 45.

Sec. 121. *Of God's delivering his out of trouble.*

That whereof Joseph here made mention was the *departing of the children of Israel*.

By the *children of Israel* are meant that numerous and holy seed which was promised to Abraham, Gen. xv. 5, and to Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 4, and to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 24.

Jacob was also styled *Israel*, Gen. xxxii. 28; and because he was the immediate progenitor of those twelve sons which were the heads of the twelve tribes, his name is mentioned—and of his two names that which was the more honourable, namely *Israel*.

The departing here intended was their freedom from a miserable bondage, under which those chil-

dren of Israel were pressed—yea, even oppressed, Exod. i. 13.

So as their departing out of Egypt was a great deliverance from a miserable bondage, and it giveth instance that God will deliver his out of their troubles.

This is oft exemplified in time of the Judges—yea, and of the Kings also, and especially in the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. See more hereof in *The Guide to go to God*, or *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, on the Eighth Petition, Sec. 188, and in *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 15, Sec. 77.

Sec. 122. *Of reserving Joseph's bones.*

Another evidence of Joseph's faith is a *charge that he gave concerning his bones*.

The word, *ἐνετείλατο*, which we translate *gave commandment*, is the same that is used, Chap. ix. 20, Sec. 106, and translated *enjoined*. It implieth a strict charge, which by no means he would have omitted or neglected. This hath reference to that oath which Joseph imposed upon the children of Israel, Gen. i. 25. It must needs, therefore, be a strict charge, whereunto they were bound by oath. A like charge, with a like bond, did Jacob lay upon his son Joseph, Gen. xlvii. 31. So as herein this pious son imitated his pious father, as the said father imitated his father Isaac, in blessing his son.

The manner of commanding by an oath doth give warrant for requiring an oath, and for taking an oath. Hereof see more, Chap. vi. 16, Secs. 116, 119.

The matter which so strictly Joseph commanded concerned his bones—namely, that they should carry his bones out of Egypt.

Joseph believed that God would bring the children of Israel out of Egypt into the land of Canaan, promised to their fathers. To give them assurance of his faith therein, and also to strengthen their faith, he giveth this charge. He foresaw that they should abide in Egypt a long while—yea, and that they should there be much oppressed; but yet he believed that they should be delivered, and that in Canaan should be the continual residency of the church. There, therefore, he would have his bones perpetually to lie, as his predecessors desired to be buried in a cave that was in that country, Gen. xlix. 31.

He maketh mention, *πρὸς ὅσιν, of bones*, rather than of *body*; because they were long to continue in Egypt. For after Joseph's death they there abode a hundred and forty years, and after that they were forty years in the wilderness, and they were also sundry years in conquering Canaan; so as from the death of Joseph to the burial of his bones (Josh. xxiv. 32), might be about two hundred years. In this time his flesh, though it were embalmed, could not but be clean wasted away; yet his bones might remain, being kept dry.

In general we here see that care of one's dead

corpse is a fruit of faith. This made Abraham so careful of a place for the burial of his wives' and his own corpse, and Isaac and Jacob careful to have their own and their wives' corpses buried where Abraham and Sarah's bodies were, Gen. xlvii. 30.

Hereby hope of the resurrection of the body is nourished.

This warranteth a decent funeral. This is promised as a blessing, 1 Kings xiv. 13. But the contrary is threatened as a curse (Jer. xxii. 19).

1. By this means is manifested a difference betwixt the bodies of men and beasts.

2. This ministereth comfort against death, both in regard of our own departure, and also in regard of our friends that depart before us.

3. This is the rather to be done among God's people, because their bodies, while they were living, were temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 19.

4. The dead bodies of believers still remain members of Christ.

This, therefore, as a duty lieth upon surviving friends, who hereby may give testimony of a good respect to their deceased friends.

Nearest and dearest friends have taken special care hereof, as children who have survived their parents, 1 Gen. xxv. 9; and parents that have survived their children, Luke vii. 12; and husbands, Gen. xxiii. 4; and friends, John xi. 17, and xix. 39, 40, Acts viii. 2.

See more hereof in *Domest. Duties*, Treat. 5, Of Children, Sec. 45.

Papists here raise a use about reserving the relics of saints, and ground it upon this instance about reserving Joseph's bones. But to shew the non-consequence thereof, let them know that,

1. There is not the like occasion of keeping the bones of Christians, as was of keeping Joseph's bones.

2. Joseph's bones were to be kept as if they had been buried.

3. Joseph's bones were not carried up and down for ostentation.

4. There was no adoration done to Joseph's bones.

5. False bones were not substituted instead of Joseph's true bones, as are in many Popish relics.

Sec. 123. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 22.*

Ver. 22. *By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones.*

The general sum of this verse is, of the former, faith's proof. Hereabout is set down,

1. The person whose faith was proved, *Joseph*.

2. The arguments whereby it is proved. These are two,

(1.) His mention of things future.

(2.) His charge.

The former is amplified.

[1.] By the time, which was *when he died*.

[2.] By the matter whereof he made mention, *the departing of the children of Israel*.

In his charge we may observe,

[1.] The manner of it, which was by imposing an oath, Gen. i. 25.

[2.] The matter thereof, *his bones*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Faith manifesteth her vigour when a believer is dying.* So did Joseph's faith. See Sec. 119.

II. *Dying men must shew their care of their posterity.* Herein is Joseph set before us as a pattern. See Sec. 119.

III. *Faith resteth upon deliverances to come.* Joseph's mention of the Israelites' departure out of Egypt gives proof hereof. See Sec. 121.

IV. *Believers will be careful to persuade others of that which they themselves believe.* This doth Joseph endeavour, by mentioning the departure of the Israelites. See Sec. 120.

V. *God will deliver his.* The departing of Israel out of Egypt is an instance hereof. See Sec. 121.

VI. *Care about men's dead corpses is a fruit of faith.* See Sec. 122.

Sec. 124. *Of the honour that redounds to parents by worthy children, and of their care over them.*

Ver. 23. *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*

Not the faith of Moses, but of his parents, is here commended.

This is the ninth instance which the apostle hath produced.

The word, *παρῆτες*, translated *parents*, properly signifieth *fathers*, but according to the mind and meaning of the apostle, fitly translated *parents*; under whom father and mother are comprised.

The mother may not here be excluded, for the history maketh express mention of her, and of her alone, for the mother was the actor of all; but unquestionably all that the mother did was with the father's consent, if not upon his advice, and it is no more than probable that he had his part also in acting many things about the preservation of Moses. Of the notation of this name *Moses*, see Chap. iii. 2, Sec. 37; and *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 9, Sec. 9.

These parents are expressly named in the history. The father was *יִסְכַּר*, *Amram*, which signifieth a *numerous people*; it containeth in it a great part of Abraham's name.

The mother's name was *יֹכֶבֶד*, *Jochabed*, which signifieth *glorious*, for she was glorious in bringing forth and preserving such sons as Aaron and Moses.

They were both of the tribe of Levi, and of the same family. The said Amram and Jochabed were near of kin. For Jochabed was Amram's father's

sister; so as Amram married his aunt, and of her had Aaron and Moses. But this was before the law of prohibiting degrees of marriage, and before the commonwealth of Israel was sufficiently peopled.

The parties whose faith is here commended are described by their relation to their son, Moses; thus, *his parents*, rather than by their own names, for honour's sake. For Moses was a man of great note and name, and his memorial was very honourable in the church of God. Hereby then it appears that parents are much honoured by having worthy children. Solomon therefore styleth himself 'the son of David,' Eccles. i. 1. And David pleadeth this as a matter of honour and dignity, 'I am the son of thine handmaid,' Ps. cxvi. 16. Hereupon it is said that 'a wise son maketh a glad father,' Prov. x. 1.

1. If a son prove praiseworthy, by virtue of his education, praise useth to be ascribed to his parents that have so educated him, even as the praise of Solomon's servants was ascribed to the wisdom of Solomon, 1 Kings x. 5.

2. If the gifts, parts, or dignities of a son be extraordinary, and immediate from God, they use to be evidences of God's good respect unto the parents.

1. This may be a motive unto parents to do the best that they can for their children, that they may be of eminent use to the church and state where they live; and that among other ends for this, the honour and glory of parents themselves.

2. This should put on children to do the best that they can to be famous in Israel, even for the honour of their parents.

This title, *his parents*, in reference to that care that Moses's parents had of him, being their child, giveth us further to understand that parents especially ought to have a care of their children.

For this we have sundry precepts, as Eph. vi. 4, and 2 Cor. xii. 14; and patterns, as Prov. iv. 3, 4.

Parents are, under God, the means of their children's being. On this ground natural instinct teacheth all creatures to be careful of their young ones.

Parents therefore ought to observe,

1. What dangers their children are subject unto, to prevent them.

2. What good they may do unto them, and to endeavour that with all their power.

The plural number, wherein this word *parents* is expressed, doth plainly evidence that both father and mother must have a joint care of their children. In this respect, saith a father, in reference to himself and his wife, 'How shall we order the child? and how shall we do unto him?' Judges xiii. 12. And a son saith of both parents, 'I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother,' Prov. iv. 3. 'Behold, thy father and I have sought these sorrowing,' saith a mother to her son, Luke ii. 43.

1. Both parents have a joint part in the being and bringing forth of their child.

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2. The law requireth the like honour to both, Exod. xx. 12.

3. For this end are parents so nearly linked together as to make one flesh, Gen. ii. 18.

It will be therefore a good point of wisdom for both parents to observe what duties belong unto each of them in reference to their children, and wherein they may be best helpful one to another for the good of their children.

Sec. 125. *Of hiding such as are in danger.*

The act whereby the faith of Moses's parents is commended is implied in this phrase, *הִסְתִּירָם*, was hid.

The word *hid* is attributed to concealing of matters from the eyes of men, so as they should not see them or find them out.

The hid treasure and pearl in the Gospel is set forth by this word, Mat. xiii. 44; and the slothful servant's talent that was put into the earth, Mat. xxv. 25. Thus Jesus is said to 'hide himself' from the Jews, John viii. 59, and xii. 36; and they who are afraid of the Judge are said to 'hide themselves,' Rev. vi. 15, 16.

The reason why Moses's parents hid him was a cruel edict of the king of Egypt, 'That every son that was born of an Israelite should be cast into the river,' Exod. i. 22. To prevent this destruction of Moses, his parents hid him; so as persons in danger may be concealed from mischievous attempts. Thus Rebekah used means to conceal Jacob from the fury of his brother, Gen. xxvii. 43; thus Rahab hid the spies, Josh. ii. 4; and a woman hid Jonathan and Ahimaaz, 2 Sam. xvii. 19. To omit other instances, it is said of God himself that he hid Jeremiah and Baruch, Jer. xxxvi. 26.

*Obj.* These were extraordinary cases, and they that did it were guided by an extraordinary spirit.

*Ans.* 1. They were special cases, not extraordinary. All examples are a kind of special instances, yet in a like case are for our warrant.

2. Though in some particulars they might be extraordinary, and might be done by an extraordinary spirit, yet the general equity of them is ordinary and imitable. Hereupon Rahab's example is set before us as a pattern, ver. 31, James ii. 25.

The spies that searched Jericho were employed in a good cause, warranted by God, whereof Rahab was assured, partly by the common fame that God had devoted all Canaan to destruction, and partly by an inward inspiration of the Spirit. In this respect her act is imitable. It was extraordinary to hide spies that came to search her country. This she did by an extraordinary spirit. But to hide such as were in God's work, and in a warranted course, was ordinary and imitable.

1. To hide one's self from foreseen evil is a point of prudence, Prov. xxii. 3, and ought to be extended to others.

2. It is a fruit of charity to prevent the danger of others.

3. Many benefits may thence arise, as,

(1.) Protecting the innocent.

(2.) Preventing wrongs.

(3.) Disappointing Satan's instruments.

(4.) Preserving such as may be useful to men and honourable to God.

But hurt comes to none hereby.

*Quest.* 1. What if such as are hid be inquired after by authority? may they then be concealed?

*Ans.* If it may be done without impeachment of truth. Otherwise, I make question of this question. For,

1. All lying is a sin, Eph. iv. 25.

2. Though good may come thereby to man, yet it is against God and his truth.

3. It impeacheth the power and prudence of God, as if he could not maintain his own servants without untruth.

4. It prevents the providence of God in his own course.

5. We may not talk deceitfully for God, Job xiii. 7.

*Quest.* 2. What if a good end follow upon some untruth?

*Ans.* A good end is not sufficient to justify a matter. If a thing be ill in the matter or manner, or end, it is not to be done.

*Obj.* A bad end mars a good thing. By consequence of contraries a good end may justify an evil act.

*Ans.* That is no good consequence; for there is difference betwixt good and evil. One circumstance maketh a thing evil; but all circumstances must concur to make it good. One kind of poison is enough to take away life; but there must be many ingredients to make a potion for preserving life.

*Quest.* 3. What, then, is to be done when innocents and saints are unjustly sought after?

*Ans.* We must be silent, and say nothing one way or other, or courageously refuse to betray him, or so prudently order our answer as nor the party be endangered nor truth impeached.

The application of this point concerneth such especially as live among those who, like Pharaoh and the Egyptians, are persecutors of the church, oppressors of men, inhuman and cruel. It doth not justify concealers of malefactors. Christians must take heed of making such inferences from such approved patterns as this is.

Thereby they pervert the word of God, scandalise the profession of the gospel, open the mouths of enemies, bring themselves under the penalty of good laws, and suffer as malefactors, which is expressly forbidden, 1 Pet. iv. 15.

On the other side, their undue timidity and overmuch fear of danger is manifested, who are ready,

upon undue respects, to bring others into danger; as,

1. They who, Doege-like, discover God's servants to their enemies, 1 Sam. xxii. 9; and this in hatred of and malice against them.

2. They who discover such to curry favour with great men, as the Ziphites, 1 Sam. xxiii. 19.

3. They who, for fear of incurring danger themselves, refuse to stand to God's cause when they are questioned about it, as the parents of the man that was born blind, John xix. 22.

4. They that deny that succour which they might and ought to [afford to] their brethren, for fear of men.

Those and such like shew how little faith they have.

See, 126. *Of preventing danger betimes.*

That act of their faith, in hiding their son, is amplified by the time, both when they began, and how long they continued. In regard of the former, the apostle saith that they did it, *γυνώσκεις, when he was born*. This implieth a timely doing of that act, even so soon as he was born. They did not invite their neighbours at her travail; nor, when the child was brought forth, they did not make known that they had a child born; so as they prevented the danger betimes. This was an especial point of wisdom. An angel admonished Joseph to carry his reputed son Jesus out of Herod's reach before he could know that he was mocked of the wise men, Mark ii. 13. 'Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us,' say the men of Gibeon to Joshua, Josh. x. 6. It is commended in Saul, that he came to succour Jabesh-gilead 'in the morning watch,' 1 Sam. xi. 11.

Otherwise all pains, all endeavours may prove to be in vain, being too late. It is too late to shut the stable door when the steed is stolen. *Sera est in fando parsimonia.*

It is, therefore, a point of wisdom carefully to observe what danger we ourselves or others, especially such as are under our charge, are in, and to afford them seasonable succour.

It is noted that the man-child which the dragon sought to devour, as soon as it was born, was presently caught up unto God, Rev. xii. 4, 5. The apostle exhorteth us to be vigilant, because 'the devil seeketh whom he may devour.'

On this ground we ought, by faithful prayer, to lift up our children to God so soon as they are born; to bring them to the sacrament of baptism so soon as conveniently we may; to instruct them so soon as they are capable; to train them up to good callings, and to perform other duties betimes. Resist all Satan's temptations in the beginning. Many fair advantages are lost by delay. The two great conquerors, Alexander and Caesar, were careful in taking the first opportunity, and in using all the expedition

they could. The motto of the one was *μὴδὲν ἀποβαλλόμενος*, that he let slip no season; and of the other, *Veni, vidi, vici*, that as soon as he came and saw, he overcame. These principles are of special use in spiritual dangers.

Sec. 127. *Of continuing in what is well begun.*

The time of their continuing to hide their son is set down in this phrase, *τρὶς μῆνας*, *three months*, which is expressed by one word in Greek. The Grecians have like words for other months, as *τετραμήνιον*, for four months, John iv. 35, and five months, and so others. They have one general word, *πάμηνος*, to comprise *all months* under it.

Those three months were as long a time as they could hide him. Some say that the Egyptians searched the Israelites' houses every three months. It appears that some discovery began to be made of their child; or, at least, that there was some suspicion of such a child; for the history saith, 'she could not longer hide him.' Exod. ii. 3. Questionless diligent inquisition was made by the Egyptians concerning the Israelitish women that were with child; from which inquisition, though for a while they might conceal their child, yet long they could not; for wicked men (as their father, 1 Pet. v. 8.) are diligent and sedulous in pursuing their malicious and mischievous courses. Thus was Herod in seeking the life of Jesus, Mat. ii. 8, 16, and Ahab in seeking after Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 10.

This circumstance sheweth that care in preventing danger is to be continued as long as may be. It is said of the mother of Moses, 'when she could not longer hide him,' Exod. ii. 3; so as she hid him as long as she could. Rahab hid the spies till they who sought them were out of sight, Josh. ii. 15, 16. So Joseph abode in Egypt, to keep Jesus there safe 'until the death of Herod,' Mat. ii. 15.

The benefit of preventing danger consisteth in continuing so to do till fear of danger be overpast. If such as are hid for a time be left, and fall into the danger, what good cometh by the former hiding?

Surely it is a point of unfaithfulness to fall from those whom we have begun to protect and succour. Such were the men of Keilah, who would have delivered David into the hands of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiii. 12; or rather that timorous and servile king of Israel, who, after he had taken some care of Jeremiah, and freed him out of the prison, where he was like to die, and caused bread to be allowed him every day, upon the instigation of the princes, delivered him up into their hands, Jer. xxxviii. 5.

This unfaithfulness is much greater in the spiritual dangers of our souls; as when governors shall begin to protect their people from idolatry, and after give them up thereto, as Joash did, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, 18, and ministers that shall well begin to keep their people from Satan's snares, and after suffer them to slide

back by negligence, or by any corruption in life or doctrine, as sundry false brethren and apostles in the primitive church. So parents and governors of families: so friends and neighbours; yea, and all backsliders, that neglect their own souls, which for some time they have begun to keep. An apostle's verdict of such is, that 'it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness,' 2 Pet. ii. 21, 22.

This particular sheweth how necessary constancy and perseverance is in the good things that we do enterprise. Hereof see more, Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 68.

Sec. 128. *Of respecting children that carry God's stamp.*

One special reason of the aforesaid care that the parents of Moses had of him is thus expressed, *because they saw he was a proper child*.

This word, *ὁρίσας*, *because*, doth in general intend a reason.

The particular reason was, a visible stamp of God's respect to this child in the very favour and feature of it.

The Hebrew expresseth it by a general word, *טוב*, that signifieth *good*, and compriseth under it every kind of goodness. Hereof, see Chap. xiii. 9, Sec. 116.

It setteth out the beauty and comeliness of persons, and is translated *fair*, Gen. vi. 2, and xxiv. 16.

The Greek word here used signifieth comely and beautiful. It is used in this very case, Acts vii. 20, *ἀστεὺς τῷ Θεῷ*. There the word *God* is added to it; and the title *God* being added, it is translated *very fair*; for the addition of *God* to things in Canaan's language addeth an excellency unto them, as *cedars of God*, tall cedars; *mount of God*, a great mount; and so in other things. Or else this phrase, *fair to God*, may imply a divine stamp, whereby it was evident that God had marked him for some great work. This might God set on him to move both his parents, and also Pharaoh's daughter, to respect him. In this respect it was not fondness in the parents, by reason of the prettiness, comeliness, and fairness of the child, that moved them to do what they did, but that divine stamp, and their faith thereupon.

God oft setteth a stamp on such as are by him deputed to weighty works, Jacob's holding his brother by the heel was such a kind of stamp, Gen. xxv. 26, and John Baptist springing in his mother's belly, Luke i. 41. So Samson's strength, Judges xiv. 6, and David's courage, 1 Sam. xvii. 34.

This God doth to raise up in men beforehand an expectation of some great matter: that thereby they may be moved to call upon God, to depend on him, and to ascribe the praise and glory of that which is done by such to God. Moses his brethren are herein blamed that they did not understand that God would deliver them by Moses, when Moses avenged one of



his brothers that was oppressed, and smote an Egyptian, Acts vii. 24, 25.

This is the consideration that moved the parents of Moses to take such care as they did of preserving him; and thereby it appears that it ought to be the care of parents to take special notice of such children as God doth set any special mark upon. The name which God gave to the second child of Bathsheba, which was Solomon, 1 Chron. xxiii. 9, and Jedidiah, 2 Sam. xii. 25, gave David to understand that that son was a select child of God: hereupon both David was the more careful of his education, Prov. iv. 3, 4, and Bathsheba also, Prov. xxxi. 1, 2. On that ground David is careful to give his son sundry instructions, 1 Chron. xxii. 7, &c., and to give his princes a charge concerning him, 1 Chron. xxii. 17, &c., and xxviii., &c. This phrase (which is oft applied to the Virgin Mary), 'she laid up those things in her heart,' Luke ii. 19, 51, hath reference to extraordinary evidences of divine glory in her son, and made her more careful over him.

1. Care upon such a ground importeth an eye of the soul on God's providence, and faith in effecting some great matter. This, as it manifesteth a good and due respect to God, so it must needs be acceptable to him.

2. God useth to bring his counsel to pass by means. Parents' care over their children, and such especially as are marked by God to special employments, is a principal means to bring on children to accomplish those works.

3. This may be applied to parents that have children of good capacity, quick wits, ready invention, happy memories, and other special parts, whereby they are, as it were, stamped and sealed for special employments. They ought to be the more careful over such, both in their good education, and also in fitting them to eminent and excellent callings. Surely both church and commonwealth might be furnished with worthy instruments of much good, if parents were careful to take notice of God's stamp in their children, and answerably to take care of their training up.

Sec. 129. *Of believers not fearing man.*

These words, and they were not afraid, admit a double reference; one to the words immediately going before, and so imply another reason of Moses's parents hiding him. One reason was the beauty of the child: they saw he was a proper child.

Another is their courage: they were not afraid. The copulative, *and*, importeth a connexion of these two reasons.

The other reference is to the main virtue commended, which is *faith*. Thus it is another effect or evidence of the faith of Moses's parents. One effect was, that they hid their child; the other was, that they were not afraid, &c.

Thus it answereth a question, namely, how they durst conceal their child so long against the king's commandment. The answer is, 'They feared not man.'

Of the notation of the verb, *ἐφοβήσαν*, translated *fear*, see Chap. ii. 15, Sec. 149. Of the difference betwixt a fear of God and men, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 5. Of fear of men, see Chap. xiii. 6, Sec. 84, &c.

It is the fear of men that is here meant, and that an evil fear, and therefore set down negatively as a matter shunned, *ὅχι, not afraid*.

That whereof they were not afraid is here styled *ἐντολὰς, commandment*. It is a compound. The simple verb, *τάττω*, whence it is derived, signifieth to *ordain*, or appoint, Acts xiii. 48.

The compound verb, *ἐντάττω*, whence the word here used is derived, signifieth to *command*. The word of this text, *ἐντολὰς*, implyeth an edict peremptorily determined, set down, and proclaimed, so as none may do against it without a severe penalty. It here hath special reference to this cruel edict, 'Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river,' Exod. i. 22.

The king here meant was that cruel tyrant Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who used the Israelites worse than slaves or beasts. By the foresaid cruel edict Pharaoh sought utterly to put out the memory of Israel.

This evidence of faith, that Moses's parents were not afraid of the king's charge, giveth proof that faith in God expels fear of man. See Chap. xiii. 6, Secs. 84, 91.

Sec. 130. *Of not fearing evil edicts of kings.*

The subject-matter whereof Moses's parents were not afraid is here said to be a *commandment*. But this is not so indefinitely or generally to be taken, as if no commandment or edict of men were to be feared: but it hath reference to the forementioned commandment, which was an evil, cruel, and bloody commandment; so as evil edicts are not to be feared, nor through fear to be yielded unto. No, though they be the edicts of the highest on earth; for who higher than a king in his dominion, and what straiter bond can lie upon a subject than a public edict or proclamation of a king?

From these two circumstances, of the straitness of the charge, and greatness of the person that gave it, the pattern of Moses's parents in not fearing it giveth evidence that the strictest edicts of the greatest on earth, being evil, are not to be yielded unto. And as the not yielding hereunto is produced as an evidence of faith, it gives proof that a true believer will not yield in such a case. Take for further proof hereof, Jonathan's denying to bring David to Saul, 1 Sam. xx. 31, 32, and Daniel's three companions refusing to yield to the idolatrous edict of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iii. 16, &c., and of Daniel himself,

who, notwithstanding a contrary edict of the king and princes of Persia, prayed to his God, Dan. vi. 10. The former refused to bow to an idol upon the king's edict; the latter would not forbear to call upon God, though it were against the king's edict. None of them were 'afraid of the king's commandment.'

Believers know (which all of us ought to know) that there is a straiter edict, and a higher Lord, whereunto we are more bound than to any edict or lord on earth. The apostles laid down this as a duty, 'We ought to obey God rather than men,' Acts v. 29. Yea, so equal and agreeable to the light of nature is this point, as the apostles refer it to the very judgment of those who would have had them do otherwise, thus, 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye,' Acts iv. 19. This difference betwixt God and man doth Joseph press against his mistress's temptation, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' Gen. xxxix. 9.

1. Most undue are the pretences which many bring for justifying evil acts, as, the king commands it; it is my master's charge; my father will have me do it, and such like. All these, and other like pretences, savour too rankly of Adam's cursed folly, who made this pretence for his sin against God, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat,' Gen. iii. 12.

2. Well weigh what is commanded by superiors. Observe whether they be against God's command or no; if yea, be not afraid of the commandment, let it not move thee. See more hereof in *Domest. Duties*, Treat. 3, Secs. 51, 63, and Treat. 5, Sec. 37, and Treat. 7, Sec. 38.

3. Take an invincible resolution to hold close to God, and not to transgress his commandment for any man's commandment. There is no comparison betwixt God and man. See more hereof, Chap. xiii. 6, Sec. 86.

Sec. 131. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 23.*

Ver. 23. *By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child, and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.*

This verse in sum declareth Moses's vigour. Hereof are two parts,

1. A description of the parties.

2. A declaration of the kinds of proofs.

The parties are described by their relation to their son Moses, *parents*.

The proofs of their faith are two effects.

The former is,

1. Propounded.

2. Confirmed.

In propounding the effect, is noted,

1. Their act.

2. The reason thereof.

Their act was their hiding of their child, amplified by the time.

The time is set forth two ways,

1. By the beginning, *when he was born*.

2. By the continuance, *three months*.

The reason was, a divine stamp upon the child. They saw he was a *proper child*.

The latter proof of their faith was their courage, which is,

1. Manifested by the contrary: they were *not afraid*.

2. Amplified,

(1.) By the subject-matter which they feared not, *a commandment*.

(2.) By the author of that commandment, *the king*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Parents are honoured by worthy children.* For honour's sake the parties are here described by their relation to their son Moses. See Sec. 124.

II. *Parents especially ought to have care of their children.* So had Moses's parents. See Sec. 124.

III. *There ought to be a joint care of fathers and mothers.* For both these are comprised under the word *parents*. See Sec. 124.

IV. *Persons in danger may be concealed from mischievous persons.* So was Moses from the Egyptians. See Sec. 125.

V. *Danger is to be prevented betimes.* So soon as Moses was born, he was hid. See Sec. 126.

VI. *Care in preventing danger must be continued.* This phrase, *three months*, intendeth as much. See Sec. 127.

VII. *God sets a stamp on such as he deposes to a special work.* Thus he did here on Moses. See Sec. 128.

VIII. *God's stamp works a good esteem.* So did this about Moses. See Sec. 128.

IX. *Faith expels fear.* It was faith that made these not afraid. See Sec. 129.

X. *Unlawful edicts fright not believers.* Moses's parents were not afraid of such commandments. See Sec. 130.

XI. *Kings in sinful things are not to be obeyed.* It was the king's commandment that was not feared. See Sec. 130.

Sec. 132. *Of Moses acting when he was of years.*

Ver. 24. *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.*

The tenth instance to demonstrate the vigour of faith is Moses himself.

Of the notation of this name *Moses*, see Chap. iii. 2, Sec. 37.

His faith is largely set forth: three times by an elegant *anaphora*, in this phrase, *by faith*, used in setting out the fruits of Moses's faith, vers. 24, 27, 28.

The first fruit is contempt of the world. This he began to manifest betimes, even *when he came to years*. In Greek it is word for word, thus, *μέγας γινόμενος, when he was great*. This is here diversely taken, for some refer it to dignity, others to age.

They who are advanced to honour, are said to be great, Mat. xx. 26.

They also who are grown up to years are said to be grown great, or become great.

That here it is to be referred to Moses his age, is evident—

1. By the history, Exod. ii. 11. There the Hebrew hath such a word, מֵגֵד, that signifieth *great*, as the Greek here hath. The Hebrews do oft use that word in reference to age, as where it is said, 'the boys grew,' Gen. xxv. 27; and 'the child Samuel grew,' namely, in years.

2. Stephen, having reference to this circumstance, saith, 'Moses was full forty years old,' Acts vii. 23. In that respect he became *great*.

This is noted to shew that Moses was of mature judgment when he did what he did. He was not spurred on thereto by rash youth, for 'years teach wisdom,' Job xxxii. 7, 1 Cor. xiii. 11. It is said of Christ that 'he increased in wisdom and stature,' Luke ii. 52 or in wisdom and age; as in the one, so in the other.

As parts of the body grow in bigness and strength, so the faculties of the soul grow more capable of their several endowments, and more active in exercising the same.

This instance sheweth that weighty things are to be enterprised when men are able well to manage the same. It is a judgment that children shall be people's princes, Isa. iii. 4; and the wise man denounceth a woe against that land whose king is a child, Eccles. x. 16.

The like may be applied to other functions. I will not deny but that there may be a Josiah, an Edward the Sixth, a Samuel, a Timothy; but these are not ordinary. By continuing to some ripeness of years, means of fitting one to a function are multiplied, and thereby a man is better fitted thereto.

They who come to years, and remain children in understanding, wisdom, and other Christian graces, are a shame to their profession. This is upbraided as a great disgrace, chap. v. 12, 1 Cor. iii. 1.

### Sec. 133. *Of Moses his trials.*

Before I come to handle those particulars wherein the apostle doth here set out the faith of Moses, it will not be impertinent to note out the heads of Moses his trials, gifts, and privileges, as we have done in other worthies.

1. The trials of Moses were these, and such like:

(1.) So soon as he was born, his life was in hazard, Exod. ii. 3, &c.

(2.) He was in great danger to have been cut off

from the church by being accounted the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Exod. ii. 10.

(3.) He was trained up forty years in an idolatrous court, Acts vii. 22, 23.

(4.) Though he himself lived as a prince, yet his whole nation lay in a miserable bondage, which could not but be a great trial to him, as the like was to Nehemiah, Neh. i. 4, &c.

(5.) His own people, though he sought their good, regarded him not, Exod. ii. 14, Acts vii. 25, 27.

(6.) He was forced from the place of his education, yea, and from his own nation, which was the church, to save his life, Exod. ii. 15.

(7.) He served forty years in a strange land, Exod. ii. 22, Acts vii. 29, 30.

(8.) God himself was incensed against him for neglecting to circumcise his son, Exod. iv. 24.

(9.) He was sent to a cruel king with a displeasing message, Exod. v. 2.

(10.) His own people, for whose good he was sent, murmured against him, Exod. v. 21, and vi. 9.

(11.) His people, whom he brought out of Egypt, revolted from God and from him, Exod. xxxii. 1, &c.

(12.) His people, in their straits, were ready to stone him, Gen. xvii. 4.

(13.) Korah and sundry others made head against him, Num. xvi. 1, &c.

(14.) Hard charges were laid to his charge, Num. xx. 8.

(15.) He was provoked to speak unadvisedly with his lips, Ps. cvi. 33.

(16.) He was excluded out of Canaan.

By these, as by other saints' trials, we see what saints on earth are subject unto; answerably it becometh us to expect trials, to prepare for them, patiently to bear them, and to be comforted under them.

### Sec. 134. *Of Moses his gifts.*

1. He was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Acts vii. 22.

2. He was mighty in words and deeds, Acts vii. 22.

3. He was a man of great faith. This is here proved.

4. He had great zeal for God's glory, Exod. xxxii. 32.

5. He was of great courage in God's cause, ver. 27.

6. He had great indignation against idolaters, Exod. xxxii. 19.

7. He was of a meek spirit in his own cause, Num. xii. 3.

8. Great was his love of his brethren, Exod. ii. 12, and xxxii. 32.

9. He contemned the world. This is here at large proved.

10. Great was his patience in reference to wrongs done by men, Exod. xiv. 13.

11. He was far from envy and ambition, Num. xi. 29.

12. Great was his respect to his father-in-law, Exod. xviii. 7.

13. He was willing to take and follow good advice, Exod. xxviii. 24.

14. He was very faithful, Num. xii. 7. Of the particulars of Moses's faithfulness, see Chap. iii. 2, Sec. 39.

15. He put himself out to the uttermost for the people's good, Exod. xviii. 13.

16. He had care for the good of his posterity, Num. xxvii. 16, 17.

The gifts and graces of Moses are for imitation, and that by all sorts of people in like places, as servants, children, parents, courtiers, rich men, noblemen, ministers, magistrates, princes, exiles, and others.

#### Sec. 135. Of Moses his privileges.

1. God set a stamp upon him in his infancy, Exod. ii. 2.

2. He was extraordinarily preserved, Exod. ii. 5.

3. He was advanced to high honour, Exod. ii. 10.

4. He was made a deliverer of God's people, Exod. iii. 10.

5. He was made a ruler and governor of God's people, Exod. xviii. 13.

6. God maintained his authority against gain-sayers, Num. xvi. 28.

7. He was an extraordinary prophet; none like him, Deut. xxxiv. 10.

8. He was the first and largest peuman of sacred Scripture; he declared the state of the world and church for the space of two thousand seven hundred and fifty years, Num. xxi. 18. All the sacred rites whereby God of old was worshipped were delivered by him.

9. God spake to him face to face, mouth to mouth, so familiarly as to no other prophet, Num. xii. 8, Exod. xxxiii. 23.

10. He was more mighty in miracles than any before Christ, Acts vii. 36.

11. His prayer was powerful with God, Exod. xxxiii. 10, Jer. xv. 1.

12. Twice he fasted forty days and forty nights together, Deut. ix. 18.

13. He was thrice forty years preserved: forty in Pharaoh's court, Acts vii. 23; forty in Midian, a strange land, Acts vii. 30; and forty in the wilderness.

14. Old age did not dim his sight, nor abate his natural force, Deut. xxxiv. 7.

15. He was buried by God himself, Deut. xxxiv. 6. The like is not noted of any other.

16. His memorial was very precious in the church of God, and still remains.

17. He was a special type of Christ; and that in these respects:

(1.) As Moses had God's stamp at his birth; so an extraordinary star in heaven manifested Christ to be of special use for God's church.

(2.) As Moses's life was sought, so soon as he was born, by Pharaoh; so Christ's, by Herod.

(3.) As Moses was saved in Pharaoh's court; so was Christ in the land of Egypt.

(4.) Both Moses and Christ were born in the lowest ebb of the church.

(5.) As Moses his face did shine, when he had been upon the mount; so Christ's, Mat. xvii. 2.

(6.) As Moses was a deliverer of God's people; so Christ.

(7.) As Moses was a prince, to govern; a priest, to offer sacrifice; and a prophet, to instruct: so Christ.

(8.) As the law was given by Moses; so grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John i. 17.

(9.) Moses was a mediator, Gal. iii. 19; so Christ, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

(10.) Moses was grieved at the sins of people, Exod. xxxii. 19; so Christ, Mark iii. 5.

(11.) As Moses was punished for the people, Deut. i. 37; so Christ suffered for them.

The foresaid privileges do inform us in the providence and bounty of God.

#### Sec. 136. Of refusing of honour.

The first effect whereby Moses his faith is evidenced was his refusing of honour. The word, *ἀνέχαστο*, which we translate *refused*, is opposed to confessing or acknowledging a thing; and we commonly translate it *denied*, as it is said of John the Baptist, 'he confessed, and denied not,' John i. 20. This refusing is not here to be taken of any plain or apparent expression of his mind by word of mouth; but rather of his behaviour, whereby it might easily be inferred that he refused the honours of Egypt; for he went day after day out of the court and conversed among the children of Israel which were in bondage, and at length clean left court, land, and all.

*Obj.* Moses was forced to leave court and kingdom for fear of his life, Exod. ii. 15.

*Ans.* 1. He voluntarily brought upon himself that occasion of flying out of Egypt, and that by defending one of his brethren against an Egyptian. Had he preferred his own honour before his respect to his poor brethren, he would never have adventured to have killed an Egyptian in the quarrel of an Israelite.

2. When he heard that that fact was known, he made no means to obtain protection or pardon, which questionless he might have obtained, if he had concealed his relation and respect to the Israelites his brethren; but rather took the advantage to free himself from that wicked course. Therefore this word *refused*, which implieth a voluntary act, is used.

That which by his carriage he so refused was to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

The word *ἐξυψωθῆναι*, called, implieth a reputed or accounting one to be such and such a one, as when we think and account such a one to be rich, or honourable, or learned, we use to say of him that he is a rich, or an honourable, or a learned man, and so call him.

Pharaoh here mentioned was the king of Egypt. His daughter was a great princess. It seemeth that she had been married, and either had at this time a husband, or was a widow; but had no child of her own, and thereupon adopted Moses to be her child; which is implied in this phrase, 'He became her son,' Exod. ii. 10.

If she had a husband, this might be done with his consent; if she was a widow, she did it of her own accord. Howsoever, hereby was Moses made a great man and a great heir, if not an heir to the crown, which was no small honour. If Pharaoh had no other child, his daughter was heir to the kingdom, and Moses her heir.

This is here brought in as an effect of Moses his faith, whereby it is manifested that faith is of force to make believers slight the highest honours on earth. Joseph was in Egypt advanced next to the king; and his children might by his means have attained great and honourable places: but he rather chose to have them incorporated into the society of God's saints, than to have the highest honours in Egypt; therefore he brought them to his father to be blessed, Gen. xlviii. 1. Daniel refused honours offered unto him by a great monarch, Dan. v. 17.

1. Faith raiseth a man's mind and heart above this world, and the honours thereof; it presents unto him heavenly honours.

2. Faith so cleareth the eye, in beholding the things of this world, as it makes a man discern them in their own proper colours—vain, transitory, full of vexation, and subject to many temptations: thus it makes a man to slight them.

This sheweth that ambitious persons have very little faith, if they have any at all. 'How can ye believe,' saith Christ, 'which receive (or affect) honour one of another?' John v. 44. Many that saw cause to believe on Christ professed him not, because they loved the praise of men, John xii. 42, 43.

That this sin of ambition may be better discerned, I will endeavour distinctly to declare what it is.

Ambition is a corrupt puffing up of man above that which is meet.

1. It is a branch of the corruption of nature; for it was not in that entire estate wherein God at first made man after his own image, though he was then endowed with most excellent abilities. The first occasion thereof was this suggestion of Satan, 'Ye shall be as gods,' Gen. iii. 5.

2. The scripture doth set it out in this phrase of

'puffing up,' 1 Cor. iv. 18, 19, and viii. 1, Col. ii. 18. This metaphor of puffing up doth fitly set out the nature of ambition, which is as a wind, nothing but a vapour, yet makes a man swell, as if there were abundance of solid flesh.

3. It puffeth up 'above that which is meet;' for ambition hath no bounds. If it had, it were not ambition. The notation of the word, *ἐπαρρησώμεθα*, implieth a *super-appearing*. Herein it differeth from sundry lawful things, as,

(1.) From knowledge and acknowledgment of a man's gifts and place, 2 Cor. xii. 1.

(2.) From preferment, Esth. vi. 11, 12.

(3.) From endeavour to excel, 1 Cor. xii. 31, and xiv. 12.

(4.) From seeking and accepting honour.

*Quæst.* May honour be sought and accepted?

*Ans.* 1. For accepting honour, being duly and deservedly conferred, no question may be made. The example of Joseph, and Daniel and his three companions, and Mordecai and Esther, give sufficient proof hereof.

2. About seeking honour is the greater doubt; because Christ seems to forbid it, Mat. xxiii. 8, &c. But Christ doth not there simply forbid all seeking of honour, but such a manner as the Pharisees did, ambitiously and vainly.

Due honour, rightly sought, is among those things which are 'honest, just, and of good report,' Phil. iv. 8, and in that respect may be sought. He may 'seek to excel,' so it be 'to the edifying of the church,' 1 Cor. xiv. 12. Mordecai did what he could for the advancement of Esther, Esth. ii. 10, 11; and Esther procured Mordecai's advancements, Esth. viii. 1, &c. Daniel also spake for the advancement of his three companions, Dan. ii. 49.

1. Honour is an especial gift of God, Ps. lxxv. 6, 7, 1 Chron. xxix. 12.

2. It is promised of God as a blessing and a recompense, 1 Sam. ii. 30, Ps. xxi. 5, and xci. 15.

3. It is one of those rewards that wisdom setteth before such as seek her, Prov. iv. 8.

4. It is an especial means of doing good. Instance the good that Joseph, David, Daniel, Mordecai, and Esther did, by being advanced unto high honour.

*Quæst.* How, then, is it a fruit of faith to deny honour?

*Ans.* 1. As it is considered in itself, and one of the world's allurements, it is but vanity.

2. Comparatively, in reference to spiritual things, it is also vanity.

3. In reference to the good things which are hindered thereby, or the evils which are thereby committed, it is worse than vanity, and on these grounds to be refused.

Cautions, therefore, are to be observed about seeking or accepting honour; for if it be sought, it must be sought,

1. Not simply for itself, but for the good that may be effected thereby.

The philosopher<sup>1</sup> granteth as much, upon this reason, that the means which tend to good should be made the end to which it tends.

2. Not preposterously, before the things which may make us worthy of honour, and enable us to do good by that honour whereto we attain. The heathen that dedicated a temple to *Honour* made the entrance thereinto by *Virtue*. Honour is made the fruit of righteousness, Prov. xxi. 21. 'Honour is not seemly for a fool,' Prov. xxvi. 1.

3. Not immoderately in the manner of seeking it; so as disquietness of mind, carking care, and vexation of spirit arise thereabouts. We may not thus seek food and raiment, Mat. vi. 25, much less honour.

4. Not immeasurably, so as never to be satisfied. The heathen condemned in Alexander, that he was grieved there was no more worlds but one for him to overcome. Such is the disposition of many, who heap offices, dignities, and livings one upon another.

5. Not indirectly, by bribery, by undermining others, by any unjust or unlawful means. Simon Magus did this way fail in seeking an apostolical honour, Acts viii. 18, 19.

6. Not ambitiously, to have a name among men. This was the fault of the Scribes and Pharisees in all their undertakings, Mat. vi. 1, 2, &c.

7. Not mischievously, for any bad ends; as Judas, John xii. 6. Thus Haman desired the king's letters and ring, Esth. iii. 9.

But subordinately to virtue, upon worth, moderately in the manner and measure, duly in humility, and for good ends, honour may be sought and accepted; otherwise it must be refused, as Moses did, to whom we ought to be like-minded, in not regarding the greatest honours that in this world can be afforded, so far forth as they may prove temptations and snares unto us, or keep us from better courses. This is the ready way to obtain greater and better honour from God, Mat. xvi. 25, and xix. 29.

To leave honour or anything else in a good cause is the more commendable, if it be done as Moses here did, voluntarily; for so much doth the word *ἑκούσια*, *refused*, imply. His honour was not wrested from him, but he willingly let it go. It may be said of him, as was of the governors of Israel, he 'offered himself willingly among the people,' Judges v. 9. God would have the offerings for his tabernacle 'of them who were of a willing heart,' Exod. xxxv. 5: such were they that offered to the temple, 1 Chron. xxix. 9.

1. God loveth such, 2 Cor. ix. 7.

2. God accepteth such, though it be but little that they let go, 2 Cor. viii. 12.

1. They fail exceedingly, who think that that which is taken from them perforce is acceptable to God. Unless their mind be willing to yield to the divine

<sup>1</sup> Arist. in Ethic.

providence, there can be no commendation of what they let go, nor comfort therein. That which is done on necessity is in itself no virtue; yet by a willing yielding to let go that which we cannot hold, a virtue may be made of necessity.

2. In losses, in castings down, in all alterations, it becometh us to examine our inward disposition, and to observe whether we can willingly yield to God's will, made known unto us by events; as Job did when he said, 'The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away,' Job i. 21.

3. Be exhorted to bring your wills to God: this is the way to have better things than what ye let go. Moses, that refused the honours of Egypt, had a greater honour amongst God's people here on earth, besides his heavenly recompense. And 'the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning,' Job xlii. 12. But, on the other side, God is oft provoked to take away more from them who are unwilling to let go what God intends to take away.

Of men's willingness to do their duty, see Chap. xiii. 18, Sec. 156. Of Christ's willingness in his undertakings, see Chap. ix. 14, Sec. 79.

#### Sec. 137. Of Moses choosing the better.

Ver. 25. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.*

A second instance of Moses's contempt of the world was, his light esteem of pleasure. This is set out comparatively, whereby the high degree of his slighting pleasure is manifested: he so slighted it, as he chose affliction before it.

The word, *ἐλέγμενος*, translated *choosing*, implieth a voluntary act, and that upon due consideration. It is but twice more used in the New Testament. Once of Paul's choosing to be with Christ, Phil. i. 22. Betwixt two things he did not wot what to choose; yet in regard of himself, he took it to be far better to be with Christ. The other is of God's choosing men to salvation, 2 Thess. ii. 13.

Here the word is set down in a participle, *choosing*, to shew that it dependeth on the former as a cause thereof. His choice of affliction was one cause of his refusing honour.

This manner of setting down his suffering of affliction, by choosing to suffer, was noted in the latter end of the former section, about a willing doing or enduring what we do and endure; and it doth wonderfully commend his pious mind and good respect to the people of God, that he chose to suffer affliction with them.

The conjunction or note of comparison added hereunto, *μᾶλλον*, *rather*, amplifieth his contempt of pleasure; for it importeth that he so far despised pleasure, as he rather chose affliction; not that affliction was as pleasure, delightful and joyous, and in those

respects pleasing; for this apostle granteth that 'no affliction for the present seemeth to be joyous,' chap. xii. 11; but in that upon a due consideration of the many ill consequences that might follow upon pleasures, and the many benefits and blessings that might be found among the people of God, he preferred to be in their case with them than to remain in Egypt with the fruition of pleasures.

This manifested his wisdom, in choosing that which was indeed the more excellent.

See, 138. *Of suffering affliction with God's people.*

This phrase, *to suffer affliction with*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, *συμπαρουσταβαί*. It is a double compound. The first compound is of a verb, *ἐχω*, that signifieth *to have*, or *to handle* and deal; and a noun, *κακός*, that signifieth *evil*. Both joined (*κακοῦσιν*), signify *to deal ill*, or *to handle hardly*. The passive (of which voice the word here used is) signifieth *to be ill handled*. Our English translate it 'tormented,' ver. 37, and 'suffering adversity,' chap. xiii. 3.

The double compound is with a preposition, *σύν*, that signifieth *with*, so as it intendeth a joint suffering together with others, or a participation with others' sufferings, or being a companion with them in their sufferings. This the apostle commended in these Hebrews. Whereof see more, Chap. x. 33, Sec. 126.

The persons with whom Moses chose to suffer affliction are here said to be *τῷ λαῷ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *the people of God*. Of the notation of the Greek word translated *people*, and of the respects wherein they are styled *people of God*, see Chap. iv. 9, Sec. 57. They were the children of Israel, mentioned, Ver. 22, Sec. 121. These are called *the people of God*, because God had chosen them to be a peculiar people to himself, Exod. xix. 5. And at this time, and for many ages after, they were the only church of God, the only people that professed the name of the true God.

This is here added, to shew an especial reason why Moses was so willing to suffer with them; not so much because they were of his stock and alliance and his kindred, as because they were God's people.

It is here taken for granted that God's people, even they who are saints, may be under afflictions. Hereof see more in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 3, Sec. 16.

The prophet's choosing to suffer affliction with them, giveth proof that afflictions keep not believers from communion one with another. This was the ground of the prophet's associating himself with the Israelites, that they were the people of God; and this was the ground why these Hebrews became companions with them that suffered, because they were believers, and so the people of God. This also was the reason why Joseph, though he foresaw the oppressions of the children of Israel in Egypt, yet would have his sons incorporated into that communion.

This moved Esther to adventure her life, because it was in the cause of God's people, Esth. iv. 16.

True believers well discern between outward crosses (which only touch the body, and extend only to the time of this life) and the privileges that appertain to the communion of saints, which are spiritual, tending to the good of the soul, and eternal felicity thereof. Therefore, as the soul is more excellent than the body, heaven than earth, the glory of the world to come than the misery of this world, so they prefer that estate where the soul is quickened, nourished, decked with grace, and prepared for glory, though the body be afflicted, before freedom from that affliction, and before the loss of the foresaid privileges.

Great, therefore, is their folly who either, on the one side, associate themselves with idolaters, heretics, or any other wicked persons, because they are, as they suppose, honoured with popular applause, honour, promotion, wealth, or liberty to do what they list; or, on the other side, shrink from the society of saints, for fear of reproach, or hindering their profit or preferment, or of restraint of their liberty, or of any such like thing. If such would well weigh the advantage of good society, or the damage of ill company, they would soon discern their folly in forsaking the one, and seeking after the other.

I will, therefore, endeavour to set down the heads of each of these.

Advantages of society with God's people are such as these—

1. Means of daily edification, 1 Thes. v. 11.
2. Encouragement in good courses, Neh. ii. 18.
3. Participation of mutual prayers, James v. 16.
4. Benefit by the gifts of one another, Prov. xiii. 20, Isa. i. 4.
5. Divine blessings, 2 Kings iii. 14, Gen. xxxix. 5.
6. Avoiding judgments, Gen. xviii. 26, &c.

Damages upon associating with wicked ones are such as these—

1. Infection with evil. He that toucheth pitch must needs be defiled, Gen. xlii. 16.
2. Discouragement from a holy profession, John xviii. 18.
3. Hindrance in duties. David thought that if he were among the wicked, he could not keep the commandments of God, Ps. cxix. 115.
4. A patronising and emboldening the wicked, among whom we are, in their wicked courses, 2 Chron. xix. 2.
5. Offending and grieving the upright, 1 Cor. viii. 10.
6. Pulling on our own pates judgments due to the wicked, Rev. xviii. 4.

Let us therefore set before us the pattern of Moses in this particular that is here noted, and in truth say, as the psalmist did, 'I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts,' Ps. cxix. 63. For this end,

1. Inquire after God's people.
2. Associate thyself with them.

3. Frequent their assemblies.
4. Set thy heart upon them.
5. Take all occasions of testifying thy love to them.
6. Pass by all discouragements, yea, though they be great afflictions.

Sec. 139. *Of pleasures occasioning sin.*

The redition or other part of the comparison is in these words, *than to enjoy*, &c.

This word, *than*, is the note of the second part of a comparison; and it shews that that which followeth is meaner and less to be regarded than that which was before mentioned.

The thing disrespected, yea, even contemned by Moses, is thus expressed, *to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*. The first words, *to enjoy the pleasures*, are in Greek only thus, *ἐξῆν ἀπολαύειν*, to have fruition. The word translated *to enjoy*, is a substantive; but it is translated by a verb, 'to enjoy,' 1 Tim. vi. 17. The noun is derived from a verb, *λάω*, *vel* *λαβω*, that signifieth *to enjoy*. It is taken for using or enjoying a thing with delight or pleasure; and another noun, *ἀπολαύματα*, from the same root, signifieth *delight*, and two adjectives, likewise from the same root, *ἀπολαυστος* and *ἀπολαυστικός*, signify *appertaining to pleasure*, or given to pleasure. The apostle, therefore, hath used a word fit to his purpose, and it is in our English fitly translated, *to enjoy the pleasures*.

This word, *ἀμαρτίας*, *sin*, is here added by the apostle, to shew what kind of pleasure he intended, even such as occasioned and produced sin, and also to intimate that the delights and pleasures whereunto worldly men give themselves are tainted with sin. They who follow worldly pleasures can as hardly be freed from sin as they who handle pitch or tar be freed from besmearing their hands. In a like respect riches are called, 'Mammon of unrighteousness,' Luke xvi. 9, because ordinarily they occasion much unrighteousness.

Sin may be well attributed to the pleasures here intended, because they were about such things as are used and practised in the court of a heathen king, among heathen people, such as feared not God. It was like the court where Abraham was, Gen. x. 11.

The apostle doth hereby give us to understand that worldly pleasures are occasions of sin. They brought Esau to sell his birthright, Gen. xxv. 27, &c. It is made one cause of Babel's sins, that she was given to pleasure, Isa. xlvii. 8, and a cause of Dives's neglecting his soul, Luke xvi. 25, and of the unrighteousness of them that followed Antichrist, 'they had pleasure in unrighteousness,' 2 Tim. ii. 12.

Pleasures are so delightful to the corrupt heart of man, as they draw him from such means as might restrain him from sin. They draw him from diligence in his lawful calling, whereupon the wise man saith, that 'he that loveth pleasure shall be a poor

man,' Prov. xxi. 17, implying that he neglecteth the means of thriving; yea, pleasures use to withdraw men's hearts from God. They are 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 4.

This title, *pleasures of sin*, plainly demonstrateth the folly and absurdity of the Epicurean opinion, that pleasure is a man's chiefest good. Many of the heathen philosophers have discovered the senselessness of that opinion, and manifested it to be a conceit more be- seeming sensual beasts than reasonable men.

Let us take heed of giving ourselves to pleasures; they are Satan's baits to allure us, his snares to hold us fast, his hooks to pull us down to destruction.

*Quest.* Are all pleasures and delights unlawful?

*Ans.* No, not all; for many are warranted unto us by sacred scriptures, as,

1. Shooting in the bow, 2 Sam. i. 18.
2. Flinging and slinging stones, Judges xx. 16, 1 Chron. xii. 2.
3. Hunting, Gen. xxvii. 3.
4. Music, and that vocal, Eccles. ii. 8, and instrumental, 1 Sam. xvi. 23, 2 Kings iii. 15.
5. Feasting, Neh. viii. 10.
6. Anointing one's self, 2 Sam. xii. 20.
7. Putting out riddles, Judges xiv. 12.
8. Dancing, 2 Sam. vi. 16.

Both body and mind, while we live in this frail flesh, are prone to dulness and heaviness: but lawful and delightful pleasures are a means to quicken them. This questionless was one end why Elisha called for a minstrel, 2 Kings iii. 15.

They may be also occasions of taking notice of the divine bounty, in affording unto us, not only for necessity, but also delight.

But because sin useth so much to cleave unto pleasures as it doth, it will not be impertinent to set down some cautions about using pleasures. These shall have respect to the matter, mind, manner, time, conscience of others, God's presence, and better things.

1. The pleasures which we use, in the matter of them, must be lawful: else do we what we can, it will be pleasure of sin. An unlawful thing cannot be used without sin. The lawfulness hath a double relation,

(1.) To God's law.

(2.) To such human laws as we live under. We must not take pleasure in the things that are against either of those.

2. He that useth pleasures must in his own mind and conscience be persuaded of the lawfulness thereof, Rom. xiv. 11, 22.

3. In regard of the manner, pleasures must be moderately and sparingly used: nor too much time must be spent, nor too much pains taken about them. They must be as sauce, not as meat; a little to sharpen, not much to glut the appetite. To 'sit down to eat and drink, and to rise up to play,' is a fault, Exod. xxxii. 6. We have too little time for



necessary duties; were it not for necessity, in regard of our heavy bodies and dull spirits, all pleasures might be spared. To take overmuch pains in pleasures crosseth the main end thereof: which is, not to weary and weaken, but to refresh and strengthen body and spirit.

4. In regard of the time, pleasures must be seasonably used, when we are not tied to a bounden duty. Therefore they are not to be used on the Lord's days, nor too early in the morning, or too late in the evening, lest they hinder our morning and evening sacrifice. Nor yet on days of humiliation; nor when the main duties of our calling are to be performed—especially when those duties tend to others' good, as the duty of magistrates, ministers, lawyers, physicians, and others.

5. In using pleasures, respect must be had to the conscience of others, that we offend not them, especially if they be our superiors, and have authority over us, and wise men, and pious. The apostle, in matters indifferent, would have us tender of other men's consciences, Rom. xiv. 15, 1 Cor. x. 29.

6. Especially respect must be had to God, in whose presence we are at all times, and who seeth us in all our actions, Prov. xv. 3. Pleasures, therefore, ought so to be used as therein we may approve ourselves unto God. We must so use them, as we may in faith call upon God for a sanctified use; and give him thanks for indulging such a liberty unto us. We must use them in a holy fear, not breaking out into passion, nor using any indirect course; but with a humble submission to that end, which, by the divine providence, shall fall out, especially in trying maneries.

7. They must not be preferred before better things. Hereof we have a great instance in Moses: he discerned afflictions with God's people to be better than pleasures in Pharaoh's court; therefore he chose affliction before pleasures.

#### Sec. 140. *Of pleasures being temporary.*

To discover men's vanity in doting upon pleasures, the apostle addeth this epithet unto them, *πρόκαιρον*, for a season, or temporary; for it is but one word in Greek, and translated 'temporal,' and opposed to eternal, 2 Cor. iv. 18. It is applied to the corn sown in stony ground, which continueth but 'a while,' Mat. xiii. 21, Mark iv. 17. Worldly pleasures, therefore, are but momentary. The wise man compareth the laughter of fools to the crackling of thorns under a pot, Eccles. vii. 6. Instance that delight which the fool took in his abundance; he thought he should enjoy them many years, but he did not enjoy them one night, Luke xii. 20. The wise man by experience found them to be vanity, Eccles. ii. 1.

They must needs be temporary, because they are,

1. Of this world, which passeth away, 1 John ii. 16, 17, 1 Cor. vii. 31.

2. They are only for the time of this life. But this life is transitory; it is as a flower, a vapour, a shadow, a bubble, a thought. Those and other like resemblances are fit, both in regard of the uncertainty of life—it may on a sudden vanish, as soon as the foresaid resemblances—and also in reference to eternity. Thus all resemblances come short in setting out man's life.

3. They continue not all the time of this life. There are many occasions of interrupting them; as sundry sorts of sicknesses, other casualties, inward perplexities of soul, oppressions of men, manifold losses, and other crosses. It oft falleth out that 'even in laughter the heart is sorrowful,' Prov. xiv. 13. Instance Belshazzar, Dan. v. 5.

This surely is a great aggravation of their folly, who pursue pleasures with the uttermost of their power; and though they may in words detest the foresaid opinion of Epicures, about placing happiness in pleasures, yet by their deeds they give too great approbation thereunto. I may apply to pleasures that which the wise man saith of riches, Prov. xxiii.

5. They who give themselves most thereunto, find a sting in the tail of them. Let such note that answer that was given, Luke xvi. 23.

The foresaid epithets of *sinful* and *temporary* should move us to seek after other pleasures, which are neither sinful nor temporary, but both lawful and eternal. As Christ saith of meat, I may say of pleasure, 'Labour for that which endureth to eternal life,' John vi. 27.

#### Sec. 141. *Of believers' esteem of what they choose.*

Ver. 26. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*

A third instance of Moses's contempt of the world is about riches. This, as the former, is set down comparatively, to shew how far he went in contempt of wealth.

The first word, *ἡγεύμενος*, translated *esteeming*, setteth out his opinion and judgment. Of the meaning of the word, see Ver. 11, Sec. 56. There it is translated 'judged;' it is used to set out the apostle's opinion and judgment of other things compared to Christ, Phil. iii. 7, 8. It implieth that Moses did not rashly what is here mentioned, but on mature consideration and good judgment.

The word is here set down in the participle, *esteeming*, to shew that it is added to the former, as a like reason to that. He refused the honour of Egypt, because he preferred the communion of saints before it, ver. 25. Here he is content to 'suffer affliction with God's people,' because he 'esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.'

This giveth instance that a believer doth what he doth upon good ground. Peter's profession is an evident proof hereof, John vi. 68, 69.

For believers have both the word, as a light to shew unto them what is most excellent; and also the Spirit, to enlighten their understandings, and make them perceive what is to be esteemed, and withal to persuade them to esteem that which is worthy of esteem.

Take notice of this evidence of faith.

Sec. 142. *Of enduring the reproach of Christ.*

That which Moses esteemed so highly as to prefer it before treasures, is here styled, *τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν, reproach*.

*Reproach* is taken two ways.

1. For that disgrace which a man justly brings upon himself by his ill-behaviour, and so is a just punishment. This is intended by the apostle, where he sheweth that a bishop must have a good report, 'lest he fall into reproach,' 1 Tim. iii. 7.

2. For that disgrace which is unjustly cast upon one for doing his duty, or for that which is good. Thus it is taken, Chap. x. 33, Sec. 124. In this sense reproach may be, and hath been, cast upon God himself, and upon Christ Jesus, Rom. xv. 3. In this sense it is here taken, and taken as a kind of persecution; for so is reproach, as hath been shewn, Chap. x. 33, Sec. 124.

To prove that this kind of reproach is here meant, it is styled 'the reproach of Christ;' even that reproach which for Christ's sake was cast upon him.

*Quest.* Christ was not then exhibited; how could then the reproach of Christ fall upon Moses?

*Ans.* 1. Christ was promised anon after man's fall to Adam and his posterity, Gen. iii. 15. On that ground he was known, and believed on.

2. Christ was many ways typified before he was exhibited: and thereby the faith of God's people was confirmed on him.

3. By Christ may be meant his mystical body, which compriseth under it the whole number of the elect, which were given to Christ by God's eternal counsel, Eph. i. 4. Thus is this title *Christ* used, Gal. iii. 16, 1 Cor. xii. 12. In this respect, reproach of Christ signifieth the reproach of the church of God: so as Moses was reproached for joining himself with the people of God. Hereof see more, Chap. xiii. 13, Sec. 135.

By the way, we may here observe that Christ was of old made known to believers: and that he was acknowledged and believed in before he was made manifest in the flesh. It hath been shewed that he was comprised under the great promises made to Abraham, Chap. vi. 13, Sec. 95, and that he was typified before he was exhibited, Chap. vii. 3, Sec. 25. And that he is ever the same, Chap. vii. 24, Sec. 98, and Chap. xiii. 8, Sec. 112.

Sec. 143. *Of reproaches preferred before riches.*

To amplify the high esteem which Moses had of the reproach of Christ, it is said to be *greater riches*

*than the treasures of Egypt.* Every word in this comparison carrieth emphasis.

1. *Riches*, *πλοῦτος*, use to be in high esteem among men—that which they use most of all to desire, and for which they do most bend their studies and bestow their pains. Riches are the main end that most men aim at in getting offices, in managing trades, and in following their several callings, of what kind soever they be. Such, even of such price did Moses account the aforesaid reproach of Christ.

2. This comparative, *μείζονα, greater*, doth further amplify the point, for it hath reference to treasures. The riches here mentioned were not small riches, as the riches of one tradesman may be greater than another, and yet those greater riches not very great: but the riches which are meant were greater than treasures, that is, more worth, more highly to be prized.

3. *Treasures*, *θησαυροί*,<sup>1</sup> imply abundance of precious things. A treasure is a heap or store of many things. It is derived from a verb that signifieth to heap up, or as we speak, to treasure up, Mat. vi. 19, 20. Things treasured up use not to be mean, common, and ordinary, but choice and precious, of great worth and high account—as silver, gold, pearls, jewels, and all sorts of precious stones: even before these did Moses prefer the aforesaid reproach.

4. The place of these treasures, *ἐν Ἀγύπτῳ, in Egypt*, is specified.

(1.) Because at that time Egypt was one of the richest nations of the world, where the greatest store of the choicest treasures were to be found.

(2.) Because Moses was then of such esteem in Egypt as he might have had the choicest of the treasures thereof: yet he chose reproaches of Christ before these treasures.

Here then we have an instance that reproaches of Christ are precious to believers. I may apply thereto the words of the psalmist, they are 'better than thousands of gold or silver,' Ps. cxix. 72; yea, they are 'sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb.' This is evident by Matthew, Zaccheus, and other rich men's leaving their wealth to follow Christ, or to associate themselves with the church of Christ, Mat. ix. 9, Luke xix. 6, &c., Acts iv. 34.

Such reproaches procure an exceeding recompense of reward, Mat. v. 11, 12, and xix. 29. By this reason were the Hebrews moved to endure reproach, Chap. x. 34. He that knows of what worth a diamond, pearl, or jewel is, will have it in high esteem, and endure much for it.

It is therefore a point of singular wisdom to acquaint ourselves with the benefit and advantage that reproach for Christ's sake doth bring, that we may the more patiently, contentedly, and joyfully endure the same.

This direction is the rather to be observed, because

<sup>1</sup> *θησαυροί* quia videtur eis αἰών.

by nature we are of a swinish disposition, to trample precious things under our feet. Most men are like the cock in the fable, which preferred a barley corn before a pearl. Ignorance of the worth of reproach for the gospel is that which doth much disquiet the spirits of many, by reason of that reproach, and discourageth them from making open profession thereof. Only let us take heed that we do not by any undue courses bring just reproach upon ourselves.

Sec. 144. *Of believers discerning betwixt things that differ.*

Moses preferring one thing before another, namely, Christ, though accompanied with reproach, before all earthly pleasures, giveth proof that believers well discern betwixt things that differ. Thus Abraham discerned the difference betwixt following God's call and abiding in his own country, Gen. xii. 1. So Joseph discerned the difference betwixt that which God required and his mistress. This might be exemplified in many others, as Ps. lxxxiv. 10, Dan. iii. 17, 18, Luke x. 42, Acts iv. 19.

The proper object of faith is God's word : the true believer maketh that his counsellor, his judge, his guide, his instructor ; it is to him all in all. Now God's word layeth down the true difference betwixt things—nothing else so truly. Well therefore is it called 'the word of truth,' James i. 18. This word hath also a virtue in it, to enlighten the eyes of those that exercise themselves therein, Ps. exix. 105.

By this we may discern the reason of the different opinions of believers and worldlings. They judge by faith : these by sense. They discern all things as they are cleared up unto them by the light of God's word : but these behold all things through the coloured glass of corrupt reason—yea, which is worse, of carnal sense. No marvel, therefore, that their opinions are so contrary as they are : one highly esteeming what the other basely accounteth of. Thus they wonder one at another ; but let the world judge as it list : let us labour for faith, and that rightly grounded on God's word, that by it we may understand and choose the things that are indeed most excellent.

Sec. 145. *Of the recompense of reward.*

An especial motive whereby Moses was induced to prefer the society of God's people, and Christ himself, though accompanied with affliction and reproach, is thus expressed, *for he had respect unto the recompense of reward*. This causal, γὰρ, *for*, apparently noteth out a reason or motive of that which goeth before.

This phrase, *the recompense of reward*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, μισθωδωσία ; whereof, see Chap. ii. 2, Sec. 16. According to the notation of the word, it properly signifieth a *reward*, whereby one is *recompensed*. This recompense of reward being applied to man, in reference to God who gives it, as

is shewed, Ver. 6, Sec. 23, doth not import any desert on man's part, but abundant kindness on God's part, who will not suffer anything to be done or endured for his sake without recompense.

That reward may stand with free grace, is shewed, Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 43.

Quest. What may be the reward here intended ?

Ans. It is not here distinctly set down : but by the inference of the reward upon that which went before, as the occasion of the reward, it may be collected in general, that it was higher honour, better pleasure, more precious treasures than could be had in Egypt.

More particularly, the recompense might be both in the militant church on earth, and also in the triumphant church in heaven.

In the militant church he was the chief governor ; and he had much delight in the manifestation of God's glory to him, and much pleasure in the assurance of God's favour, and the precious treasures of the graces of God's Spirit.

In the triumphant church there are honours, pleasures, and treasures unutterable, unconceivable.

By this it appears that there is a reward for the faithful.

Of the reward of good works, see Chap. vi. 9, Sec. 57.

Of the reward of patience, see Chap. vi. 12, Sec. 88.

Of the reward of suffering, see Chap. x. 34, Secs. 130, 132.

Sec. 146. *Of a believer's respect to reward.*

By the aforesaid reward Moses was the more encouraged, because his eye was still upon it. That is implied under this phrase, ἀτιθάπτει, *he had respect*.

The Greek word is a compound, and properly signifieth to look from one thing to another.

Of the simple verb, θάπτω, which signifieth *to see*, we have spoken, on Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 72 : and there shewed how it is sometimes properly used, for seeing with the eye of the body, and sometimes metaphorically, for seeing with the eye of the soul. This compound, ἀποθάπτω, is here to be taken metaphorically, for the sight of the soul.

Thus a like word of the same signification, ἀόρατα, is used in the next verse, and applied to that which is invisible. To see him who is invisible, must needs be meant of a metaphorical and spiritual sight.

In setting down this sight, there are two prepositions : one, ἀπὸ, signifieth *from*, with which this verb is compounded ; the other, εἰς, signifieth *to*, and is joined by way of reference unto the recompense of reward. These two prepositions, *from*, *to*, imply two terms of motion ; one, from which one turneth ; the other, to which he turneth. It importeth a removing of the eye from one object to another. Hereby the mind of Moses is excellently set out : he turned his mind and heart from the honours, pleasures, and treasures of Egypt, and fixed them upon the honours,

pleasures, and treasures of God's church here on earth, and of his church above in heaven.

Thus was he moved to prefer *these* before *those*.

This act of Moses, in having respect to the recompense of reward, is here approved; and it demonstrateth that respect may be had to reward. See more hereof, Chap. vi. 18, Sec. 149.

The inference of this act of Moses, as a reason of that which he did before—namely, that he suffered affliction with the people of God, and refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt—giveth proof that respect to reward maketh a believer deny anything, or endure anything; as those Hebrews 'suffered afflictions, and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods,' Heb. x. 33, 34.

They know that God can and will abundantly recompense all.

This sheweth one reason why so little is done and endured for Christ. Men do not look from that which is present to that which is to come. They consider not the recompense of reward.

Let us therefore acquaint ourselves therewith, and oft meditate thereon, and duly weigh who is the rewarder, and what is the reward, both for the greatness, and also for the continuance thereof: then shall we know that 'our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' 2 Cor. iv. 17. This is it that will make us 'steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,' 1 Cor. xv. 58.

#### Sec. 147. Of Moses forsaking Egypt.

Ver. 27. *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

One evidence of Moses's faith was his contempt of the world, manifested by refusing honour, ver. 24, pleasures, ver. 25, and treasures, ver. 26.

Another evidence is here set down in this verse, which was an undaunted spirit, in *not fearing the wrath of a king*.

A proof of this evidence is premised in this phrase, *he forsook Egypt*. This is here made a fruit of faith. By faith he did it. As he refused honour, pleasure, and wealth by faith: so, by the same faith, he shewed himself to be of an invincible courage.

The word translated *forsook*, is the same that is used, Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 7, and translated *left*. Thereof see more in that place.

Concerning his forsaking Egypt, the Scripture mentioneth two times, betwixt which forty years passed (Acts vii. 30).

One, when he fled into Midian, Exod. ii. 15.

The other, when he led the people of Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness, Exod. xii. 31, &c.

Interpreters differ about the time which should be here meant.

Both ancient and modern expositors<sup>1</sup> apply it to the former, namely, his flying out of Egypt to Midian. Their reasons are these:—

1. The order of setting down this point by the apostle. For the other leaving of Egypt was after the passover, ver. 28, 29.

2. The emphasis of the word *forsook*, which importeth a flying from Egypt as a banished man.

3. The other departure out of Egypt is set down by the apostle in another place, ver. 29, therefore it cannot be here intended.

Many of our later expositors apply this to the latter forsaking of Egypt. Their reasons are these:—

1. Moses then so forsook Egypt as he never returned to it again.

2. Then was the king's wrath most incensed against him.

3. Then he shewed greatest courage against the king's wrath.

To take up this difference I see no necessity to oppose one against the other; for.

1. At both times great faith was manifested—yea, and an undaunted spirit.

2. At both times he did forsake Egypt.

3. The wrath of the king was at both times incensed against him; for at first he sought to slay Moses, Exod. ii. 15.

At the second time, he charged Moses to see his face no more—threatening death if he saw him again, Exod. x. 29.

*Obj.* At the first, it is said that Moses fled from Pharaoh, Exod. ii. 15. This cannot be accounted a matter of courage, but rather of prudence, that he wisely used a means to avoid danger.

*Ans.* That prudence may stand with courage, where Christ again and again stirreth up his disciples not to fear man, he adviseth them to fly from city to city when they are persecuted, Mat. x. 23, 26; so as a wise avoiding of danger may stand with good courage. Christ himself did oft keep himself from danger, Luke iv. 30, John viii. 59.

Herein his courage appeared, that he maintained the cause of his countrymen, and slew an Egyptian in the quarrel, which he well knew could not but incense the king.

This evidence of faith, that Moses forsook Egypt, wherein he had such honour and wealth and freedom as he enjoyed in Egypt, giveth proof that faith will put on a man to forsake any place. This made Abraham leave his native country, ver. 8; so did Ruth, Ruth i. 16. Faith assures a Christian of a better place than that which is left in God's cause, ver. 16, 35.

Hereby we may discern a true faith, if being born and brought up in an idolatrous or profane place, where honours, pleasures, and treasures may be en-

<sup>1</sup> Chrysost., Theodoret., Theophyl., Euseb., Junius in Paral., Aug., Marlorat. in Eccles. Expos.

joyed, yet, for conscience' sake, we forsake that place, surely we have a good faith.

See, 118. *Of not fearing the wrath of a king.*

Such a proof as was given of the faith of Moses's parents, that they were 'not afraid of the king's commandment,' is here given of the faith of Moses himself, 'not fearing the wrath of the king.' Here the point is set out with much emphasis; for,

1. Men use to be most feared when their choler is stirred up, and wrath incensed. Wrath makes men seek the greatest revenge; yet Moses did not in such a case fear.

2. The wrath of a king meth to be more feared than the wrath of other men, and that by reason of his supreme authority, and of his power to work the greater mischief. 'The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion,' Prov. xiv. 12. And 'as messengers of death,' Prov. xvi. 11.

Thus, then, the courage of Moses is amplified by a gradation.

1. He feared not *man*.

2. He feared not the greatest of men, a *king*.

3. He feared not that which most affrights men, the *wrath of a king*.

It was his faith in God that expelled this fear of man.

That greatest fears affright not believers; for what came of greater fear could there be than the wrath of such a king as Pharaoh was! See more hereof, Ver. 23, See, 129.

See, 119. *Of a believer's remaining invincible.*

To shew that it was no blockish stupidity, nor obstinate impudence, that wrought such a resolution in Moses, as not to fear the wrath of the king, the reason thereof is thus rendered, *for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible*.

The argument is taken from the difference betwixt God and man; for this phrase, *who is invisible*, is a description of God.

The argument then may be thus framed,

He that can see him that is invisible will not fear the wrath of a visible king;

But Moses saw him that was invisible;

Therefore he would not fear, &c.

In setting down this reason, there is another act of Moses thus expressed, *endured*, *he endured*. This verb, *κατέσχευε*, is derived from a noun, *κατάρσις*, which signifieth *strength*, power, courage, so as the word of this text, *endured*, implieth that Moses continued resolute and unmovable, he was no whit daunted, but retained an invincible courage.

By this we see that a true and sound faith makes the believer invincible, so as no cause of human fear will daunt him. He that said, even in reference to God, 'though he slay me, yet I will trust in him,' had such an invincible spirit, Job xiii. 15. So, in

reference to man, had Daniel's three companions, Dan. iii. 17. This is to the life expressed by him that said, 'In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, &c., shall be able to separate us from the love of God,' Rom. viii. 37, &c.

True faith never faileth, but retaineth a perpetual vigour; and thereupon it maketh men endure and remain invincible.

Here behold the reason of men's fainting upon violent opposition, and of shrinking in their heads through continuance of such opposition. They either have not, or exercise not faith as they should. They acquaint not themselves with the grounds of faith, which are God's properties, promises, and performances. 'If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small,' Prov. xxiv. 10. The day of adversity is the time to act faith; if then a man faint when he should most manifest his faith, there may be just suspicion of the truth, or, at least, of the vigour of his faith.

See, 150. *Of believers seeing God.*

The ground of Moses enduring as he did is thus set down, *as seeing him who is invisible*.

Of the word, *ἑώρα*, translated *seeing*, see Chap. ii. 8, See, 68, and Ver. 9, See, 72.

It is here set down in a participle of the present tense, to declare a continued act.

This seeing must needs be meant of a spiritual sight by the eye of the soul, which is faith. For he whom he eyed is said to be *invisible*; but an invisible thing cannot be seen with a corporal eye. That would imply contradiction. For that which may be discerned with a bodily eye is visible; but *visible and invisible* are contradictory.

This participle, *ἑώρα*, as, is premised, not by way of diminution, as if it were a seeming to see, but rather by way of amplification. For,

1. This participle doth sometimes imply an identity and reality of a thing; and it is used to set forth the perspicuity and clearness thereof; as where it is said, 'the glory *as* of the only begotten son of God,' John i. 14.

2. It implieth a kind of spiritual rapture, as if Moses had been rapt into the highest heaven, and there beheld God himself encouraging him in what he did.

This act of Moses giveth an instance of the virtue of faith, which is to set a man always before God. A true believer is like Enoch, who walked with God, and that continually, as the emphasis of the Hebrew word implieth, Gen. v. 24. 'I have set the Lord always before me,' saith a believer, Ps. xvi. 8. It was Abraham's speech, 'The Lord before whom I walk,' Gen. xxiv. 40.

God is the proper object of faith; the object

wherein it delighteth; the object on which it rests; the object from whom it expects every good thing; the object to which it returns the glory of all.

Here behold the reason of a believer's courage. The world wonders at it, and no marvel, for it seeth not him whom believers see.

God's presence is that which emboldeneth believers, as here Moses was emboldened thereby. See more hereof, Chap. xiii. 6, Sec. 78.

Sec. 151. *Of seeing him who is invisible.*

This attribute, *ἀόρατος*, *invisible*, is derived from the former word, *ἑωρα*, translated *seeing*; for a privative particle is joined with it, so as it implieth the contrary to seeing, even that which cannot be seen.

The epithet is attributed to God, Col. i. 15, 1 Tim. i. 17, and that in a double respect.

1. In regard of the divine substance, which is spiritual. Every spirit is invisible, Luke xxiv. 39; much more the purest spirit of all.

2. In regard of a divine property, which is to be incomprehensible, in which respect Christ saith, 'No man hath seen God at any time,' John i. 18; and he is said to 'dwell in the light which no man can approach unto,' 1 Tim. vi. 16.

1. This is a strong argument against all the conceits of anthropomorphites, who would make God like unto man. See more of these, Chap. i. 10, Sec. 133.

2. It is as strong an argument against all representations of God. God himself thus presseth this argument, 'Ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you,' Deut. iv. 15.

3. It is also against all apprehensions, in the mind, of God in the likeness of any visible object.

4. It shews that we must conceive God as he is revealed in his word. He, being invisible, is an object not for the eyes but for the ears, not for the brain but for the heart. The mystery of unity in trinity, and the divine properties, duly considered in the mind, will raise up a great admiration and a high esteem of God, and a due respect towards him.

5. This invisibility of God doth not keep him from seeing us. Though visible things cannot see things invisible, yet he that is invisible can and doth see them that are visible: 'The eyes of the Lord in every place behold the evil and the good,' Prov. xv. 3. No obstacle hindereth the sight of him who is invisible. How should this stir us up so to carry our selves in all places, and at all times, and in all actions, as seen by him whom with our bodily eyes we see not! He that is invisible seeth thee, when thou neither seest him nor thinkest of him.

Sec. 152. *Of faith raising a man above sense.*

This joining together of things that seem to be contradictory, namely, *seeing* and *invisible*, in this phrase, *seeing him who is invisible*, giveth an evident

proof of the vigour of faith in raising a man above sense.

On this ground, saith the apostle, 'whom having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable,' 1 Peter i. 8. On this ground Christ himself pronounceth them blessed 'who have not seen, and yet have believed,' John xs. 29.

God's word is the proper object of faith; what God's word revealeth, faith believeth.

1. Hereby we have a demonstration of the excellency of faith. It is of an infinite capacity; for they are infinite and incomprehensible mysteries which the word revealeth, yet faith believeth them all; no grace is like unto it.

2. This sheweth the reason of faith's vigour in supporting against sense. It seeth beyond things seen and visible. God by many judgments seems to be angry; faith seeth him pacified in Christ. We are here in this world subject to many visible miseries; faith seeth a spiritual happiness in them, and a celestial felicity following upon them. Our bodies putrefy in the grave, yet faith beholdeth a resurrection of them.

3. Hereby learn how rare a ground the martyrs had of suffering so much as they did, and that with constancy to the end. They saw (as Christ did, Heb. xii. 2) a joy that was not before them, which swallowed up the terror of all things sensible.

4. Have we not good and great reason to do what we can to get, keep, nourish, and strengthen faith?

Sec. 153. *Of faith's working obedience.*

Ver. 28. *Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.*

Here is set down the third evidence of Moses's faith (see Sec. 147 in the beginning), which was his obedience to God's charge.

Though our English do somewhat alter the accustomed phrase, which is, *by faith*, and therein alter the elegant *anaphora*, or beginning several proofs with the same phrase, thus, *by faith*, yet the Greek is constant in holding the same word, without any variation. Such an alteration was noted in the beginning of ver. 11; but those two phrases, *through faith*, and *by faith*, intend one and the same thing.

The repeating of the word in the beginning sheweth that this is another and a distinct evidence of faith, and that, taken in the same sense as it was before, for a true justifying faith; which so apprehends God's respect to man, as it makes man to take all occasions of testifying all due respect to God, which Moses here did in his faithful observing of that which God had expressly enjoined him.

The particular act of Moses's obedience is thus expressed, *he kept the passover*.

The word of obedience here used, *ποιῶν*, signifieth

to *make*, as if it had been thus translated, *πρωήκη*, *he made the passover*.

This word, *making*, hath a double reference.

One, to the primary institution whereby Moses delivered it as a divine ordinance to the people. He first made it known to the people, and, in that respect, may be said to *make* it. In this sense, our former English translation thus renders it, 'He ordained.'

*Obj.* God, not Moses, was the ordainer of it.

*Ans.* The Holy Ghost doth oft attribute divine works to the ministers whom God is pleased to use about them, John vii. 19. See more hereof, Chap. iv. 8, Sec. 48.

The other reference of this word, *make*, is to the observation and celebration of the passover; for Moses both observed it in his own person, and also caused all the people to observe it. Thereupon our translators thus render it, *he kept*.

Herein we have a pattern—

1. Of obedience; for faith puts men on to do what God enjoineeth. So did the faith of Noah, ver. 7; of Abraham, and of others. See Ver. 8, Sec. 37.

2. Of faithfulness in declaring God's ordinances to others, that they may observe them, see Chap. iii. 2, Secs. 32, 40.

#### Sec. 154. *Of the passover.*

That object whereabout Moses testified his obedience, and manifested his faith, is here styled *πάσχα*, *the passover*. Some would have this Greek word from a verb, *πάσχω*, that signifieth to *suffer*. That derivation might be fit enough, but that it is evident that the Greek, as also the Latin, are taken from the Hebrew, *פסח*, *transiit*. The Hebrew root signifieth to *pass over*; thence a noun, *פסח*, *transitus*, which signifieth *a passing over*. The Chaldee and Syriac do hold the same letters, but add thereto another letter, which we pronounce *A*, *פסחא*. In like manner, both the Greek, *πάσχα*, and the Latin, *pascha*, retain a word of the like pronunciation, which is *pascha*. Our English *passover* fitly setteth out the meaning of the name.

The occasion of giving this name *passover* to the ordinance intended, is double.

1. In reference to the first time that it was observed, namely, to be a sign unto them, and an assurance that the destroyer, which slew the firstborn in every house of the Egyptians, would *pass over* the houses of the Israelites, and destroy none in them, if they observed that which was enjoined about this passover, Exod. xii. 11–13.

2. In reference to after times, to put people in mind of God's *passing over*, and delivering the houses of the children of Israel, when he smote the Egyptians, Exod. xii. 27, 28.

I find this word *passover* used in four distinct respects:

1. In reference to the whole feast, with all the rites and circumstances thereof, Exod. xii. 11.

2. In reference to the sacrifices that were offered up at that feast, Deut. xvi. 2.

3. In reference to the lamb that was then to be killed and eaten. In this respect, it is said, 'they roasted the passover with fire,' 2 Chron. xxxv. 13—that is, the lamb, which was the sacramental element thereof.

4. In reference to the truth and substance of that type, which was Christ, of whom it is thus said, 'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us,' 1 Cor. v. 7.

The word *passover* is here taken in the first and largest sense, namely, for the whole feast, with all the rites of it. In this sense it may be thus described:

The passover was an ordinary sacrament of the Jews, wherein, by eating a lamb after the manner prescribed, under a temporal deliverance, man's spiritual and eternal deliverance was signified and sealed up unto them.

Ten distinct points are observable in this distinction:

1. It was a *sacrament*; for the Lord's supper was substituted in the room thereof, Mat. xxvi. 19, 26; and it had like rites to the Lord's supper, Luke xxii. 15–17; and the same substance was sealed up by both, namely Christ, 1 Cor. v. 7.

2. It was a sacrament of the *Jews*, to distinguish it from the sacraments of Christians. The sacraments of the Jews were types of things to come; but the sacraments of Christians are memorial of things to come.<sup>1</sup>

3. It was one of their *ordinary* sacraments, to distinguish it from their extraordinary sacraments, which were but for the time of their abode in the wilderness. Of the several kinds of sacraments, see Chap. ix. 20, Sec. 108.

4. It is said to be *one* of their ordinary sacraments, to distinguish it from circumcision, which was the other, Gen. xvii. 9.

5. The outward element therein was a *lamb*, Exod. xii. 3; for this creature did very fitly set out Christ, the substance of that sacrament; therefore he is oft styled the Lamb, John i. 29, 1 Pet. i. 19.

6. That lamb was to be *eaten*, to shew their participation of Christ, John vi. 53.

7. That it was to be celebrated after the manner prescribed, is evident by this injunction, 'Ye shall keep the passover in his appointed season, according to all the rites of it,' &c., Num. ix. 3. The distinct rites are expressly set down, Exod. xii. 3, &c.; they concerned either the preparation to the passover, or the partaking thereof.

Rites concerning the preparation to the passover were these:

(1.) A choice lamb, ver. 3.

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'Of things come'!—Ed.

(2.) A keeping of that lamb from the dam four days, ver. 6.

(3.) Killing that lamb, ver. 6.

(4.) Sprinkling the blood thereof, ver. 7.

(5.) Roasting it whole, vers. 8, 9.

Rites concerning the partaking of the passover were these :

(1.) Eating the flesh of the lamb, and that all of it, vers. 8, 10.

(2.) Eating it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, ver. 8.

(3.) It must be eaten with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, their staff in their hand, and that in haste, ver. 11.

(4.) It was to be eaten in one house, ver. 46.

8. Those rites were to be a sign and seal, ver. 13.

9. The temporal deliverance thereby intended was preservation of their firstborn from that destruction which fell upon the firstborn of the Egyptians, and from the place and state of their bondage, vers. 17, 27, Exod. xiii. 3.

10. The spiritual deliverance typified hereby was their deliverance from their bondage under sin and Satan, 1 Cor. v. 7, John i. 29.

#### Sec. 155. *Of a sacramental union.*

This word *passover*, being here put for the sacramental rites thereabout used, giveth instance that, in sacraments, the sign and thing signified are mutually put one for another.

1. Here the thing signified is put for the sign. In this sense, 'God's covenant' is said to be 'in the flesh' of them that were circumcised, Gen. xvii. 13.

2. The sign is put for the thing signified ; as the rock for Christ, 1 Cor. x. 4.

3. The property of the thing for the property of the sign ; as baptism is said to save us, 1 Pet. iii. 21.

4. The property of the sign for the property of the thing ; as washing, which is the property of outward baptism, applied to that which taketh away sin, Acts xxii. 16.

The reason hereof is a sacramental union betwixt the sign and thing signified. As a hypostatical union of the two natures of Christ gave occasion to attribute the properties of the one nature to the other, so doth a sacramental union. By virtue of the hypostatical union, the 'Son of man,' even when he was on earth, was said to be 'in heaven,' John iii. 13 ; and on the other side, the blood wherewith we were redeemed is said to be the 'blood of God,' Acts xx. 28.

Hereby it appeareth that the inference which Papists and Ubiquitaries make of transubstantiation and consubstantiation from this phrase, *this is my body*, is unsound. See Chap. ix. 20, Sec. 107.

The passover being a like figure to the Lord's supper (which succeeded the passover, Mat. xxvi. 26), I hold it meet distinctly to set down,

1. The agreement betwixt these two sacraments.

2. The difference betwixt them.

1. They agree in these particulars following :

(1.) In the same author ; they are both of divine institution, Exod. xii. 1, 1 Cor. xi. 23.

(2.) In the general properties of a sacrament. Both had their signs and things signified ; both had their sacramental rites ; both were annexed to a covenant and to promises, as seals.

(3.) The particular thing signified of both was Christ, 1 Cor. v. 7, and x. 16.

(4.) There was the same benefit of both, which was deliverance from death, and reconciliation with God.

(5.) Both had the same means of application, and participation of the benefit of them, which was faith.

(6.) Both had the same ends ; which were,

[1.] To seal God's promises.

[2.] To testify our faith and obedience.

[3.] To be a badge of our profession.

[4.] To distinguish from such as were not God's people.

[5.] To maintain love.

2. The differences betwixt the passover and the Lord's supper are these :

(1.) The outward element in that was a lamb ; in this, bread and wine, which are more common, usual, and sooner prepared.

(2.) Particular rites ; that had many, and those difficult ones ; whereof before. This, fewer and more easily performed.

(3.) The manner of setting forth Christ. That, set him forth to come ; this, past.

(4.) The perspicuity and clearness. As a declaration of a thing is more perspicuous than a predication of it, and an accomplishment of a thing more evident than a prophecy of it, so is our sacrament more perspicuous and clear than the Jews'.

*Obj.* Killing of a lamb and shedding blood do more plainly and lively set forth a sacrifice, than breaking bread and pouring out wine.

*Ans.* 1. That may be granted in regard of the outward manner ; and it was needful it should be so, because they were children in comparison of us, and the thing signified not then accomplished, so as it could not be so easily conceived and discerned. But perspicuity of a sacrament is not so much in the outward element or rites, as in the word annexed thereto, whereby the meaning of what is done is distinctly declared.

*Ans.* 2. The elements and rites of the Lord's supper are more significant than the element and rites of the passover, and they do more lively set forth the whole benefit that we receive by Christ, which is not only to have sin removed, but to be nourished and refreshed by him. Bread better compriseth all manner of food under it than flesh : bread is the strength and stay of a man's life. Wine may be drunk, but blood cannot. Wine cheereth the heart of man. A



participation of Christ is more lively set forth in the rites of the Lord's supper than of the passover.

(5.) The efficacy. As the Lord's supper doth more lively set forth our participation of Christ, so the efficacy thereof must needs be the greater, according to man's apprehension in Christ, and is more or less affected.

(6.) The amplitude. The passover was only for the Jews, Exod. xii. 43; the Lord's supper is for all nations.

(7.) The continuance. The passover had a date; this is to continue 'till the Lord's coming,' 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Sec. 156. *Of sacraments being means to strengthen our faith.*

One special end of this passover, in reference to the first observation thereof, was to assure them of their preservation from that destruction which should be in every house of the Egyptians. God afforded them this means for strengthening their faith. This general, to strengthen faith, is the end of all sacraments. It was an end of circumcision, Rom. iv. 11. It is indeed the end of those extraordinary signs which God of old afforded to his people, Exod. iv. 5, 8, 9, Judges vi. 37, and vii. 10, 11. This was the end of God's entering into covenant with his people, Gen. xvii. 17, and of binding himself by oath to make good his promise, Heb. vi. 17, 18.

1. God knoweth man's backwardness to believe, and proneness to distrust.

2. He hath an earnest desire that we should partake of the benefit of his promises.

On these grounds he useth means for strengthening our faith.

1. On<sup>1</sup> the tender-heartedness of God towards man! How should this bind us to God!

2. Let us carefully observe the means which God affordeth for strengthening our faith, and use them aright.

As this passover was continued in future years after that deliverance given, it was a memorial thereof, and giveth proof that God's memorable mercies are to be held in perpetual memory. See more hereof.<sup>2</sup>

As the keeping of this passover is here produced for an evidence of the faith of Moses, who *by faith kept the passover*, it giveth proof that sacraments are to be solemnised by faith: as one sacrament, so all sacraments are to be solemnised; and in the particular here set down, *by faith* every part of God's worship is to be performed. 'By faith Abel offered his sacrifice,' ver. 4. 'What things soever you desire when you pray, believe,' &c., Mark xi. 24.

Faith makes both our persons and works acceptable to God, ver. 6, otherwise our persons are odious, and our works are abominable in God's sight.

In sacraments this is the rather to be observed, because thereof are two parts.

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'Oh!—En.

<sup>2</sup> Reference omitted.—Ed.

One is God's offer.

The other is our receiving. This is done by faith, without which God's offer is altogether in vain.

1. Hereby take notice of the reason of that small, or rather no profit which many receive from God's ordinances in general, and from the sacraments in particular. They want that eye of the soul whereby they might perceive the good tendered to them by God, and the hand whereby they might receive it. Faith is both that eye and hand.

2. Hereby learn how to prepare thyself to a due partaking of the sacrament. By faith observe it. Let thy heart be seasoned and filled therewith. For this end take notice of God's promises, particularly of those that are sealed up by the sacrament. Thus may faith be wrought in thee. Meditate on them; so may thy faith be strengthened, so will the sacrament be profitable unto thee.

Sec. 157. *Of sprinkling blood.*

To the former evidence of Moses his faith, by keeping the passover, the apostle addeth another, which was *sprinkling of blood*. Those two are joined together by the ordinary copulative, *and*. And well may they be joined, for the one was observed with the other: when the lamb was slain, they were enjoined to 'take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts,' Exod. xii. 7. The noun, *σπένδυμα*, translated *sprinkling*, is derived from a verb, *σπένδω*, that signifieth *to pour out*: for the blood was poured into a basin, and carried to their door, and there sprinkled upon the posts thereof.

Of the derivation of the noun translated *sprinkling*, see Chap. ix. 22, Sec. 11.

Blood was there used to be a sign unto them that blood should not be shed in their houses. Blood under the law typified the means of atonement. Hereof see Chap. ix. 7, Sec. 43, and Ver. 18, Sec. 99.

The sprinkling of blood did typify the application of the means of atonement to a man's own self. Hereof see Chap. ix. 12, Secs. 71, 72.

Blood was the ground of atonement; *sprinkling* was the means of reaping benefit thereby.

The rite of sprinkling blood was used only the first time of celebrating the passover, because it was a sign of that particular deliverance which then only was given. There was not the like occasion for it at other passovers; for such a destroyer, as is noted in the words following, was only sent at that time.

Sec. 158. *Of him that destroyed the firstborn in Egypt.*

One special reason of the foresaid rite of sprinkling blood is thus expressed, *lest he that destroyed, &c.*; so as it was for preventing a great danger. This particle, *ἵνα μή*, *lest*, or as it is in the Greek, *that not* (meaning that the destroyer might not touch them),

implieth that what was done was to prevent danger, that such or such an evil might not surprise them.

So as faith may stand with prudence in preventing danger, both in reference to ourselves and also in reference to others. For Moses hereby prevented both the danger of his own house, and also of every house amongst the Israelites. Prudence in this case may especially be used, when such means are used as God prescribeth for preventing danger. We heard before, Ver. 23, Sec. 125, that danger might be prevented in others. And Moses forsaking Egypt, sheweth that men may avoid the danger whereunto themselves are subject.

How fear and faith may stand together, see Chap. v. 7, Sec. 45.

This phrase, *ὁ ὀλοῦντων*, *he that destroyeth*, cometh from the same root that the word, *ἀπώλεια*, translated *perdition*, did. Whereof see Chap. x. 39, Sec. 151.

It is here a participle of the present tense, and implieth that he was much in destroying. He spared never a house of any of the Egyptians.

*Quest.* Who was this destroyer?

*Ans.* 1. Principally and primarily, it was God himself; for he saith, 'I will smite all the firstborn,' &c. And Moses saith, 'The Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians,' Exod. xii. 12, 23.

2. Instrumentally and secondarily, an angel might do it, as an angel smote Israel with a plague, 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, and the Assyrians with a sudden destruction, 2 Kings xix. 35.

Whether one or more angels were implied<sup>1</sup> is not expressly determined; and it is too curious to search after it. It might be done by the ministry of one, or many might be employed about it. Whosoever they were, they were God's instruments, and, as it were, God's hand; so as hereby it is manifest that God avengeth. He hath many ways, means, and instruments of vengeance, but they are all ordered by him. Hereof see Chap. x. 30, Sec. 112.

Sec. 159. *Of the extent of God's vengeance on all, of all sorts.*

The parties destroyed are here said to be *τὰ πρωτότοκα*, *the firstborn*—such as first opened the womb.

Of the derivation and composition of the Greek word, see Chap. i. 6, Sec. 67.

Under this word, *firstborn*, are here comprised not only the firstborn of men, but also of beasts, Exod. xi. 5. Yea, and their gods also were destroyed, Exod. xii. 12.

The firstborn of their children were most dear unto them.

Their beasts were very profitable unto them. Their gods were in high account amongst them.

We have here an instance that God can take away the dearest and the usefulest things, yea, and things

which we have in highest account. This is further exemplified in Job, chap. i. 19, and in the Jews, Ezek. xxiv. 25.

1. God is a high supreme Lord over all. All are under his jurisdiction, as children, cattle, and such as we esteem as gods.

2. He doth sometime in this extent manifest his power, to aggravate his terror.

3. He doth so in some persons, to prevent future mischiefs that they might do. Thus he took away David's dear Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 15.

4. He sometimes so dealeth with his children to try them, Gen. xxii. 2. Yea, and to manifest that grace that is in them. This was the end of God's dealing with Job so as he did—that faith, patience, and other graces that were in him might be manifested to be in him.

1. What cause have all of all sorts to take heed of provoking such a one as the Lord is! He can make the stoutest to stoop; witness Pharaoh and all Egypt, Exod. xii. 31, &c. If there be anything that men set their heart upon, God can spoil them of it, and make them repent their opposing against God.

2. This may admonish us to take heed of setting our heart, and doting too much upon anything here below. We ought to account all things that here we enjoy to be such as may be taken from us. Besides the forementioned instances of children, beasts, and gods, the Lord may take away his ordinances, as he suffered the ark to be taken from Israel, 1 Sam. iv. 11.

3. Well use all things that are dear and useful unto thee, that thou provoke not God to take them away from thee. This judgment is aggravated by the extent thereof, implied in the plural number, *πρωτότοκα*. The history thus expresseth the circumstance, 'All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh, that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill, and all the firstborn of beasts,' Exod. xi. 5. It is further added in the execution of this judgment, that 'there was not an house where there was not one dead,' Exod. xii. 30.

Thus we see how God can extend his judgment to all of all sorts. In another place mention is made of 'old and young, maids, little children, and women, to be destroyed,' Ezek. ix. 6. Yea, of the 'priest and prophet, of virgins and young men,' Lam. ii. 20–22. Read Lam. v. 11–14.

To God all are alike; with him is no respect of persons.

It therefore concerneth all of all sorts to fear and to take heed of provoking the wrath of the Lord. This extent prevents all vain pretences, as if God would spare the prince, or the honourable person, or the rich, or the poor, or the mean, or any other kind. No outward condition can exempt us from God's judgment; and as God can, so he will keep under us.

1. By the

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'employed'?—Eu.

Sec. 160. *Of God's ordering judgments answerable to sins.*

This kind of judgment in destroying the firstborn is the more observable, in that it was answerable to their great sin.

Their sin was to seek the extirpation of the children of Israel, for which end the king commanded the midwives to kill all the male children of the Israelites in the birth; which cruel edict, because it took not effect, therefore he made another as cruel, (if not more cruel,) that all his people should cast every son that is born of an Israelite into the water, Exod. i. 16, 22. God therefore destroyeth all their firstborn, and thus ordereth the judgment answerable to their sin. The Lord further followed the Egyptians in this kind; for they sought to drown the children of the Israelites, and their king, and all his mighty host, were drowned in the Red Sea. Many are the instances which the Scripture giveth in this kind. Nadab and Abihu offered incense with strange fire, and were themselves devoured with strange fire, Lev. x. 1, 2. Memorable is the instance of Adonibezek, Judges i. 7.

And of Eli's sons, who profaned the holy things of God, and were destroyed in bearing the ark of the Lord, 1 Sam. iv. 11.

Agag was thus dealt withal in his kind, 1 Sam. xv. 33. And David in sundry cases, as 2 Sam. xii. 11, and xxiv. 1, 15.

God hath expressly threatened thus much, Lev. xxvi. 23, 24, Ps. xviii. 26.

1. Thus God dealeth to manifest the equity of his proceeding against men, that so he may be the more justified.

2. The Lord doth this in mercy, to afford unto men a means to find out the cause of judgment, that so they may take away the cause by true repentance, and thereupon the judgment be removed; or otherwise, that they may be made the more inexcusable.

Let us, therefore, take occasion, from the kind of God's judgments, to search after the causes thereof. Hereof see more in the *Plaster for a Plague*, on Num. xvi. 44, Secs. 4, 5.

Sec. 161. *Of children punished for their fathers' sins.*

It is more than probable that among those first-born very many were young children, which never had done themselves any hurt to the Israelites; so as children may suffer for their fathers' sins. The law threateneth as much, Exod. xx. 5. And God herein manifesteth the extent of his justice, Exod. xxxiv. 5. This may be exemplified in the children of Dathan and his accomplices, Num. xvi. 27, 32, and in the children of Jeroboam, 1 Kings xv. 29, and sundry others.

Divine vengeance is hereby much admitted.—Ed. 's

God's mercy, by the extent thereof to the seed and children of such as believe on him, is much amplified, Gen. xvii. 7, Prov. xx. 7, Ps. cxli. 2, so is the judgment aggravated by this extent.

*Obj.* This may seem to be against justice, and against God's express word, who hath said it, and sworn it, that 'the child shall not die for the sin of the father,' Ezek. xviii. 2, 3, &c.

*Ans.* 1. The justice of God is manifested by the universal contagion and corruption of all children of men. Is it not just with men to destroy the young cubs of foxes, wolves, and other mischievous creatures, by reason of their ravenous nature?

*Ans.* 2. Besides, children appertain to parents; they are theirs. In this respect it is not against justice to punish them in their parents' case. (Children of traitors are deprived of their patrimony by reason of their parents' demerit.

As for God's avouching not to punish the child for the father, that is spoken of penitent children, and withal it is intended of the personal sins of parents, and the eternal punishment thereof: which punishment no child shall bear simply for his parents' personal sin.

This should the rather move parents to take heed of provoking God's wrath in respect of their children. Have pity, O parents, on yourselves and children, and take heed of treasuring up wrath for them.

This also gives occasion to children to be humbled, even for their parents' sin. This was it that much humbled good Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 19, and it was acceptable in God's sight.

Sec. 162. *Of God's preserving his from common judgments.*

The end why the foresaid blood was sprinkled, was the preservation of the people of God, who are comprised under this relative, *אשרו, them*, for this hath reference to the Israelites, who are styled, 'the people of God,' ver. 25.

The extent of their preservation is set out in this word, *וַיִּצַן, touch*: which implieth, that the destroyer should be so far from slaying them, or any of theirs, as he should not come near, so much as to touch them. In this sense is this word used concerning a beast, that should come near mount Sinai whereon the law was delivered, Heb. xii. 20. This word is also used of being far from doing a thing, and therefore it is joined with a metaphor of a like extent, namely, *תִּשְׁמַר, thus*, 'touch not, taste not,' Col. ii. 21. Be so far from eating, as not to taste of such a thing. The history thus expresseth the extent of this preservation, 'the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you,' Exod. xii. 23.

This giveth proof that God can deliver his from common judgments. See more hereof in the *Plaster for a Plague*, in Num. xvi. 45, Sec. 12-14.

Sec. 163. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 24-28.*

Ver. 24. *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter:*

25. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season:*

26. *Esteeming the reproach for Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*

27. *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.*

28. *Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.*

The sum of these five verses is a commendation of Moses's faith.

It is commended by three effects.

One was, his contempt of the world.

Another, his courage.

The third was, his obedience.

His contempt of the world is manifested by turning from the three great allurements of the world: which were,

1. Honours, ver. 24.

2. Pleasures, ver. 25.

3. Riches, ver. 26.

His despising of honour is set out two ways,

1. By the time when he manifested as much, even *when he was come to years.*

2. By the kind of honour, which was very great, to *be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.*

Both these are amplified by the manner of rejecting honour, which was voluntarily, in this word, *refused*.

A second particular wherein his contempt of the world was manifested, was about *pleasure*. This is set down comparatively. The comparison is of unequals. Here observe,

1. The things compared.

2. The manner of comparing them.

The things compared are, *afflictions and pleasures*.

Afflictions are set out by the patients: which were,

1. The *people of God*.

2. Moses himself, who is comprised under this phrase, *suffered with*.

Pleasures are set out by two properties.

1. Sinful.

2. Momentary.

The manner of preferring afflictions before pleasures is declared in these words, *choosing rather than*.

The third particular instance of contemning the world is about riches. Here is noted,

1. The effect of faith.

2. The ground thereof.

This effect also is set down comparatively.

In the comparison we are to consider,

1. The things compared.

2. The manner of comparing them together.

The things compared are *reproach and riches*.

Reproaches are illustrated by the principal object, who was *Christ*.

Riches are amplified,

1. By the kind of them, *treasures*.

2. By the subject or place where they were, in *Egypt*.

The manner is manifested two ways.

1. Simply, in this word, *esteeming*.

2. Comparatively, *greater riches than*.

The ground of preferring the one before the other, was *reward*.

This is set out,

1. By the kind of reward, in this phrase, *the recompense of the reward*.

2. By the affection of Moses thereunto, *he had respect unto it*.

A second evidence of Moses his faith is set out, ver. 27.

Here is declared,

1. The kind of evidence.

2. The ground thereof.

The kind of evidence was an invincible courage.

This is,

1. Propounded.

2. Amplified.

In propounding it, is noted,

1. His act, *he forsook*.

2. The place which he forsook, *Egypt*.

The amplification is by denial of a contrary disposition, wherein we have,

1. The affection denied, *not fearing*.

2. The object of that fear, set out by a threefold gradation.

(1.) A man. This is implied under the word *king*.

(2.) The greatest of men, *a king*.

(3.) That which maketh a king most terrible, his *wrath*.

A third evidence of Moses his faith, was his obedience.

This was manifested two ways.

1. In reference to God.

2. In reference to God's people.

In that which hath reference to God we have,

1. His act, *he kept*.

2. The object thereof, *the passover*.

In that which hath reference to God's people is set down,

1. The thing done, *sprinkling of blood*.

2. The reason thereof, which was to prevent danger.

Here is declared,

1. The kind of danger.

2. The extent of preservation from it.

The kind of danger was destruction, amplified by the persons destroyed, *the firstborn*.

The extent of preservation is set out,

1. By the act denied, *should not touch*.

2. By the object, or persons not touched, *them*—namely, the Israelites.

Sec. 164. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xi. 24–26, &c.*

I. *Memorable matters are to be kept in memory.* This the name, *Moses*, intendeth. See Sec. 132.

II. *Weighty matters are to be attempted as men are able.* This phrase, *when he was come to years*, implies thus much. See Sec. 132.

III. *Difficult duties must be willingly done.* This word, *refused*, hath reference to a difficult task, but implieth willingness. See Sec. 136.

IV. *Faith makes worldly honour to be lightly esteemed.* By faith Moses refused honour. See Sec. 136.

V. *Greatness of honour moveth not believers.* It was a great honour 'to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,' but Moses was no whit moved therewith. See Sec. 136.

VI. *Affliction may be chosen, or it may be willingly undergone.* Moses did choose it. See Sec. 137.

VII. *God's people may be under affliction.* This is here taken for granted. See Sec. 138.

VIII. *Afflictions keep not believers from communion with saints.* Though the people of God were afflicted, yet Moses would be of their communion. See Sec. 138.

IX. *Pleasures occasion sin.* Here they are styled *pleasures of sin*. See Sec. 139.

X. *Pleasures are momentary.* They are but for a season. See Sec. 140.

XI. *Faith makes afflictions to be preferred before pleasures.* Moses by faith preferred afflictions. See Sec. 137.

XII. *Matters must be enterprised on good ground.* This word, *esteeming*, intends as much. See Sec. 142.

XIII. *Christ was known of old.* For he was known to Moses. See Sec. 142.

XIV. *Christ was reproached before he was exhibited.* In this respect this phrase is here used, *the reproach of Christ*. See Sec. 142.

XV. *Believers prefer Christ's reproach before riches.* Witness Moses. See Sec. 113.

XVI. *Believers discern betwixt things that differ.* This phrase, *greater riches than*, giveth proof hereunto. See Sec. 144.

XVII. *There is a reward.* This is here taken for granted. See Sec. 145.

XVIII. *Respect may be had to reward.* So Moses had. See Sec. 146.

XIX. *Reward puts on to endure.* Moses was hereby put on. See Sec. 146.

XX. *Danger may be avoided.* For this end Moses forsook Egypt. See Sec. 157.

XXI. *Faith cures fear.* Faith made Moses not to fear. See Sec. 148.

XXII. *The most terrible ones are not to be feared.* Moses feared not the king's wrath. See Sec. 148.

XXIII. *Faith makes invincible.* The expression of that which Moses feared not, which was *the wrath of a king*, giveth proof hereunto. See Sec. 149.

XXIV. *Faith seeth God.* Thus Moses saw God. See Sec. 150.

XXV. *God is invisible.* So is he here set down to be. See Sec. 151.

XXVI. *Faith raiseth the mind above sense.* For sense cannot see that that is invisible. See Sec. 152.

XXVII. *Sight of God keeps from fear of man.* Thus was Moses kept from fear of Pharaoh. See Sec. 149.

XXVIII. *Faith works obedience.* By faith Moses was moved to do what God required about the passover. See Sec. 153.

XXIX. *What God enjoins must be observed.* God commanded Moses to observe the passover, and so he did. See Sec. 153.

XXX. *God's works are oft attributed to his ministers.* As this word, *kept*, implieth an ordaining, it proves the point. See Sec. 153.

XXXI. *Deliverances are to be remembered.* This was the end of the passover. See Sec. 154.

XXXII. *In sacraments the sign and things signified are oft mutually put each for other.* The passover was the thing signified, yet it is here put for the external celebration thereof. See Sec. 155.

XXXIII. *God affords means for strengthening faith.* This was one end of the passover. See Sec. 156.

XXXIV. *Sacraments are to be solemnised in faith.* So did Moses keep the passover. See Sec. 156.

XXXV. *Blood is the means of atonement.* It was blood that kept the destroyer from entering into the Israelites' houses. See Sec. 157.

XXXVI. *A right application makes means useful.* Sprinkling of the blood intends so much. See Sec. 157.

XXXVII. *Faith and prudence in preventing danger may stand together.* By faith Moses used that means that kept out the destroyer. See Sec. 158.

XXXVIII. *The Lord revengeth.* He it was that destroyed. See Sec. 158.

XXXIX. *The dearest and usefulest that men have may be taken from them.* Who dearer than the first-born? Who more useful than their cattle? Yet were these destroyed. See Sec. 159.

XL. *God can extend judgment to all of all sorts.* The firstborn here destroyed are set down in the plural number; none exempted. See Sec. 139.

XLI. *God ordereth punishment according to sin.* The Egyptians destroyed the male children of the Israelites, and their firstborn are destroyed. See Sec. 160.

XLII. *Children may be punished for their fathers' sins.* So were these firstborn. See Sec. 161.

XLIII. *God can preserve his from common judgments.* So were the firstborn of the Israelites preserved. See Sec. 162.

XLIV. *God can keep judgment far off from his; even so the judgment may not touch them.* See Sec. 162.

Sec. 165. *Of Israel's passing through the Red Sea.*

Ver. 29. *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*

The eleventh instance which the apostle produceth to prove the vigour of faith is exemplified in Moses, together with all those that under his guidance went out of Egypt. It is indefinitely said, and that in the plural number, *διεβησαν, they passed through.*

The word translated *passed through* is a compound. The simple verb, *βάζω*, signifieth to go. The preposition, *διὰ*, implieth *through*. So, as it is well translated, *they passed through.*

Here are intended the whole multitude of believers; not only some of the eminent persons, as Moses, Aaron, Hur, Joshua, Caleb, and such others, but also all of all sorts. So as faith is a grace appertaining not only to extraordinary persons, but also to persons of the meaner rank.

This, in brief, should stir up all, great and mean, learned and unlearned, governors and subjects, male and female, young and old, to labour after faith.

*Quest.* What kind of faith was this?

*Ans.* Surely such a faith as hath hitherto been set forth—a true, justifying, and saving faith.

It cannot be denied but that there was in Moses, and some others, a miraculous faith, which may stand with a justifying faith, as a sensitive soul is in a reasonable man.

*Obj.* 1. It is said of them who passed through the Red Sea, that they murmured, and wished they had not been brought out of Egypt, Exod. xiv. 11, 12.

*Ans.* 1. That might be said of some of them, as it is said afterwards, the mixed multitude that was among them, Num. xi. 4.

2. Though upon the sight of Pharaoh's host they might distrust, yet upon Moses's exhortation, and upon sight of the path that was made in the sea, they believed.

*Obj.* 2. God sware to them that believed not, 'that they should not enter into his rest,' Heb. iii. 18.

*Ans.* By virtue of the true faith of some, all might be made partakers of the external and temporal blessing. God in this preservation would manifest a difference betwixt such as professed his name and such as openly opposed against him.

The place of danger wherinto they went, and through which they passed, and thereby were preserved from the fury of their enemies, is here styled *ἡ θάλασσα ῥάβρυς, the Red Sea.* In Hebrew it is styled *ים סוף*, the sea of reed, or a bulrush, by reason of reeds

or rushes growing on the banks thereof, or of weeds in the bottom of it. Those weeds, *רִפְיָה*, which Jonah doth thus mention ('The weeds were wrapt about my head,' Jonah ii. 5), are expressed under this Hebrew word, which signifieth *reed* or *rush*.

The Chaldee paraphrase and the Greek LXX translate it *Red Sea*.

The apostle followeth them; so doth Luke in relating Stephen's speech, Acts vii. 36. In all nations at and since the several translations of the Bible called this sea the *Red Sea*, hereupon that it might be the better known what sea was here meant, they translated it *Red Sea*. Thus they translated the asterisms and constellations which are mentioned, Job ix. 9, and xxxviii. 32, by the common names with which they were then called, as *Arcturus*, *Orion*, *Pleiades*, which are not the Hebrew names there used, but names taken from the Grecians.

This sea is called the *Red Sea* on these grounds—

1. The sand on the shores thereof were red.
2. The mountains bordering thereon were reddish.
3. By reason of the foresaid sands and mountains there appeared a reddish lustre upon the waters.

This title, *Red Sea*, is here expressed for distinction's sake, to shew that it was not as the Sea of Tiberias, John vi. 1, a narrow, shallow sea, but a broad, deep sea, as the *Red Sea* is.

The word, *διεβησαν*, which we translate *passed through*, implieth that they passed from one side to another.

Some of the Jewish rabbins, whom many Christian interpreters follow, say that they did only pass on one side of the sea from one place to another, in way of a half circle, to avoid the fury of Pharaoh's host, and to be a means of drowning them, as if one should go into the Thames at Westminster and come out at the Temple, not touching the other side of the Thames.

Their reasons for this assertion are these—

1. The Israelites had not time enough to pass from one side of the sea to the other. They were on foot, and had many little children with them, so as they could not in one night pass over so broad a sea.

2. The place from whence they went before they passed over is called *Etham*, Exod. xiii. 20; and the place to which they came after they had ended their journey is also called *Etham* Num. xxxiii. 8.

*Ans.* To the first—(1.) The sea in the place where they passed might be so narrow as in a night it might be passed over, especially by such as fled from their enemies.

(2.) It is nowhere said that they were but one night in passing it over. Indeed it is said, Exod. xiv. 24, that 'in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, and troubled them.' This might be about six in the morning; and God then began to trouble the Egyptians: but at that time might the Israelites be in the sea: and though

God caused the waters behind them, where the Egyptians were, to fall down, yet he might uphold them before the Israelites as they passed on.

To the second—The same name might be given to two places, which is frequent in Scriptures, and in all ages and places of the world, especially one being on one side, the other on the other side of the sea.

Near London there is on one side of the river of Lea a town called Stratford, and on the other side another town called Stratford, and these two distinct towns, in different parishes, and different counties. Besides the notation of the name, **אתח**, *Etham*, on the one and other side of the sea, may be given upon a like occasion; for *Etham* signifieth their coming. It is derived from a verb, **אתח**, *venit*, that signifieth to come, and the last letter of *Etham* implieth a relative pronoun, *their* or *thom*. Wherefore because out of Egypt they came to such a place, when they entered into the sea, it was called *Etham*; and having passed through the sea, the place whither they first came was also called *Etham*.

That they clean crossed the Red Sea, from one side to another, appears by these reasons—

1. The word here used by the apostle, **διέβησαν**, they passed through, intends as much.

2. It is three times noted in the history that they were 'in the midst of the sea,' *Exod. xiv. 16, 22, 29.*

3. As they passed through Jordan, so they passed through the Red Sea, *Josh. iv. 23.*

4. Mount Sinai, whither the Israelites came after they had passed through the sea, *Exod. xix. 1*, was on the other side of that sea, in the desert of Arabia, *Gal. iv. 24*. So also were other places whither they came after they had passed through the Red Sea.

5. If they had come out on the same side of the sea on which they went into it, they might have lived in fear of the Egyptians to gather another army against them; but the Red Sea being betwixt them, they are freed from those fears.

6. Going in and coming out of the sea on the same side would open too wide a gap for Julianists, Porphyrians, and other like atheists, to elude this miraculous work by saying that Moses marked the low ebb of the sea, and so led the people along, and the Egyptians following when the tide began to arise, were drowned.

This miracle is amplified by this phrase following, **ὡς διὰ ξηρῆς**, *as by dry land*. The word *land* is not in the Greek, but yet understood. When the word *dry* is applied to other things, that other thing useth to be expressed, as, **ξηρὰ ξηραν**, *a dry hand*, *Mat. xii. 10*, or *a withered hand*; **ξηρὸν ξηρὸν**, *a dry tree*, *Luke xxiii. 31*; but when it is attributed to the earth, the substantive useth to be left out, as *Mat. xxiii. 15*, 'ye compass sea and land.' The word translated *land* is the word that is here used in the text, and signifieth *dry*.

This is here noted,

To give evidence of the divine providence, in making the bottom of the sea on which they went as fit to travel on as a hard, plain, beaten highway in dry weather. In the history it is said that the sea was made dry land, and that 'they went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground,' *Exod. xiv. 21, 22.*

This I note to meet with the conceit of them who refer this circumstance of dry land to the boldness of the Israelites, as if they had gone through thick and thin as lustily as if they had gone on dry, hard ground. They ground their opinion on this particle, **ὡς**, *as*; but we observed before, *Ver. 27. Sec. 152*, that that particle did not always imply a diminution or a mere seeming of a thing, but a reality thereof.

*Sec. 166. Of faith making bold and strong.*

The forementioned evidence of faith, that *by faith they passed through the Red Sea*, giveth evidence of that holy boldness which faith putteth into men. As here these Israelites passed through the Red Sea, so their children, by faith, passed through Jordan, *Josh. iii. 17*; and Jonathan with his armour-bearer set upon a garrison of the Philistines, *1 Sam. xiv. 13*; and David set upon a lion, a bear, and a giant, *1 Sam. xvii. 36, 45.*

Faith raiseth up the mind and heart of man to him who is a sure rock, fortress, buckler, and high tower, *Ps. xviii. 2.*

Such defenses, especially if they be impregnable, make men bold; but God is the Lord of hosts, more than all other defenses or armies of creatures.

On this ground be moved to take the shield of faith, and well to wield it; this above all will make thee truly bold.

This is further amplified by the persons comprised under this relative, *they*. Men, women, children, great and mean, all of all sorts, are here intended. Among them there must needs be many weak ones, so as the weak may be made strong in faith. Many of these nurtured before they saw this way opened for them, *Exod. xiv. 11, 31*, *Ps. cvi. 12*. Compare *Gen. xviii. 12*, with the 11th verse of this chapter, and you may find the like exemplified in Sarah; so also in Gideon, *Judges vi. 13*, and *vii. 15*.

The apostle renders this ground thereof, 'God is able to make him stand,' *Rom. xiv. 4*; and this God doth, 'that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us,' *2 Cor. iv. 7*.

This is a good encouragement for such as are weak in faith to pray and say, 'Lord, help my unbelief,' *Mark ix. 24*, and 'Lord, strengthen our faith,' *Luke xvii. 5*; and as men pray, so they must use all warrantable means for increasing, strengthening, and establishing faith.

This also may put on ministers, and others who have to do with doubting minds and unbelieving spirits, to essay the uttermost that they can to work

and to strengthen the faith of such. So did Moses. In this case he advised distrustful and murmuring spirits 'not to fear, but to stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord,' Exod. xiv. 13.

Among this multitude there were many that remained unfaithful, and retained a rebellious disposition against the Lord. Witness their murmurings and rebellions in the wilderness, yet they all passed through the Red Sea; whence we may infer that wicked men may receive temporal good things by their mixture with the godly. Hereof see more in *The Plaster for a Plugie*, on Num. xvi. 45, Sec. 20.

Sec. 167. *Of believers venturing upon terrible things.*

It could not be but a most terrible sight to see such waters as were in the sea on the one hand and on the other, though there were a dry path betwixt them; yet faith made these Israelites adventure to go to the bottom of the sea, for terrible things do not affright believers. The waters that drowned the whole world affrighted not Noah and them that were with him in the ark, Gen. vii. 7; and David was not affrighted with the terror of the giant in his armour, and with his target of brass, and spear like a weaver's beam, 1 Sam. xvii. 45; nor lions nor fire affrighted Daniel and his companions, Dan. iii. 16, and vi. 10. The courage of sundry martyrs gives further proof hereunto.

Their confidence in God—in his divine properties, in his presence, in his providence—is the ground of this courage, Isa. xliii. 2, Ps. xci. 4, Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

Surely men's doubtings and fears and perplexities arise from want of faith, Mat. viii. 26, and xiv. 31, Prov. xxiv. 10.

To expel such fears, get faith, and use faith. Faith lifts a man above himself; it putteth a spirit more than human into a man; it soars above sense, reason, and human capacity—even as high as the throne of God: no grace comparable to it.

Sec. 168. *Of God's carrying his through danger into safety.*

This case of *passing through the Red Sea*, sheweth God's care in carrying his through the greatest dangers. To the eye of flesh and blood, what could be more dangerous than to venture into the Red Sea? A proof of the danger hereof was manifested upon the Egyptians. But these were God's people, and therefore he carried them through. Thus God preserved Noah, and them that were in the ark, till the earth was fit for habitation, and then they came forth, Gen. viii. 16. Thus God preserved Jacob after he departed from his father's house, till he brought him to it again.

God is still present with his, and that in all their dangers, Isa. xliii. 2. The cloud and pillar in the wilderness was a visible evidence hereof, Exod. xiii. 22.

This is a good inducement to venture upon anything whereunto God calleth us; and to rest upon this, that God, who openeth a way for safety, will carry us through all difficulties and dangers. As, therefore, we begin, so let us hold out, that we may pass through the Red Sea.

This passing through hath a double reference—one, to the continuance of God's providence; the other, to their perseverance. Such as look for the benefit of the former must be careful of the latter, and take heed of Peter's falling after he had adventured to walk on the water to go to Jesus, Mat. xiv. 29, 30.

We have the greater cause to rest upon God's providence, because it is here said that they passed *as by dry land*; so as God made a most dangerous place to be the safest—he made the sea as land, the bottom of the sea as a beaten path. 'He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground,' Ps. cvii. 33. God made the land of the Philistines, where were David's greatest enemies, a place of refuge for him, 1 Sam. xxvii. 3; yea, he made the belly of a whale a place of security for Jonah.

God hath a supreme and absolute power, and doth what he will everywhere. 'There is not any rock like our God,' 1 Sam. ii. 2.

1. Herein is manifested a difference betwixt the power of the Creator and creatures. The Creator can make the sea as dry land; they only can use the benefit of dry land. He is tied to no course; creatures are tied to that course that he prescribeth unto them.

This instance giveth proof of the power of God above the course of nature; for water is of a fluent nature, running downward, and spreading itself all abroad; but here it stood on each hand as two walls.

2. This affordeth ground of encouragement in all places, difficulties, and distresses, to trust in God, Jonah ii. 2, Ps. cxxx. 1. We ought, on this ground, to be so far from fainting, by reason of the greatness of danger, as the more confidently to trust unto him; because man's extremity is God's opportunity. This is not to make us neglect means, but, in the use of lawful means, to expect a good issue from God; and if our case be such as we know not what to do, then to say, as Jehoshaphat did, 'our eyes are upon thee,' 2 Chron. xx. 12.

Sec. 169. *Of wicked men's boldness in pursuing evil to their own destruction.*

The aforesaid preservation of the Israelites through the Red Sea is much amplified by the destruction of the Egyptians therein.

Under this word, *Egyptians*, are comprised Pharaoh and that great host which he had gathered together to pursue the Israelites. It is said that 'he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them,' Exod. xiv. 7.



This implieth that Pharaoh's army was a very great one. All these seeing a way made in the sea, wherein the Israelites went before them, little considered the mighty power of God in destroying many among their countrymen, and the wise providence of God in putting difference betwixt the Egyptians and the Israelites, whereof they had had many particular instances before, Exod. viii. 22, 23, ix. 6, 26, and x. 23, but presumptuously thrust themselves into the sea in that way that they saw opened for the Israelites, and thereby brought destruction upon themselves.

The Greek word, *πειρα*, signifieth *experience* or *trial*, and it is so translated, ver. 36. It implieth that the Egyptians would yet make a further trial whether God would yet still defend his people, or could protect them against this army, and thereupon rush on into the sea.

Herein we may behold the boldness of enemies in pursuing the people of God. The like may be noted of the Amalekites, who, not long after the destruction of this great host of the Egyptians, set upon this people whom God had so preserved, Exod. xvii. 8. And the like also of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan, Num. xxi. 23, 33.

Malice and hatred so blindeth the minds of the enemies of God's church, and so intoxicateth their understanding, as they cannot discern the danger wherinto they venture. They can neither think of things past, nor foresee and forecast matters to come. Our proverb saith, 'Who so bold as blind Bayard?'

1. This giveth proof of that satanical spirit which ruleth in wicked men, setteth their spirits on fire to do mischief, not regarding into what danger they impunge themselves. They are like mad bulls, who will run their career, though they break their own necks. How do bloody-minded men venture their own lives to take away the lives of others! How do all sinners run headlong down to their eternal perdition, to accomplish their mischievous plots!

2. This doth much check the backwardness, coldness, and fearfulness of such as profess the truth, in maintaining the same. How little will men venture in God's cause! How doth every show of danger discourage them! Shall adversaries be so audacious and venturous in opposing the truth, and in persecuting the professors thereof, and shall professors be timorous in maintaining it?

3. Let this put us on to a holy zeal in the cause of God and of his church, and of our own and others' salvation. Let the boldness of the wicked in their mischievous courses animate and embolden us in pious courses.

This is not to make us blind and mad, as the wicked are, by impugning ourselves into apparent danger, but to make us cast off the cloaks of sluggishness and timorousness, pretending danger where is no just cause of pretence, Prov. xxii. 13, and xxvi. 13. Let us shew that there is more power in the divine Spirit

to embolden us to good, than can be in a satanical spirit to embolden men to evil.

Sec. 170. *Of enemies perishing by that which pre-seeth saints.*

The issue of the Egyptians' forenamed boldness is expressed in this word, *κατεβήσαν, were drowned*. This word is compounded of a simple verb, *βίβω, bibo*, that signifieth to *drink*, and a preposition, *κατά, kata*, that intendeth a thorough doing of a thing; so as this compound signifieth to drink up, or, as it is ordinarily translated, to 'swallow,' as Mat. xxiii. 24, 1 Cor. xv. 54. It is attributed to the devil, and translated 'devour.' It being here applied to waters, it is fitly translated, 'were drowned;' for waters swallowing up men do drown them. Thus we see that the presumption of the Egyptians caused their destruction. The like may be exemplified in the forementioned instances of Amalek, Sihon, and Og, and might be in a multitude of others.

The just vengeance of God causeth this; for hereby they are brought as beasts into snares, and as birds into pits, Ps. ix. 15, 16, and xxxv. 8.

This is enough to dissuade such as have any care, even of themselves and their own safety, from over-much boldness and forwardness in persecuting such as God will protect. They have cause to fear, lest God should make them visible spectacles of his vengeance. Let such consider God's just dealing with these Egyptians.

To aggravate this evidence of God's just vengeance, it is worthy our observation to consider that means of the church's preservation proved to be the means of their enemies' destruction; for those waters that were a wall unto the Israelites returned and covered all the host of Pharaoh, Exod. xiv. 28, 29. The lions that preserved Daniel from the plots of the princes of the Persians were a means of devouring those princes, Dan. vi. 22, 24.

This also proveth true in the means of salvation; for that word which is a saviour of life to believers is a saviour of death to others, 2 Cor. ii. 16. Thus may some, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, 'eat judgment to themselves,' 1 Cor. xi. 29; so Christ himself, who is 'a chief corner-stone, elect and precious to them that believe,' is, 'unto them that be disobedient, a stumbling-block of offence,' 1 Pet. ii. 6-8.

1. This comes to pass through man's abuse of the means which God affords for his good, as Saul abused his sword, wherewith formerly he had destroyed the enemies of the church, by thrusting it into his own bowels, 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.

2. God being provoked by such men, turns blessings into curses.

This may afford us a good direction about the use of those means which we see to be useful and successful to others. For this end,

1. Be sure of thy warrant for the use of such and

such means. These Egyptians had no warrant so to rush into the sea as they did. When the Israelites presumed to go up against the Amalekites and Canaanites without God's warrant, they were discomfited, Num. xiv. 44, 45.

2. Use warrantable means after a right manner. Herein David failed, 1 Chron. xv. 13.

3. Aim at a right end. The king of Assyria aimed at a wrong end in the successes that God gave him, Isa. x. 12, 13.

4. In all lawful things seek God's blessing; for it is not means, but God's blessing on means, whereby we come to prosper, Deut. viii. 3, Prov. x. 22.

Sec. 171. *Of passing through the Red Sea, sacramentally considered.*

The apostle maketh this passing of the Israelites through the Red Sea to be such a sacrament unto them as baptism is unto us, where he saith, 'they were all baptized in the sea,' 1 Cor. x. 2.

Hereupon, having distinctly noted the main points of the history, I hold it meet to open the mystery, and for that end,

1. To shew what kind of sacrament their passing through the Red Sea was,

2. To manifest wherein that sacrament agreeth with baptism.

That sacrament may thus be described: It was one of the Jews' extraordinary sacraments, wherein, by their safe passing through the sea, their preservation from the common destruction of mankind was represented and sealed up unto them.

1. That it was a sacrament is evident by this phrase, 'they were baptized in the sea,' 1 Cor. x. 2, and in that it had the essential parts of a sacrament, as we shall shew in comparing it with baptism.

2. It was a sacrament of the Jews, appertaining to that church alone. It was not for the Egyptians: they were drowned in the sea. Hereby it is distinguished from the ark, which was a general sacrament for the whole world; and also from Christian sacraments.

3. It was an extraordinary sacrament, in that it was but once for all used.

Hereby it was distinguished from the Jews' ordinary sacraments, which were circumcision and the passover.

4. It is said to be *one of* their extraordinary sacraments, to shew that the Jews had more extraordinary sacraments than this. They had four. Two answered baptism, this and the cloud, 1 Cor. x. 2. The two other answered the Lord's supper, which were manna, and the water that came out of the rock.

5. The outward sign of this sacrament was the Red Sea. They passed through it.

6. The thing signified was Christ's blood. Christ's blood is the sea that keeps us safe from that destruction that falls upon others.

7. The fit resemblance betwixt the sign and thing signified sheweth that this was represented by that —namely, that our spiritual preservation was represented by the manner of that temporal preservation.

8. The adding of the means to the promise sheweth that this was a seal. The promise was first made to Abraham, Gen. xv. 14; and confirmed, Exod. iii. 8, xiv. 13; and by this passing through the Red Sea, ratified. This was an especial means of strengthening their faith, Exod. xiv. 31.

Sec. 172. *Of the agreement betwixt Israel's passing through the Red Sea and baptism.*

1. The passing through the Red Sea, and baptism, had both the same outward signs, which was water, Mat. iii. 6.

2. They had like rites, which were entering into the water, and coming out of it, Acts viii. 38, 39.

3. They both had the same inward substance, which was salvation by Christ, Rom. vi. 3, 4.

4. They both had the same ground, which was God's commandment and God's promise, Exod. xiv. 13, 16, Mat. xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 16.

5. They were both for the same people, which were God's confederates, Mat. xxviii. 19.

6. Both were but once administered, Eph. iv. 5, John xiii. 10.

7. By both, persons were incorporated into God's church. They who passed through the Red Sea were the only people of God; so they who are baptized.

8. Both sacraments are unprofitable to such as start from the covenant, 1 Cor. x. 5, 2 Pet. ii. 20.

9. Both are sacraments to prepare people for further grace. Therefore they that passed through the Red Sea had manna, and the water coming out of the rock prepared for them; and such as are baptized have the Lord's supper, as a sacrament of spiritual nourishment.

10. In both there was a difference betwixt God's people and his enemies. Israelites were saved, but Egyptians drowned. So by baptism believers are saved, the flesh with the corrupt lusts thereof are destroyed.

11. As the Egyptians, being drowned, lay on the shore; so the old man, with his corrupt lusts, lies as drowned in believers.

12. As the Israelites passed through the sea by the wilderness into Canaan; so believers that are baptized pass by this world into heaven, Mark xvi. 16.

Sec. 173. *Of the resolution of, and observation from, Heb. xi. 29.*

Ver. 29. *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*

The sum of this verse is a proof of the faith of the

Israelites under the conduct of Moses. Hereof are two parts,

1. A preservation.

2. A destruction.

In setting down the preservation, observe,

1. The persons preserved, in this relative, *they*.

2. The kind of preservation.

Here again observe,

1. The matter, manifested two ways.

(1.) By an act, *they passed through*.

(2.) By the object, *the Red Sea*.

2. The manner, under this phrase, *as by dry land*.

In setting down the destruction, observe,

1. The persons destroyed, *the Egyptians*.

2. Their attempt, *assaying to do*.

3. The issue, *were drowned*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Faith is common to all sorts of persons.* The relative participle, *they*, extendeth itself to all sorts among the Israelites. See Sec. 165.

II. *The faith of some may be beneficial to others.* Though all did not believe, yet all received this benefit by the faith of them that believed, that they were preserved. See Secs. 165, 166.

III. *Faith makes bold.* By faith the Israelites were emboldened to adventure through the sea. See Sec. 166.

IV. *Weak in faith may become strong in faith.* Many of those who upon the sight of Pharaoh's host murmured, now confidently go into the sea. See Sec. 166.

V. *Terrible things affright not believers.* The rising up of the waters of the sea could not but seem terrible, yet these believers are not affrighted. See Sec. 167.

VI. *God can carry his through great dangers.* He carried these Israelites through the Red Sea. See Sec. 168.

VII. *God can make the most dangerous places to be the safest.* He made the bottom of the sea to be as dry land. See Sec. 168.

VIII. *Enemies boldly venture in the pursuit of God's saints.* So did the Egyptians when they entered into the sea upon pursuit of the Israelites. See Sec. 169.

IX. *Presumption is the ready way of destruction.* The presumption of the Egyptians in entering into the sea caused the destruction. See Sec. 170.

X. *The same means may cause preservation to some, and destruction to others.* Instance the Red Sea, wherein the Israelites were preserved, and the Egyptians were destroyed. See Sec. 170.

XI. *Israel's passing through the Red Sea was a like figure to Christians' baptism.* See Secs. 171, 172.

See. 171. *Of the meaning of Heb. xi. 30.*

Vcr. 30. *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.*

The twelfth instance for proof of the vigour of faith is of the Israelites, under the government and conduct of Joshua.

This is the ninth instance from the flood, and the first after the law.

By faith is here meant the same kind of faith that was before mentioned in the other instances.

Jericho here mentioned was a strong and well-fenced city, a frontier town, the first that kept them from entering far into Canaan. It was one of those cities which affrighted the spies that were first sent to search the land; because, as they said, 'they were walled, and exceeding great,' Num. xiii. 28; 'great, and walled up to heaven,' Deut. i. 28. So as to man's eyes it was impregnable. Had this city stood in the strength thereof, it might have been a refuge for others that had been overcome; yea, it might have been such a block in the passage of the Israelites, as might have kept them from entering further. Therefore the Lord, by destroying this city in the first place, would make a ready way, and open passage for his people, and withal give them hope of prevailing over others, by laying this flat to the ground.

That this great work might appear to be of the Lord, it is said that *by faith the walls fell down*—that is, Joshua and the Israelites that followed him, believing that the Lord was their God, and that he would accomplish all his promises made to his church in Christ, and particularly this of Jericho, answerably it fell out. That they had a particular charge and promise to march about Jericho, and that the walls of it should fall down, is evident in the five first verses of the sixth of Joshua.

Their faith is manifested by their obedience, in the verses following; and the fruit and effect thereof is thus plainly expressed, 'the walls fell down flat,' Josh. ii. 20; so as by inserting the persons that are here intended, the full sense of the apostle will clearly appear thus:

By the faith of Joshua, and the rest of the host of Israel, the walls of Jericho fell down.

The Jewish rabbins and Chaldee interpreters are of opinion that those high and thick walls sunk down right into the ground, and were swallowed up of the earth, that the stones and rubbish of the walls might be no hindrance to the Israelites entering into the city. But for this we have no sure ground out of the record of sacred Scripture.

These particulars are expressly set down.

1. The walls fell down flat.

2. All living creatures in the city, man and beast, male and female, young and old, were slain with the sword, except Rahab and those who were in her house.

3. Whatsoever was combustible was burnt, as linen, woollen, wooden, and other like things.

4. Metals that could endure the fire, as silver, gold,

brass, and iron, were consecrated to the Lord. For God would have the firstfruits. None of the people might take any part thereof, to try whether they would rest on God for sufficient provision or no.

5. The city itself was burnt with fire.

6. A curse was laid on him that should build it up again. Thus was this great block clean removed out of their way, and that with no violence used by them: for it is said of those walls, *ἐπεσε, they fell down*. The verb is of the active voice; and for aught that any man could see, they tumbled down of themselves; but this was not done till the army had used such means as God had prescribed unto them; which were these—

1. The men of arms march along in order. They make no trenches to keep themselves safe; they stand not in battle array to repel the excursions of their enemies; they set no engines against the walls, nor assault the city, but march on one after another, whereby they lie the more open to their enemies.

2. Seven priests go before with seven trumpets of rams' horns, sounding with them. Had they sounded with the silver trumpets, which were consecrated, and to the alarm whereof in war a blessing was promised, Num. x. 9—an evident performance whereof is recorded, 2 Chron. xiii. 14, 15—some spirit might have been put into the Israelites, and a more seeming ground of faith: but God would thus try them, by so mean a means as sounding of rams' horns, which we read not before or after to be used for triumph.

3. The ark followeth the priests. The ark was but a little chest, Exod. xxv. 10. It could not hold any store of ammunition, neither was there a sword or any warlike instrument therein; so as to the eye of flesh and blood, this ark could stand them in little stead. Yet to such as believed, it was a great prop for their faith. For the ark was an especial evidence of God's presence among them. It had in it the book of God's covenant betwixt him and his people, and thereupon it is called 'the ark of the covenant,' Heb. ix. 4. Yea, it was called 'by the name of the Lord of hosts,' 2 Sam. vi. 2. When it was lifted up, the priest said, 'Let God arise,' Num. x. 35. The Lord is said to 'dwell betwixt the cherubims' over it, 2 Kings xix. 15. From it the Lord used to deliver his oracles, Exod. xxv. 22. And before it they used to fall and pray, Josh. vii. 6. God's blessing accompanied it, 2 Sam. vi. 12. On those and other like grounds the Lord caused the ark to be carried in their march, to establish their faith. Of this ark, see Chap. xi. 30, Sec. 20.

4. In their march the foresaid trumpets only sounded. The people were commanded to be silent, to shew that they needed not consult one with another what to do, but attend the pleasure of God.

5. The rear, or gathering host, went last; with it all their provision was carried, whereby it is evident that they did not fear any attempt of the enemy.

6. In this order they went round about the city once a day for six days together, and on the seventh day they went round about it seven times; in which respect the walls are here said to be *compassed about seven days*; not by a seven days' siege against it, for every day after they had gone about it, they returned to the camp and there lodged. But on the seventh day, after they had marched about it seven times, they gave a great shout, whereupon the walls fell flat to the ground, and the army entered into the city and destroyed it.

The seven days' circuit, and seven times on the seventh day, was to prove their faith the more, and to try their obedience and patience.

Flesh and blood might thus have objected: while we compass the city they may sally out against part of our army; yea, six days compassing the city may make us weary, in that we are so long without success; so as herein their faith is proved.

God in this course doth also tender their weakness, in giving the city within the space of seven days, without any great pains of their own, into their hands. For they were now come into Canaan: they had no store of provision beforehand: a long siege might have brought them to great want; God doth, therefore, herein keep them from fainting before the work was done.

Sec. 175. *Of God's removing stumbling-blocks out of his people's way.*

This phrase, *by faith the walls of Jericho fell down*, giveth proof that faith may work upon senseless creatures. Not that senseless creatures are capable of receiving or rejecting faith; but that believers by their faith may have power even over senseless creatures. The other phrase, 'quenched the violence of fire,' ver. 34, is attributed to faith, in such a sense as the point in hand is.

That which is said of senseless, may be applied to unreasonable creatures; for believers by their faith have 'stopped the mouths of lions,' ver. 33.

Faith is set on him who hath an absolute power over reasonable, unreasonable, senseless, and all sorts of creatures; that what he can do, faith, in that course which he prescribeth, may be said to do, in that it is the means which he hath sanctified for the manifestation of his power.

The falling of the walls of Jericho doth further shew that God can and will remove such stumbling-blocks as lie in that way through which he will have his people to pass. The city was a block in their way to the other part of Canaan; and the walls of the city were a block to keep them from entering into the city. Therefore he caused the walls to fall, and the city to be destroyed. Thus he divided the sea, Exod. xiv. 21; and Jordan, 2 Kings ii. 8. Christ setteth down this in two extraordinary instances: one is, in removing a mountain, Mat. xvii. 20; the

other is, in plucking up a sycamore tree by the roots and planting it in the sea, Luke xvii. 6.

*Obj.* All these are extraordinary.

*Ans.* Yet they are of force, and fit to prove God's power and goodness in removing ordinary obstacles; and that by an argument from the greater to the less, which may be thus framed:

If God upon an extraordinary faith work extraordinary matters, much more will he work ordinary matters upon an ordinary faith. Christ himself maketh this inference, Mark xi. 23, 24. So doth his apostle, James v. 16-18. Both of them from extraordinary instances prove the ordinary power of prayer.

Wherefore when Satan, or wicked men, or our own sins, or any kind of temptations stand, as Jericho, in our way to Canaan, pray to him that is able to remove these stumbling-blocks, and believe as Christ adviseth, Mat. xi. 21.

We have the more cause to believe in such cases, because men's greatest defences are nothing against God. The walls of Jericho were thick and high, and 'they were straitly shut up because of the children of Israel,' Josh. vi. 1; yet those walls of that city fell down when God would have it so. So did Goliath, that great giant, fall, 1 Sam. xvii. 49, and Sennacherib with all his host, 2 Kings xix. 35, 37.

Man's preparations and defences, without a divine blessing, are as 'walls daubed with untempered mortar,' Ezek. xiii. 11, 13, and as 'an house built upon the sand,' Mat. vii. 26, 27.

It is therefore an egregious point of folly to spend a man's wit, to use all his pains, to put forth his utmost strength, and to make the greatest defence that he can, against or without the Lord, Isa. xxx. 1, Num. xiv. 40.

Men, in matters against God, are like blind Bayards, which rush on to their own destruction. The men of Jericho might have considered that it was as easy for God to break open their gates, or beat down their walls, as to divide the Red Sea and Jordan. Rahab considered as much, Josh. ii. 10. And the Gibeonites, Josh. ix. 3, &c. But where men's minds are blinded, and their senses stupefied, folly bewrays itself. Such folly manifesteth itself in most men: they trust to their wit, skill, strength, multitude of men, and preparations which themselves make, but seek not to the Lord. In sicknesses, like Asa, they trust to physicians, and not unto the Lord, 2 Chron. xvi. 12. If the enemies come against them, they do as the men of Jericho did, Josh. vi. 1, but seek not to the Lord. This is it that God doth much tax in his own people, Isa. xxii. 8, 9, &c.

This may stir up such as have the Lord on their side, and are by him set apart to any work, boldly to go on, notwithstanding the opposition that is made against them.

Man's oppositions are no more than the high and

strong walls of Jericho. Note Jonathan's resolution, 1 Sam. xiv. 21.

The like is noted of Asa, 2 Chron. xiv. 11.

*Sec. 176. Of oppositions giving place of themselves.*

This act, *ἐπεσεν, fell down*, giveth proof that God can make the strongest opposition to yield of itself. It is said that 'the sea fled,' Ps. cxiv. 3, and that 'Peter's chains fell off from his hands,' and that 'an iron gate opened of its own accord,' Acts xii. 7, 10. As senseless, so reasonable creatures have done thus; as the great host of Midian 'ran and fled' from Gideon with his three hundred men, Judges vii. 21.

The like is noted of the Philistines, 1 Sam. xiv. 15, and of the Assyrians, 2 Kings vii. 7, and of the men that came to apprehend Christ, John xviii. 8.

God's power is such as if he say to any creature, *Stand, it stands; Go, it goes*. The sun stood still when God would have it, Josh. x. 13, and ran backwards when God would have it so, 2 Kings xx. 11.

It is said of all the creatures which God used to plague the Egyptians with, 'they rebelled not against his word,' Ps. cv. 28.

This is a great encouragement to God's people against all oppositions in God's way; though they see no means for removing them, yet God can make them remove of themselves. What chains or cords had Daniel to tie the lions among whom he was cast? What water had his three companions to quench the fire into which they were cast? What angels were used to pull the devils out of their holds when Christ commanded them to come out? These and other like things are recorded, not to make us neglect means, nor to expect such miracles, but when we see no means, to rely on God, and in faith say, 'God will provide.'

*Sec. 177. Of great works done by weak means.*

The means prescribed for making way to enter into Jericho were, to the eye of flesh and blood, very unlikely—the means are distinctly noted, Sec. 174—yet they were effectual: so was Moses's striking of the sea, and a rock with his rod, Exod. xiv. 16, and xvii. 6. The like may be observed of many means which God from time to time hath caused to be used.

1. God prescribeth means, to try our obedience; but unlikely means, to try our faith.

2. He prescribeth means, to be occasions of looking to him for his blessing only; but strange and mean means, to draw our hearts from depending on creatures.

3. Means are prescribed, to give evidence of the divine providence: but weak means, to give evidence of God's almighty power; for his power is manifested in weakness, 2 Cor. xii. 5.

Let us learn hereby to take heed of doting on means. In use of means look to God: submit to

his will; prescribe nothing unto him, but rest on his power and blessing.

We may and ought carefully to observe what means God hath sanctified for the effecting of anything, and conscionably use the same. To contemn or neglect means, is to oppose our shallow conceit to God's unsearchable wisdom. Had not Naaman been better advised by his servants, he might have gone away from the prophet as foul a leper as he came, 2 Kings v. 11. Men's greatest failing in this kind is about weightiest matters: such as concern their soul's salvation. Therefore herein especially take heed of Satan's subtlety. Go on in God's way, observe his course, and then all Satan's attempts shall be as the walls of Jericho—they shall fall down flat.

Sec. 178. *Of the walls of Jericho falling down in the seventh day.*

The apostle taketh notice of the number of days in which they compassed the city before the walls fell down; whereby he would have us take notice, that God hath a set time to do what he intendeth. It was a longer time, but a set time, which he appointed for preparing the ark, even a hundred and twenty years, Gen. vi. 3, compared with 1 Pet. iii. 20.

God had his set time for bringing his people out of the Egyptian bondage, Gen. xv. 13, Exod. xii. 41, and out of the Babylonish captivity, Jer. xxv. 11. He had a set time both for plenty and also for famine in Egypt, Gen. xli. 26. So set is this time, as it is styled 'an hour,' John ii. 4, and vii. 30. As God hath his hour for effecting his own acts, so likewise for permitting wicked ones to do what they do, Mark xiv. 41, Luke xxii. 15.

'The Father hath put times and seasons in his own power,' Acts i. 7; and he teacheth children of men to do things in their season, Isa. xxviii. 26. Much more will he himself order matters in their fittest season.

1. This gives evidence of the divine providence in ordering matters, and sheweth that they fall not out by chance.

2. This giveth ground of contentment and comfort in all events. They fall out in the fittest time and season. When any that are dear or useful unto us are taken away (be they governors, ministers, parents, husbands, wives, children, friends, or any other), they are taken away in the time appointed by God, which is the fittest time. It is in vain to seek either to prevent or to put off God's time. As it cannot be prevented, so it shall not be overslipped. On the seventh day, the walls that held out seven days' compassing, fell down.

3. We have hereupon good ground to wait for the Lord's time: as the host of Israel did, 'wait because it will surely come,' Hab. ii. 3; 'he that believeth shall not make haste,' Isa. xxviii. 16. This was it which Christ intended under this phrase, 'Mine hour is not yet come,' John ii. 5.

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4. This should put us on cheerfully to get on in the work and way of the Lord: though for a time we may meet with many discouragements from the threatenings and attempts of men. When the Pharisees told Christ that Herod would kill him, Christ returns this answer, 'I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following,' Luke xiii. 32, 33. God hath a time for thee to work, and in that time he will uphold thee; and what God appoints shall in time be accomplished.

Divine truth is infallible, Tit. i. 2; Heb. vi. 18. And that divine truth doth manifest itself both in the substance of matters, and in their circumstances, as manner, means, time. All which are here verified.

There being seven days spent in the army's marching about Jericho, one of them must needs be the Sabbath. Now this was the strictest time of observing the Sabbath: yet on a Sabbath the whole army marched at least once about Jericho. This marching was not simply a work of piety, but a servile work, yet by God's appointment performed on a Sabbath-day; which giveth instance, that in some cases some servile works may be done on the Sabbath. Hereof see more in my treatise of the *Sabbath's Sanctification*, quest. 37.

Sec. 179. *Of the resolution of, and observation from, Heb. xi. 30.*

In this verse there is a proof of the faith of the Israelites, under the conduct of Joshua. Here we are to consider,

1. The thing proved.
2. The kind of proof.

In the former, one thing is expressed, which is *faith*. The other is implied, which sets out the persons whose faith is commended.

The latter is, 1. Propounded; 2. Amplified.

In that which is propounded, we may observe,

1. The subject whereon their faith was manifested, *the walls of Jericho*.

2. The effect whereby it was manifested, *fell down*.

In amplifying the proof, we may observe,

1. The means used, *they were compassed about*.
2. The time how long, *seven days*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Faith may work upon senseless creatures.* The walls of Jericho, which by faith fell down, were such creatures. See Sec. 175.

II. *Stumbling blocks in the way which God hath appointed shall be removed.* Jericho was a stumbling-block to the Israelites entering into Canaan, but destroyed. See Sec. 175.

III. *Man's best defences against God are nothing.* The high and thick walls of Jericho fell down before God's people. See Sec. 175.

IV. *God can make such things as stand against his people to yield of themselves.* The walls of Jericho

fell down of themselves without any battering. See Sec. 176.

V. *Great matters may be effected by mean means.* The means used for entering into Jericho were in man's apprehension very mean : yet the walls of the city round about fell down, which was a great matter. See Sec. 177.

VI. *God hath a set time for his works.* The expression of seven days intends as much. See Sec. 178.

VII. *What God appoints shall in his time be accomplished.* In the seventh day, which God appointed, Jericho fell down. See Sec. 178.

VIII. *In some cases, some servile works may be done upon the Sabbath.* One of the seven days wherein they compassed the city must needs be upon the Sabbath. See Sec. 178.

Sec. 180. *Of the apostle's method in setting down the example of Rahab.*

Ver. 31. *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, [or, that were disobedient,] when she had received the spies with peace.*

The thirteenth instance of the proof of the vigour of faith, and tenth after the flood, and second after the law, and last of the *anaphora*, which carrieth this word before it, *by faith*, is Rahab.

In setting down this instance, the method and order of the apostle in producing examples to commend unto us this precious gift of faith, is worthy to be observed.

1. He calls out eminent persons, such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, &c., which are the more perfect patterns.

2. He inserts women, as Sarah, and the mother of Moses, to prove that even women may become worthies.

3. He produceth multitudes, as they who passed through the Red Sea, and marched about Jericho, to shew that faith is a common gift for all sorts of people.

4. He giveth instance of a notorious sinner, which was Rahab, to provoke the worst to repent and believe. This is a strong inducement thereunto : for if the faith of eminent persons, if the faith of weak women, if the faith of multitudes work not upon us, let us be ashamed to come short of one that was a harlot.

Though the spies were received by Rahab before the walls of Jericho fell down, yet she and her family were not preserved before.

That preservation was the fruit and effect of her faith : and in that respect also this instance of faith is fitly set down after the former.

Sec. 181. *Of God's accepting the seed of faith.*

Concerning the faith here mentioned, great question is made whether it were a true justifying faith or no.

Some deny it to be so, because she was not of the church, nor had heard God's word, which is the true ground of such a faith.

But I answer, that she had heard of God's works, Josh. ii. 9, &c., and thereby she was brought to believe and acknowledge that the God of Israel was the true God, and a merciful God, and that to sinners : whereupon she was induced to trust in God, and to desire communion with his people. Hereby she attained a true faith, whereof this was the seed : and so accepted of God for a true faith. She believed that the Lord had given the Israelites the land of Canaan ; and that they should possess it ; and that they were the true and only people of God : and was resolved to live and die with them. Thus there was the seed of faith in her : and this was accounted a true faith, which would grow and increase more and more. Such a faith had Naaman, 2 Kings v. 15 ; and Nicodemus, John iii. 2 ; and the father of the lunatic, Mark ix. 24.

God beholds such a substance in such a kind of faith as will bring forth glorious fruits. For the Spirit, that worketh this, ever abideth, and he having begun a good work will perform it unto the end, Phil. i. 6.

1. This is sweet comfort to such as find the true seed and beginning of grace in them. For this inward working is an evidence of the Spirit : and every true evidence thereof is a matter of much comfort. When a woman that desireth children first discerneth that she conceiveth with child, she is much comforted, and rejoiceth in hope of bringing forth a perfect child. The Israelites much rejoiced when the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid after their captivity, Ezra iii. 11, in hope that the whole house in time would be perfected. For the present, God hath the seed of faith in high account : and for the future, God will so bless it, as a grain of mustard-seed shall become a tree, Mat. xiii. 31, 32.

2. They who find the beginnings of grace in them, who earnestly desire true grace, who sensibly feel the want of it, who are truly grieved for that want, may hence receive comfort. True grace, though small, will be accepted.

3. Two sorts of people may receive direction from hence.

(1.) They who have but small means, let such improve those means to the best advantage that they can : so did Rahab. If men will use what they have, they shall have more. 'Unto every one which hath, shall be given,' Luke xix. 26.

(2.) They who have powerful means, as they find any inward working of the Spirit in and by those means, let them endeavour to grow thereby, and answer plentiful means of grace with some competent measure of grace. This is an evidence of the truth of grace. Though small grace may be true, yet true grace will not ever be small. Things of God's kingdom do grow, and that to admiration, Ezek. xlvii. 3-5.

Sec. 182. *Of the fruits of Rahab's faith.*

The person whose faith is here commended is thus set out, *the harlot Rahab*. Her example is the more rare,

1. By reason of her sex, manifested in the feminine gender, *וְהָעֵרֵבָה*, she was a woman. That women may prove worthies hath been proved, Ver. 11, Sec. 53.

2. By reason of her nation: she was a Gentile—yea, she was of the cursed stock of the Canaanites; so as God can call out into his church the most unlikely that may be.

3. By reason of her external condition or filthy profession, she was a harlot. This doth much confirm the point last noted.

Her name is here said to be *רחב*, *Rahab*, which in Hebrew signifieth *broad* or *large*. It fitly answereth both to her former and later condition.

To her former, in regard of her impudency—making herself as a broad street for any to come into.

To the later, in regard of the largeness of her heart and soul, in receiving a large apprehension of God's works: and those both of his justice and mercy, Josh. ii. 9, &c.

There is mention made of *Rahab*, Ps. lxxxvii. 4, and lxxxix. 10, and Isa. li. 9. But though in English the names are of the same letters, yet in Hebrew they have different letters, and come from different roots: one, *רחב*, signifieth *broad*; the other, *רהב*, *proud*, and is put for Egypt.

The fruits of her faith were such as these, manifested, Josh. ii.

1. She entertaineth those that were of the true church, ver. 1.

2. She hides them from danger, ver. 4.

3. She refuseth to betray them, ver. 4.

4. She beguiles those that sought to apprehend them, ver. 5.

5. She acknowledgeth the true God, ver. 11.

6. She confesseth that God had affrighted the nations, ver. 9.

7. She ascribeth to God, and to his power, the great works which he had done, ver. 10.

8. She is persuaded that what God had said should be, ver. 9.

9. She adjures them by the true God, ver. 12.

10. She desires mercy of God's people, when others stood out: wherein she looked further than others, and more profited by what she had heard, ver. 12.

11. Her desire of mercy is extended to all hers, ver. 13.

12. She keeps covenant, ver. 14, 21.

13. She provides a means for the escape of God's people, ver. 15.

14. She incorporated herself into God's church for ever, Josh. vi. 25, Mat. i. 5.

This instance of Rahab giveth evidence that God had Gentiles among his people, and accounted members of the true church.

Jewish writers reckon up nine famous women.

1. Hagar, an Egyptian in Abraham's family, Gen. xvi. 1.

2. Asenath, Joseph's wife, Gen. xli. 50.

3. Shiprah. 4. Puah. These two were the midwives that preserved the children of the Hebrews alive against the king's command, Exod. i. 15.

5. Pharaoh's daughter, Exod. ii. 5. Their order sheweth that they mean her who took up Moses, though Solomon's wife may more fitly be meant.

6. Zipporah, Moses's wife, Exod. ii. 21.

7. This Rahab mentioned in my text.

8. Ruth, the daughter-in-law of Naomi, Ruth i. 16.

9. Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, Judges iv. 17.

All these did worthy facts: but whether all these were effectually converted, is a question. Besides these there were many others, both men and women. Witness the laws that were made for strangers of both sexes, and their admittance to the passover and to other sacred rites.

God hereby gave evidences and pledges of the extent of his goodness to all of all sorts: and of the truth of his promise made to Abraham, that 'in his seed all nations should be blessed,' Gen. xxii. 18.

Hereby the Lord sheweth himself to be no respecter of persons.

The like he doth now concerning the recalling of the rejected Jews, Rom. xi. 25, 26. There ever have been since their rejection some Jews professing the Christian faith, Rom. xi. 1, &c.

The promise which God made for calling the Gentiles, moved the Jews to entertain such Gentiles as came in to them, and to pray for others.

The like ground have we to do the like duty on the behalf of Jews.

Sec. 183. *Of Rahab being a harlot: and of her pre-emptive.*

That woman who yielded forth such fruits of faith is expressly said to be a harlot, which brandeth her for an infamous woman.

Some question is made by the Jewish rabbins about the Hebrew word *זונה*, whether it should signify a *harlot* or a *hostess*. They suppose it a matter improbable and dishonourable for Israelites coming among Gentiles to enter into the house of a harlot, not considering how God's glory was much more magnified by her conversion—for,

1. By a secret providence and divine instinct was this thus ordered.

2. She is called a *harlot*, not in reference to her present, but to her former past condition; as 'Matthew the publican,' Mat. x. 3.

This may be explained by an infamous title given to a woman, but in reference to the time past; which is thus expressed, 'a woman which was a sinner,'



Luke vii. 37. For God had purified her heart by faith, Acts xv. 9.

3. They went not to her house because it was a public stews, but because it was a remote and secret place; for it was upon the town-wall, Josh. ii. 15.

For the point in hand, there are two roots from whence the Hebrew word may be derived, *זָנָה* and *זָנָה*, which expressly signify to play the harlot, or to commit fornication.

There is also another Hebrew word, *זָנָה*, which signifieth *meat*; whence they would derive the word, *זָנָה*, attributed to this woman, and expound it *hostess*, or *virtualler*, that selleth meat: but they cannot give any express instance thereof. They produce some places where this word is used: but if the sense of place be well observed, it will appear, that in all those places the word may be more fitly translated *harlot* than *hostess*, as Judges xi. 1, 1 Kings iii. 16, Joel iii. 3.

This word in Hebrew is in other places put for a harlot by their own confession: nor can it be taken for a hostess or virtualler, as Gen. xxxiv. 31, Lev. xxi. 7, Ezek. xvi. 41, Prov. xxiii. 27. Besides, the LXX, who well understood the meaning of the Hebrew words, ever translate it with a word, *πόρνῆ*, that properly signifieth a harlot. And two apostles expound it so—namely, this apostle here, and James ii. 25.

Surely this much tendeth to the magnifying of God's almighty power, free grace, and rich mercy, that a harlot should attain to such faith, and be made partaker of such favour and honour as she was; as,

1. To profit by God's works so far beyond all her country as she did.

2. To be a hostess to the people of God.

3. To be a means of preserving not herself only, but all hers, from a common destruction.

4. To be admitted, though a Gentile, into the commonwealth of Israel.

5. To be incorporated into the true church of God.

6. To be married to a prime prince in Israel, which was Salmon.

7. To be one of those progenitors from whom the promised Messiah, by lineal descent, should come, Mat. i. 5.

8. To be called out by an apostle, and by name to be put into the catalogue of God's worthies.

9. To be produced by another apostle as a prime pattern of manifesting her faith by works, James ii. 25.

10. To be an heir of eternal life, as all Christ's progenitors, from whom in a direct line he descended, are supposed to be, and as all true believers are.

These shew how forward God is to honour penitent sinners; and how much mercy such may receive from him. The names of such as are registered in sacred Scripture give further evidence hereof: Ruth, Naaman, Matthew, Zaccheus, the woman that washed

Christ's feet with her tears, Paul, and others, Mat. xxi. 32.

God's high account of such is manifested many ways.

1. By sending his Son to call such, Mat. ix. 13, yea, to seek and to save them.

2. By affording his gospel, and ministers to preach it unto them, Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

3. By Christ's patient waiting upon them, Rev. iii. 20.

4. By God's readiness to receive sinners when they are coming to him, even afar off, Luke xv. 20, Ps. xxxii. 5.

5. By that joy which angels express upon the conversion of sinners, Luke xv. 10.

6. By that glory and praise which the church giveth for such, Gal. i. 22, 23, Acts xi. 18.

7. By that recompence which God confers upon them. This consisteth of sundry branches, as,

(1.) A free discharge of their whole debt, and full remission of all their sins, Luke xviii. 13, 14.

(2.) His sanctifying, comforting, and supporting Spirit in an abundant measure, 1 Cor. xv. 10.

(3.) External honours: instance, Rahab, Ruth, and the prodigal, Luke xv. 23.

(4.) Eternal life, and it may be a great degree of glory in heaven; for if notorious sinners after their conversion remain faithful, and give forth fruits meet for repentance, their former wicked course shall not be remembered to impair their heavenly glory, Ezek. xviii. 21. Yea, many such converts are, by a consideration of their former wickedness, stirred up to labour in God's work more abundantly than others, 1 Cor. xv. 10.

1. This giveth a clear demonstration of the free grace and rich mercy of our God; for sin to God is more than any rebellion or high treason against the greatest monarch on earth.

2. It giveth also a demonstration of the equity and justice of God upon impenitent sinners, Ezek. xviii. 27, &c. We may from hence infer that the destruction of every impenitent sinner is of himself, Hosea xiii. 9.

3. This mercy of God to Rahab should stir up others to do as Rahab did. Though all Jericho stood out, yet would not she; she had heard, and she believed, that there was no standing out against God; she therefore comes in; she seeks mercy and finds mercy: 'go and do thou likewise,' Luke x. 37.

Sec. 184. *Of Rahab not perishing with others.*

Among many other evidences of God's mercy to this penitent, one is thus expressed, *she perished not with them that believed not*. This phrase, *οὐ συναπόλωτο, she perished not with*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, which is a double compound.

Of the simple verb, *ἀπολλύμι, perdo*, and of the first composition, *ἀπόλλυμι*, see Chap. x. 33, Sec. 151.

The other preposition, *σὺ*, which maketh it a double compound, signifieth *with*, and hath reference to *others*, which are said *not to believe*; so as she was preserved from a common destruction.

By her not perishing, is meant her preservation from death. Under it is comprised not only the preservation of her person, but also of all that were with her in her house, Josh. vi. 23-25.

The manner of her preservation was this :

1. When the walls of the city fell down, and thereby a way was made for the whole army to enter into the city, Joshua sends to her the spies, who knew where her house was, and promised preservation to her, and all in her house. This is a worthy precedent for generals and other commanders, to ratify the engagements of such as are employed by them.

2. The spies that were preserved by her readily go and accomplish what she had made them promise and swear. This is a good example for such as have received kindness, especially when they are bound by promise and oath to a particular retribution.

3. All in her house are saved, so as covenant and oaths are to be performed to the full.

4. They were for a time left without the camp of Israel, to shew that all to whom external favour is shewed are not presently to be made partakers of all the privileges of the church. There must be a time for such as have been of a false religion, to give good evidence of their true faith and repentance.

5. She and hers dwelt for ever among the Israelites : so as true converts, though strangers, after good proof are to be accounted as these who are born in the church.

*Quest.* 1. Why is no mention made of her husband and children ?

*Ans.* It is probable that she being a harlot, had neither husband nor child.

*Quest.* 2. How is this, that she perished not, attributed to her faith, seeing it was an act of Joshua and the Israelites ?

*Ans.* 1. Her faith made her expect preservation.

2. It made her shew that kindness to the spies which was the procuring cause of her preservation.

3. It made her capitulate with them about her preservation.

4. It made her bind them by promise and oath to save her.

5. It made her tie the scarlet thread to her window as a sign.

6. It made her, with all her kindred, to abide in her house, whereby she and they were saved.

This fruit of faith giveth a proof that faith may keep believers from common destruction. Thus Noah and they that were with him in the ark were preserved from the general deluge. See more hereof in the *Plaster for a Plague*, on Num. xvi. 45, Secs. 12, 13, &c.

Under this preservation all those that were in

Rahab's family were preserved, Josh. vi. 22, 23. It giveth proof that they who belong to believers may reap much good by them, Acts xxvii. 24, Luke xix. 9, Acts xvi. 15, 31.

This ariseth not from any desert of faith, but merely from that respect which God beareth to believers.

1. This teacheth such as belong to believers,

(1.) To bless God for that lot that is fallen unto them.

(2.) There to abide, John vi. 68.

(3.) To be subject to such as believe, 1 Tim. vi. 2.

(4.) To pray for them, Gen. xxiv. 12.

2. This directeth such as have liberty to choose their habitation in a nation, city, parish, or house, to choose it where believers are, as Ruth i. 16, John i. 38, Exod. xii. 38. Thus may they expect a blessing.

*Sec. 185. Of the danger of obstinate infidelity.*

The parties who perished are said to be, ἀπειθήσαντες, *they that believed not*. This phrase is the interpretation of one Greek compound, whereof see Chap. iii. 18, Sec. 171. There it is shewn how it signifieth both unbelief, and also disobedience. Both these significations are here noted by our English translators, one in the text, the other in the margin ; both of them may here very well stand.

The former, of unbelief, may have reference to her faith : she believed that the God of Israel was the only true God, and that he had given them the land of Canaan ; answerably she desired to live among them, and to be of the communion of saints, and thereupon she was preserved ; they believed no such thing, and thereupon were destroyed.

The latter, of disobedience, may have reference both to their former lewd conversation (which was a disobedience against God's holy law written in their hearts), and also to their stiff standing out all the seven days that the city was compassed about, wherein they did not yield any whit at all, nor hold out any white flag of agreement.

This giveth proof that infidelity and obstinacy cause destruction.

An apostle rendereth this to be the reason of the destruction of the old world, 1 Peter iii. 20 ; and our apostle rendereth this to be the reason of their destruction who perished in the wilderness, Chap. iii. 18, Secs. 170, 171.

1. This layeth a sinner open to God's wrath, John iii. 36.

2. It maketh men neglect means of preservation, John iii. 18.

3. It occasioneth men to plunge themselves into danger, Exod. ix. 21, and xiv. 23.

1. This informs us in the fearful nature of infidelity and obstinacy.

The temporal destructions which they bring are

enough to manifest them to be very fearful : but much more eternal, Rev. xxi. 8.

2. Learn hereby to take heed of standing out against God. 'It is hard to kick against pricks,' Acts ix. 5.

Sec. 186. *Of the lawfulness of spies.*

An especial fruit of Rahab's faith is thus set down, *when she had received the spies with peace.*

This phrase, *when she had received*, is set down in a participle, thus, *δεδωμένη, having received*; she first received the spies, and afterwards was preserved from destruction.

They whom she received are here styled, *κατασκοπεύς, spies.*

This noun is a compound; the simple verb, *σκοπέω*, whence it cometh, signifieth *to mark*, Rom. xvi. 17, Phil. iii. 17, and *to consider*, Gal. vi. 1.

The compound verb, *κατασκοπέω*, signifieth *to spy out*, Gal. ii. 4; thence this noun, *κατασκοπεύς*, fitly translated *spies*.

This hath reference to those two men whom Joshua sent forth to spy out the land secretly. Another apostle calleth them, *ἀγγέλους, messengers*, James ii. 25. They are called *messengers* by reason of their warrant: they went not of themselves, but upon his ordering who had the chief command over them. They are called *spies* by reason of the end why they were sent, even privily to spy out the land.

*Quest.* Seeing God had promised the land to them, what need they send spies beforehand?

*Ans.* 1. To use warrantable means for the accomplishment of God's promises, Dan. ix. 2, 3.

2. To strengthen the faith of the people by understanding the fear of their enemies, whereof those spies gave them notice, Josh. ii. 24. Thus dealt God with Gideon, Judges vii. 9-11.

Here we have two things to be observed—

1. Joshua's prudence and providence in ordering matters so, as his soldiers might be the better encouraged to go on.

2. The negligence of the enemy, who, notwithstanding the fame of the Israelites coming over Jordan with a purpose to possess Canaan, are so careless of their city, as spies had advantage to come in and view their city. Indeed, afterwards they did 'straitly shut up their city,' Josh. vi. 1; but that was too late, the spies then had done their work. Thus God, to accomplish his work, can give wisdom to some, and stupefy others.

That which is here noted concerning Rahab's receiving spies as a fruit of her faith, giveth proof that spies are warrantable. It cannot be doubted but that Joshua herein had God's approbation; yea, the Lord himself doth expressly command this, Num. xiii. 2, 3.

*Obj.* A very evil event followed upon the return of the spies that were first sent to search Canaan, Num. xiii. 32, &c., and xiv. 1, &c.

*Ans.* Lawfulness of actions are not to be judged by events. There may be failings in sundry circumstances about warrantable actions, whereby the Lord may be provoked to cross them: instance Judges xx. 21, 15. It was the cowardice and faithlessness of the spies, not the unlawfulness of their action, that caused the fearful events that followed thereupon. God's people much used this kind of policy against their enemies, as Judges i. 23, 24, and xviii. 2, 1 Sam. xxvi. 4.

This may be an especial means to find out the counsels, intents, plots, and policies of enemies, the knowledge whereof is a great advantage in war, but ignorance thereof a great disadvantage, 2 Kings vi. 11.

This therefore hath ever been counted one of the lawful stratagems of war, as Abraham's pursuing enemies by night, Gen. xiv. 15, and Joshua's laying men in ambush, Josh. viii. 3, &c., so Judges xx. 29, &c.

By this means men have preserved themselves, as David, 1 Sam. xxvi. 3, 4, and enemies have been destroyed, as Judges xviii. 9, 10, 27.

*Obj.* This seems to be a treacherous circumventing of men.

*Ans.* There is no treachery therein, because it is not against trust and truth. Where the war is just, enemies may be surprised or vanquished by fraud or force, openly or secretly.<sup>1</sup> It stands both with prudence and valour to entrap or beat down an enemy any way.

On the other side, it argues much improvidence to be circumvented for want of spies.

The application of this point especially concerneth governors of states and commanders in wars.

Sec. 187. *Of Rahab's receiving the spies.*

Concerning Rahab's receiving the fornamed spies, the history expresseth these particular circumstances:

1. She gave them entertainment in her house.

2. Inquiry being made after them, she hid them.

3. By her cunning speech she kept them who were sent to search for them [not] to seek any further in her house for them.

4. She used means for their fair escape.

5. She gave them advice, after they were to be gone from her, how to remain in safety.

*Quest.* Was it lawful thus to receive spies against her own country?

*Ans.* 1. These were the people of God whom she received.

2. Her countrymen were by God himself devoted to destruction.

3. Their land was by the supreme Lord given to the Israelites.

4. She knew that the death of the spies might

<sup>1</sup> ἡ δολφ ἡε βεγ.—*Antigone*.

Dolus an virtus, quis in hoste requirit?—*Virg.*

more exasperate the Israelites, and that their life could not prejudice her countrymen.

5. She did it in no treachery or hatred, nor for any filthy lucre, or any other by-respect.

6. That which she did was by special instinct, and by an extraordinary spirit.

On the forementioned grounds she is said to receive them, *μὴ ὁμίλῃς, with peace*: that is, as special friends, kindly, safely, securely, not as enemies, treacherously—not practising any ill against them, but sending them away in peace.

This pattern sheweth that men in danger are to be preserved from such as seek their lives. Hereof see more, Ver. 23, Sec. 125.

Sec. 188. *Of dismissing in peace such as confide in us.*

The addition of this last phrase, *with peace*, added to Rahab's act in receiving the spies, giveth a clear proof that they who are taken into protection must, as far as may be, be dismissed in safety. Memorable in this respect is the example of Lot, in entertaining the two that he took into his house, Gen. xix. 7, &c. The like is noted of the old man of Gibeah, Judges xix. 22, &c.; and of the woman in Bahurim, 2 Sam. xvii. 18, 19, &c.; and of Jonathan, 1 Sam. xx. 42; and of Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 13; and of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xxii. 11. We have for this the pattern of God himself, Jer. xxxvi. 26. And his express charge for 'hiding the outcasts, and not bewraying him that wandereth,' Isa. xvi. 3.

1. Truth and fidelity requireth as much.

2. This is the main end of undertaking protection, to dismiss them in safety. 'Do nothing to these men,' saith Lot, 'for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof,' Gen. xix. 8.

Great therefore is their treachery who bewray such as put themselves under their protection. This was the sin of the Ziplites (1 Sam. xxiii. 19) which occasioned David to pen the fifty-fourth Psalm against them. This was it, that as a perpetual infamy occasioned this style, 'Judas the traitor,' Luke vi. 16.

Sec. 189. *Of equivocation.*

About Rahab's receiving and dismissing the spies in peace, it is noted in the history, that she answered the officers whom the king sent to apprehend the spies, with these words, 'I wist not whence they were, and whither the men went I wot not,' Josh. ii. 4, 5.

Here a question is raised, whether these words may be justified or no?

*Ans.* Surely no; for she did well know that they came from the camp of Israel, and she herself directed them in the way whither they went; so as her answer was against a known truth.

*Obj.* Her example is here produced, even in receiving and dismissing the spies, as an effect of faith.

*Ans.* In the general, that was an act of faith, and so approved, but not in the particular circumstances

thereof. Rahab's answer is somewhat like to the direction which Rebekah gave to her son Jacob: in the general, Rebekah's direction and intent was a fruit of great faith, for it had respect unto the promise of God made unto Jacob, in these words, 'the elder shall serve the younger,' Gen. xxv. 23; but in sundry circumstances it can no way be approved, Gen. xxvii. 6, 7, &c. It pleaseth the Lord in tender compassion to pass by many infirmities of his children, when he observeth an upright heart, and an aim to accomplish his promises. Thus did God here accept of Rahab's faith, manifested by many fruits, Sec. 182, and graciously pass over her infirmities.

There are some that do excuse Rahab, even in the circumstance before noted; and that two ways.

1. By freeing it from all untruth; thus, Rahab's house being a common inn, and divers passengers lodging therein, some might then come into her house, and of them she might say, 'I wist not whence they were;' for innkeepers do not know whence all the guests that come to their house are: she might also say of them, 'whither the men went I wot not.' Thus by her speaking of other persons, she might speak the truth.

*Ans.* 1. There is no expression in the history of any such matter.

2. There is little probability thereof.

3. That had been no direct answer to the question propounded about the spies, and in that respect an untruth.

2. By making up that which Rahab uttered with a mental reservation, thus, I wist not whence they were, to make them known to you, and whither the men went I wot not, to betray them to you.

This Jesuits call *equivocation*.

Because in these latter years a great controversy hath been raised by popish Jesuits about equivocation, I will endeavour plainly to set down the state of the question and arguments, *pro* and *con*.

Equivocation, taken in the most ancient and accustomed sense, is an ambiguous signification of a word, or a doubtful disposition of a sentence. To equivocate is, in general, to use a word or sentence so ambiguously as it may be taken diversely, in this sense, or that sense. Thus saith Christ, 'Lazarus sleepeth,' John xi. 11. Christ meaneth the sleep of death: the disciples take it of the natural sleep of the body. Equivocation in a sentence is, when a sentence is so composed as it may be diversely taken. Thus it is said that 'Ahaziah was forty and two years old when he began to reign,' 2 Chron. xxii. 2. This may be taken either of Ahaziah's own person, or otherwise of the stock whence he came by the mother's side, which had continued till that time, forty and two years.

This kind of equivocation is a rhetorical figure, and intendeth the same that a homonymy doth.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the English Annotations on 2 Chron. xxii. 1, *ἡμωσεν*. *Equivocation*.

This figure is frequently used in Scripture. It is nothing but an ambiguity in speech; such a one Christ useth in these words, 'If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?' John xxi. 22, 23.

These are not unlawful; for,

1. There is no untruth in them.

2. There are rules to find out the true and full sense of them.

3. They are of good use to exercise a man's understanding, to sharpen his wit, to make him search after the meaning of what he reads and hears; yea, and to discover men's dullness, as Mark viii. 17, &c.

To this head may be referred all manner of tropes, as,

Metonymies, when a place is put for the inhabitants, Lam. i. 1, 2.

Ironies, when the contrary is then expressed, 1 Kings xviii. 27, and xxii. 15.

Metaphors, to which may be referred all sorts of parables.

Synecdoches, as when the general is put for some particulars. Christ healed all sicknesses, Mat. xxiv. 23. which is all kind of sicknesses, Mat. xxiv. 23.

So figures, as, *prosopopeias*, when persons are brought in speaking, which do not so speak; as in the story of Dives and Lazarus, Luke xvi. 24, &c.

Apophyses, when a sentence is broken off, and a part thereof left to be understood, which was usual in forms of oaths, Ps. xcv. 11. 'I swear in my wrath, if they enter into my rest;' this was God's oath. A like is noted of man's oath. See Chap. iii. 11, Sec. 115.

The like may be said of concealing a part of truth, which the prophet did, Jer. xxxviii. 27; and of riddles, Judges xiv. 14; and of hyperboles. See Ver. 12, Sec. 60.

Jesuits, besides these and others like unto them, have invented and broached another kind of equivocation, which they themselves do term a *mental equivocation*; that is, when a false speech is uttered, yet so as something is reserved in the mind, which if it were offered, would make the speech true. An instance hereof is thus given: one is asked concerning another, whom he hath oft seen, oft talked with, and with whom he hath been very familiar, whether he ever saw him or no; he answereth, that he never saw him. This is a clear untruth; but to make that answer true, this clause, *in heaven*, is reserved in his mind, which expressed would make the answer full and true, thus, I never saw him in heaven. We cannot find throughout the whole Scripture one proof for such a mental equivocation.

Because at the first hearing of it, it seemeth very strange, they propound sundry cautions thereabout: such as these,

1. The mental reservation must be such as it may make the sentence true, if it were uttered. Yet by the way, that great Jesuit and priest, called by

them Father Parsons, giveth an instance, that though it were uttered yet cannot make a true sense. It is this; a man being desired to lend his friend a horse, answereth that he hath never a one—meaning an ox. Put this reservation to the sentence uttered, and then mark what truth, yea, what congruity there is therein.

2. Equivocation must be before an incompetent judge: which is, as they expound it, any magistrate that is not of the Catholic, whereby they mean the Romish, religion. By the way, let me here again note that some of their priests have affirmed that Jesuits have used mental equivocation before the pope himself, and before cardinals.

3. Equivocation must be in weighty causes, namely, to conceal a priest or other papist, to keep him from taking, or to save the credit of such as have entered into their holy orders, or any way to succour the Romish faith. Yet some of them permit it in a money matter, as if one should come to borrow a hundred pounds, who is not like to repay it, he may be put off with an equivocation.

They go so far in this point of equivocation, as if they be demanded whether they do equivocate or no, they may answer by another equivocation, that they do not. If they be demanded the third time, whether they do not then equivocate, they may answer the third time negatively by a third equivocation, and thus proceed without stint.

Yea, further, they avouch that a man may not only simply equivocate, but also confirm his equivocation by oath.

As for our parts, though we grant that ambiguity of speech, which is a verbal equivocation, may be used, as hath been before proved, yet there are restraints and limitations to be added thereto, such as these:

1. That the ambiguity be such as may by due observation of some circumstance or other be discerned, as where Christ said, 'Take heed of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees,' Mat. xvi. 6. Though at first the disciples mistook him, yet Christ, putting them in mind of his miracles in feeding five thousand with five loaves, they presently perceived that he meant the leaven of doctrine. All the ambiguous speeches in Scripture are such as, by diligent observation of the words and circumstances about them, may be found out.

2. That the ambiguity of speech be not against the intent and conceit of him who propounds the question; especially if it be propounded by a magistrate, or by one that is in authority to require an answer; yea, also if it be propounded by any to whom I think it meet to give an answer. Thus the Baptist, though he answered by ambiguity of speech when he denied that he was that prophet, John i. 21, yet he answered according to the true intent of them who propounded the question.

3. That it be without any purpose of any wrong;

for a malicious end turns that action, which might otherwise be good, into sin.

Upon these cautions it may be lawful to use ambiguity of speech, whether it be by tropes or figures.

Our adversaries' positions are clean contrary to these limitations. For they say,

1. That such ambiguity may be used as is impossible to be found out by any but by him that utters it. For instance, if a priest be asked whether he be a priest or no, he may answer negatively, with this reservation, *of Diana, or of the devils*: he is no such priest; who can unfold this?

2. That such ambiguity be used before an incompetent magistrate. By this rule no magistrate of another profession shall be competent. Papists hold protestant magistrates to be incompetent. What if protestants hold the like of popish magistrates? What if infidels hold the like of Christian magistrates? and Christians of infidels? Nay, liberty is hereby given to except against the competency of magistrates that are of the same religion: and to say they came in by bribery, or they have not sufficient parts for their place, or they are partial and unjust, and therefore not competent.

3. That if a man's main intent and principal end be not to deceive, it skilleth not, though both he that propounds the question, and the hearers also, be deceived. Thus they profess to deceive wittingly, though not principally.

That their mental equivocation, even as they themselves have set it down, is unlawful and sinful, may be proved by these arguments.

1. It is a new device, nor warranted by sacred Scriptures, nor by ancient heathen authors. The great philosopher,<sup>1</sup> that hath written much of sundry kinds of ambiguity, never dreamt of this.

2. It justifieth an apparent lie, which is expressly forbidden, Eph. iv. 25.

3. It being confirmed by an oath, will prove to be plain perjury.

4. Many gross absurdities do follow thereupon; such as these,

(1.) Thus all manner of lies may be made truth.

(2.) Thus no man can know whom to believe.

(3.) Thus all honest and faithful commerce, contracts, and other like dealing would be destroyed. For all depend upon the truth of men's words. If words be contrary to their mind, what shall men rest upon?

(4.) Thus there could be no end of controversies; at least of such controversies as cannot be confirmed by witness, for the only means to end such controversies is an oath, Heb. vi. 16. But equivocation causeth a judge to be in doubt, whether that which is sworn be true or no.

(5.) Christian apology, or open confession of the truth of religion, is hereby taken away; for men are

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle.

hereby taught by word to deny their religion, so they have a mental reservation to salve up the matter.

(6.) Christians hereby make their profession odious to Turks, Jews, other infidels, and pagans, who never imagined any such mental reservation, but would take us at our words.

The arguments which Jesuits produce to prove this absurd position are such as these:

1. Unreasonable creatures are cunning in deceiving their hunters, as foxes, hares, badgers, and sundry other; would God then leave man without such cunning evasions as may deceive their persecutors?

*Ans.* 1. It can carry but an unreasonable form of an argument that is so taken from unreasonable creatures.

2. Unreasonable creatures have no rule prescribed them to go by, as reasonable men have.

3. Unreasonable creatures are not called to suffer as reasonable men are.

4. Hunters know, and can find out the means which unreasonable creatures use: but no persecutors can find out the depth of equivocation.

5. There are many other means which God hath afforded his servants to escape by, besides mental equivocation.

6. God oft calls his servants by suffering to bear witness to his truth: should men in such a case equivocate?

*Arg.* 2. Stratagems in war are lawful, Josh. viii. 18.

*Ans.* There is a great difference betwixt stratagems and equivocations; for,

1. Actions, whereof stratagems consist, do expressly affirm nothing, nor deny anything, as words do.

2. In a stratagem there is only a seeming to do this or that when a contrary is intended, but no express asseveration to do it.

3. Stratagems are used by open enemies, who profess to use all the sleights they can to overcome. The fault therefore is in the adverse party if he be deceived, in that he was no more wary and circumspect. But in the case of equivocation a man professeth no deceit, but naked truth.

4. If stratagems be against promise, or performed by lying, they are unlawful; and this the heathens themselves have judged.

*Arg.* 3. They press the many rhetorical figures in Scripture.

*Ans.* There are rules to find out the full sense of those figures; but for finding out the full sense of mental equivocation no rule can be given.

*Arg.* 4. They produce sundry particular instances of saints that have, as they say, equivocated—as,

(1.) Rebekah's and Jacob's dissembling with Isaac, Gen. xxvii. 6, &c.

*Ans.* That is an instance of their infirmity, and no pattern for imitation. The like may be said of Rahab's answering the king's officers, whereof before.

(2.) Elisha's answer to the men of Syria that came to apprehend him, 2 Kings vi. 19.

*Ans.* 1. This was a stratagem against a professed enemy.

2. He was not demanded any question, and so not bound to answer this or that.

(3.) Isaiah's message to Hezekiah, 'Thou shalt die, and not live,' Isa. xxxviii. 1.

*Ans.* There is nothing but plain and open truth herein; for Isaiah spake as he was commanded, and as he himself thought; for Hezekiah's sickness was indeed deadly, according to the nature of it; and if God had not extraordinarily wrought upon him, he had died. That Isaiah knew no other but that Hezekiah should die of that disease, is evident, in that the word of God came again to him, when he carried the news of the king's recovery, ver. 4.

(4.) Jeremiah's answer to the princes, Jer. xxxviii. 27.

*Ans.* His answer is plain, no show of untruth therein; only there was some truth concealed, which makes nothing for equivocation, because he was not demanded whether the king spake to him of yielding to the Chaldeans, or any other thing, beside what he answered.

(5.) John's answer to the Jews, John i. 21.

*Ans.* John answered the truth, and that according to the meaning of the Jews, as this particle of emphasis, 'that prophet,' implieth; for John neither was a prophet, as others, to foretell things to come, nor was he that prophet which Moses spake of, nor was he Elijah, as they meant, in body or soul, but only in spirit and power. That he spake according to their intent, and that plainly, is evident, in that when they asked who he was, he directly answered the truth, saying, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness,' John i. 23.

(6.) The speech of Christ, 'The Son knoweth not the day and hour of judgment,' Mark xiii. 32.

*Ans.* 1. Here is no question propounded to our Saviour; so as it maketh nothing to the point in hand.

2. Christ declareth the truth plainly; for as he was man, he knew not that day and hour. Many other speeches of Christ are alleged, whereof not one maketh for mental reservation; for the ambiguity of them is either in divers acceptions of the word, or in circumstances, which with study and due observation may be found out.

See 190. *Of preferring the church before one's country.*

All the effects that are noted of Rahab's faith did give a plain demonstration that she preferred God's church before her own country. This is a case that admits some limitations. It will not, therefore, be impertinent to shew wherein one's country is to be preferred, and wherein the church.

One's own country is to be preferred in these cases:—

1. In civil affairs: as if a professor of the true religion be a subject in an idolatrous country that joineth near to that other country whereof he is a subject, and both requires his aid against their enemies, or for any other secular affairs, he is bound to prefer his own country before the other.

2. In differences betwixt his own country and another of the true religion, about their rights of titles in secular matters and privileges, he is to prefer his own country; as if there be war betwixt those two nations about such secular rights, he may bear arms under his sovereign, though an idolater, against the other, though of the true religion.

3. In secret differences betwixt his country and the other of the true religion, where the cause is not openly known by the common subjects, a subject is bound to the command of those whose subject he is.<sup>1</sup>

The church may be preferred in such cases as follow:

1. When there is special warrant, either by inward divine instinct (which Rahab had) or by express command. About this point of instinct men must take heed of concealed fantasies and diabolical suggestions.

2. When one's country is by God devoted to destruction. In this case the inhabitants of Babylon are commanded to 'come out of her,' Rev. xviii. 4.

3. When some members of one's country are to be punished for intolerable impiety, and the church is stirred up by God to be an instrument therein. Because the Benjaminites took part with the city of Gibeah, who were of their own tribe in this case, they sinned, and were destroyed, Judges xx. 12, &c.

4. When one's country seeks the ruin of the church merely for religion's sake, he that is of that true religion may take part with the church.

5. When there is such deadly feud betwixt one's country and the church as they cannot both stand together, a true believer may take part with the true church.

In such cases a man may say to those of his country, as Levi did to his father, mother, brethren, and sisters, 'I have not seen them, nor will I acknowledge them,' Deut. xxxiii. 9. A man herein prefers true religion before natural affection, spiritual amity before civil society; yea, God before man.

We are, therefore, in the foresaid cases to pull out the bowels of natural affection, and in the cause of God to prefer him before all, Luke xiv. 26.

The apostle St James, from these effects of Rahab's faith, inferreth that she was 'justified by works,' James ii. 25—meaning that that faith wherewith she was justified was not a bare, naked faith, without works, but a faith that manifested itself by works; and in that respect her works did declare her to be justified; so as a man's inward faith in God, and love of him, must be manifested by works. See

<sup>1</sup> August. contra. Faust. Manich., lib. xxii. cap. 75.

more hereof in the *Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 59.

Sec. 191. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 31.*

Ver. 31. *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not (or, that were disobedient), when she had received the spies with peace.*

The sum of this verse is in two words, *faith's proof*. Hereof are two parts :

1. The point proved.

2. The kind of proof.

In the former we have,

1. The particular grace, *faith*.

2. The person whose faith it was.

The person is described,

1. By her name, *Rahab*.

2. By her condition, *a harlot*.

The latter, which is the kind of proof, admits two considerations :

1. An event that fell out. This is,

(1.) Propounded, in this phrase, *she perished not*.

(2.) Amplified, by the contrary event, which befell others.

In the amplification is set down,

[1.] The kind of judgment implied, in this phrase, *with them*.

[2.] The cause thereof, in this phrase, *that believed not*.

2. An effect. In setting down whereof three branches are expressed :

(1.) The particular act, *she received*.

(2.) The object or persons whom she received, *the spies*.

(3.) The manner how, *with peace*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *The seed of faith is accounted for faith*. Such was the faith here mentioned. See Sec. 181.

II. *God takes notice of penitents by name*. Witness Rahab. See Sec. 182.

III. *Some Gentiles under the law were called*. Such a one was Rahab. See Sec. 182.

IV. *Women may prove worthies*. Rahab was a woman, and here reckoned amongst worthies. See Sec. 182.

V. *Notorious sinners may obtain much mercy*. A harlot rose so did. See Sec. 183.

VI. *God hath penitents in high account*. Rahab was a true penitent. See Sec. 183.

VII. *Faith keeps from common destruction*. See Sec. 184.

VIII. *Others may reap benefit from the faith of some*. By Rahab's faith, all that were in her house were preserved. See Sec. 184.

IX. *God can put difference betwixt different persons*. Rahab perished not with others in the city. See Sec. 184.

X. *Infidelity is the cause of destruction*. They perished who believed not. See Sec. 185.

XI. *Spies are lawful*. This is here implied by the mention of spies in this place. See Sec. 186.

XII. *Men in danger are to be preserved from such as seek their lives*. Thus did Rahab preserve these spies. See Sec. 187.

XIII. *They who are taken under protection must be dismissed in peace*. So were these spies. See Sec. 188.

XIV. *Mental equivocation is sinful*. See Sec. 189.

XV. *There are cases wherein the church is to be preferred before one's own country*. Rahab's case was such a one. See Sec. 190.

XVI. *Faith is justified by works*. So did Rahab here justify her faith. See Sec. 190.

Sec. 192. *Of registering some specials in public records.*

Ver. 32. *And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah, and of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets.*

The apostle having long insisted on a distinct narration of the fruits of the faith of sundry worthies, he here contracts his catalogue, that his epistle might not swell too much.

The sacred Scripture setteth out the examples of many other worthies, which the apostle supposed to be very pertinent to his purpose. Therefore he doth not abruptly break off his induction of particulars, but elegantly contracts it, and that,

1. By a bare expression of their names, ver. 32.

2. By a concise declaration of the common effects of their faith, in the verses following.

He passeth from his distinct description of particulars to a brief enumeration of others, by a transition in these words, *What shall I more say? the time would fail, &c.*

This transition consists of a rhetorical communication, wherein a question is propounded, and an answer made by himself, which maketh it to be a rhetorical figure.

This question, *What shall I more say?* implieth that he had much more to say. In the Greek it runs thus word for word, *καὶ τί ἐτι λέγω, and what do I yet say?* which implieth a purpose to break off his former distinct expression of the fruits of the faith of particular persons, though he had much more to say. For in the former catalogue he culled out some only of those who are recorded in the five books of Moses and in Joshua, till the church was brought into the promised land. He passed over Enoch, Shem or Melchisedech, Rebekah, Aaron, Caleb, and sundry others, whereby he hinteth that God had more worthies than are requisite to be made known.

1. There were more recorded in the Old Testament, yea, and in the books of Moses and Joshua, than are here recited.

2. There were without question many more in the



several ages of the world than are recorded in the foresaid books, or in any other part of the Bible. It is said of Enos, that 'then began men to call upon the name of the Lord,' Gen. iv. 26. Yet none of the men that did so are by name registered. It is said of all those pious long-lived patriarchs that lived before and after the flood, that 'they begot sons and daughters,' Gen. v. 4, &c., and xi. 11, &c. No doubt but that many of those sons and daughters gave good proof of their true faith: yet are they not by name registered. It is of persons as of things. Many commendable things were done which are not set down, Heb. v. 11, John xx. 31, and xxi. 25; so many persons that did worthily are not in public records.

(1.) In regard of those saints themselves, it was enough that God took special notice of them, registered their name in his book of life, gave them evidences of his favour while they lived, received their souls to glory when they died, and gave them assurance of the resurrection of their bodies.

(2.) In regard of others that from time to time lived after them, it is sufficient that God hath afforded them so many patterns and examples registered in his book as he hath done. By them direction and encouragement sufficient are given to run the race as they did. They who are not moved by them would not be moved with millions more, if they were registered.

1. Considering that many worthies have had their names buried with their bodies, let not us be over solicitous about memorials after our death, but leave it to the divine providence, and to the wisdom of our survivors. There may be a good use of chronicles and of memorials of some men's names and acts, yet there may be too great excess therein: some things that in their compass are very useful, may beyond their compass be unuseful, if not hurtful. Should there be memorials of all good men's names, I suppose the world would not contain them, especially if thereto were added their meditations, sermons, conferences, works, and labours.

2. This may stay those who, in their time and generation, do the will of God, faithfully employing their talent, and doing much good by their words and works, and yet nothing thereof remembered after death. It is enough that in their generation they have been enabled to do good, and that the present age in which they lived had the benefit thereof. They may so much the more rest herein, in that the ever-living God knows it, remembers it, and will abundantly recompense it. Their works will follow them, Rev. xiv. 13.

The answer which the apostle himself gives to his own question, thus, *for the time will fail me*, being a reason of his forbearing to go on in setting down more particular examples, as he had done before, giveth us to understand that there were very many more whom he might have produced. The multi-

tude of believers is very great: very many are registered in sacred Scripture, which the apostle styleth a 'cloud of witnesses,' Heb. xii. 1; but unquestionless there were many more, age after age, whose names are concealed. When Elijah thought that he had been left alone, God knew seven thousand more, and that in Israel, 1 Kings xix. 18, besides those that were in Judah. If there were, before Christ was exhibited, multitudes of believers, what are there since? considering these promises, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,' Joel ii. 28; 'and many shall come from the east and west, and sit down with Abraham,' &c., Mat. viii. 11. See Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 91.

This reason, as it hath reference to the altering of the style, in contracting such points as he more enlarged himself upon in the former examples, sheweth that tediousness must wisely be avoided. 'Having many things to write unto you,' saith an apostle to an elect lady, 'I would not write with paper and ink,' 2 John 12; the like he saith to Gaius, 3 John 13.

Tediousness dulls the mind, wearies the spirit, hinders devotion, draws away affection, yea, and many times deprives people of that comfort which otherwise they might receive from God's ordinances. Some who have some while given good attention, and that with cheerful affection, by overmuch tediousness have been so dulled in their devotion as their former comfort hath been taken away.

It is therefore a point of prudence somewhat carefully to observe ordinary times limited for sacred duties.

There are times wherein men may enlarge themselves both in praying and preaching—namely, when days are set apart for those duties; for then people come prepared to hold out the day.

As for private duties performed by one alone, as any finds the vigour of his spirit to be in him, he may enlarge himself. But we must not measure others' spirits by our own. Christ, when he was alone, spent nights in prayer, Luke vi. 12. But we do not read that he did so with his disciples.

§ Sec. 192. *Of the apostle's setting the more excellent before others.*

Upon the foresaid transition the apostle continues his catalogue of worthies, but much contracted.

In this verse he sets them down two ways,

1. By their particular name.

2. By the function of some of them, in this word, *prophets*.

There are six set down by name, whereof four were judges, one a king, one a judge and a prophet both, which is Samuel.

The four judges are, as the apostle hath set them down, Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah.

There were in all, betwixt Joshua, their general, and Saul, their first king, fifteen judges—1. Othniel;

2. Ehud; 3. Shamgar; 4. Barak; 5. Gideon; 6. Abimelech; 7. Tola; 8. Jair; 9. Jephthah; 10. Ibzan; 11. Elon; 12. Abdon; 13. Samson; 14. Eli; 15. Samuel.

Out of these only five are called; the rest were either not worthy to be named (as Abimelech, who usurped that dignity by fraud and blood), or had no memorable matter recorded of them in their histories, as Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon. The others, as Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, and Eli, did no greater matters than those which were done by those who are named; therefore there was no great need to mention them, especially in this place, where the apostle labours to contract his discourse.

In the particulars which are set down, the precise order of the history is not observed; for Gideon, who is in the first place, was after Barak; and Samson, the third, was after Jephthah; and David, the fifth, was after Samuel.

Hereupon some say that the apostle had an eye only on his matter, to set down some choice worthies as they came to his head, but had no respect to method or order; but I suppose that he rather aimed at some special thing in altering the order of these, and that might be to prefer the more excellent; for there is a double method.

One of time, which he observed in the former part of his catalogue.

The other of worth; for Gideon had a more excellent spirit than Barak, and Samson than Jephthah.

As for Samuel, he is put after king David, immediately before the prophets, because he was a prime prophet.

We may hence infer, that the greater grace men are endued withal, the more honourably they are to be esteemed.

Grace is the best, the most excellent, most divine, and most honourable quality that any can be endued withal.

Labour, therefore, to abound and excel in grace. See Ver. 4, Sec. 11, and Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 91.

#### Sec. 194. *Of men's fitness to their function.*

All the six worthies that are here mentioned agree in one general, that they were endued with an extraordinary spirit.

Of their distinct and different gifts we shall speak when we come severally to touch them.

They all jointly, and every one in particular, give proof that God enables men to that whereunto he calls them.

The four first were extraordinarily called of God to be judges or generals over his people. Three were judges—Gideon, Samson, and Jephthah. Barak was a general under Deborah; for she judged Israel, Judges iv. 4, 6.

Gideon was called by an angel, Judges vi. 14; Barak by Deborah, a prophetess, Judges iv. 6; Sam-

son by an angel at his first conception, Judges xiii. 5; Jephthah by the choice of the people testified before the Lord, Judges xi. 11. As for David, he was expressly anointed by God's commandment, 1 Sam. xvi. 12.

And Samuel was called of God, 1 Sam. iii. 20, 21. In like manner Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, and other judges, and the prophets, were extraordinarily gifted, because they were called to extraordinary functions.

Only Abimelech, who was not called of God, but treacherously thrust in himself, Judges ix. 1, 5, was not endued with any spiritual gift, but rather with a diabolical spirit of dissension.

The extraordinary gifts wherewith such as were called of God were endued, are apparent evidences of God's prudence and providence.

Thus God gifted them, that his work might be the better effected by them.

1. This extraordinary work of God affords an ordinary rule to such as enter upon any work of God, to have good assurance that they are in some competent measure enabled thereto.

2. It directeth those that are in place to set any apart unto God's work, to make good proof of them, whether they be enabled thereunto or no.

#### Sec. 195. *Of Gideon's names.*

The first particular person here mentioned by the apostle is Gideon, concerning whom we will consider, as we find in his history, three points.

1. His names.
2. His infirmity.
3. His excellencies.

He had two names.

One was *Gideon*, which is derived from a Hebrew word, גִּדְעֹן, that signifieth *to cut down*; so as *Gideon*, גִּדְעֹן, importeth *a destroyer*.

How fitly this name agreed to him, it is evident by that great destruction that he brought upon the enemies of God's church.

The other name was *Jerub-baal*. This is compounded of two Hebrew words. The former, *Jerub*, is derived from a verb, רוּבַּע *vel* רִיב, that signifieth *to contend*, or to plead against. The latter part, *baal*, is derived from a word, בַּעַל, that signifieth *husband* or *lord*, and it was usually attributed to an idol. The meaning, then, of the whole name, יִרְבֵּעַל, is, *a pleader against Baal*.

The reason of this name was given him from his act in throwing down the altar of Baal; and it was by way of derision, that no man might touch him for that act, Judges vi. 31, 32.

Both of those names were fit names, whereby a memorial of his zeal and success against false gods, and enemies of God's church, was preserved.

This giveth proof of their prudence who give significant and pertinent names to persons.

Sec. 196. *Of Gideon's infirmities.*

Though Gideon were in many respects a worthy man, yet he had manifold infirmities, such as these :

1. Doubting of God's presence in his church, by reason of the afflictions thereof, Judges vi. 13.

2. Opposing his meanness against God's express charge, Judges vi. 15.

3. Requiring a sign, after God's will was expressly manifested, Judges vi. 16, 17.

4. Fearing death, because he had seen the face of an angel, Judges vi. 22, 23.

5. Fearing to do in the day that which he was commanded by God to do, Judges vi. 21.

6. Not contenting himself with one sign, but asking sign upon sign, Judges vi. 17, 37, 39, and vii. 10.

7. Setting up a dangerous monument, which was an *ephod*, Judges viii. 27. An *ephod* was a holy vestment, and it being so costly a one as he made it, it could not be but very dangerous. People are prone to idolatry and superstition.

8. Polygamy, Judges viii. 30.

9. Taking a concubine to many wives, Judges viii. 31.

10. His dotage on his concubine, manifested by the name given to the child which he had by her, Judges viii. 31. The name was *Abimelech*, which signifieth *father of a king, or a chief king*. It was a common name of the kings of the Philistines. It was in itself too high a name, and it might add somewhat to his son's ambition after the kingdom.

These infirmities in such a man give instance that true justifying faith, yea, that a strong and great faith, may stand with many and great infirmities.

Sec. 197. *Of Gideon's excellencies.*

The excellencies noted of Gideon in his history are these :

1. His providence in time of extremity. When enemies in great troops invaded the land, and spoiled what they could come by, he got corn, and threshed it in a secret place, to keep it from the enemy, that so he might thereby sustain himself and his father's house, Judges vi. 11. This point of providence is commended in Joseph, Gen. xli. 48, and pressed by the wise man, Prov. vi. 8.

2. His valour, Judges vi. 12. This by the heathen is reckoned amongst their cardinal virtues. Such as were set apart to a weighty employment are commanded to be valorous, Deut. xxxi. 7 ; Josh. i. 6, 9. It is of excellent use for the managing of weighty works.

3. His acknowledgment of God to be the disposer of all, Judges vi. 13 ; for though he do somewhat too dilidantly expostulate about Israel's present case, yet there is an apparent acknowledgment of God to be their former preserver and deliverer—yea, and to be he who brought them into trouble. Persuasion hereof

is an especial means to keep in our souls a true fear of God.

4. His humble lowly mind, Judges vi. 15. Though it were a weakness in him to oppose his mean estate against God's express word, yet his acknowledgment of his meanness argued a humble mind, which is in itself a principal grace, and addeth a grace to all other graces.

5. His desire to have his faith strengthened in God's promise, Judges vi. 17. It was a weakness to need strengthening ; but his care to have that which was weak made strong was commendable.

6. His gratitude to him that brought him the glad tidings of his delivering Israel, Judges vi. 18. He took him to be a man of God, and answerably desired to give him such entertainment as he thought fit for him. This gratitude is very acceptable, both to God and man.

7. His liberal hospitality, Judges vi. 19. Bounty and liberality much magnify a courtesy.

8. His fear and trembling at God's presence, Judges vi. 22. Indeed, there was too much excess therein. Yet take away the excess, and the affection is commendable. We ought to fear and tremble at God's presence, as Gen. xxviii. 17. It will work in us a reverent respect towards God.

9. His piety towards God, manifested both by building an altar to God (which was in those days a solemn rite of worshipping God thereby), and also by the name he gave to the altar, *ידוה שלום*, which signifieth *the Lord giving peace*. Thus he caused a memorial of God's kindness to be continued to posterity, Judges vi. 24.

10. His obedience to God's charge, and that both in the general substance and particular circumstances thereof, Judges vi. 27, 28. This is a real demonstration of that high esteem which we have of God, and of that good respect we bear to him. This is further manifested by his reducing his army to the number of three hundred.

11. His prudence, in making preparation for that work wherunto God had called him, Judges vi. 34, 35. This care of preparing means may well stand with true faith ; yea, it is a fruit thereof.

12. His care to encourage others to that whereof himself was confident, Judges vii. 15. This argueth true Christian love, whereof we have a worthy pattern, Acts xxvi. 29.

13. His care to raise up the hearts of his soldiers to God, Judges vii. 18. Though he would have them acknowledge himself (whom God had deputed) for their general, yet would he have them rest on God, as the first mover, and chief author of that which they went about. Thus he makes God the principal, himself only the instrument ; and so gives unto God that which is God's, and reserves to Caesar that which was Caesar's, as Mat. xxii. 21.

14. His meek spirit and soft answer, whereby he

pacified the furious rage of the Ephraimites, Judges viii. 1-3. A blessed effect followed thereupon, contrary to that which is noted of Jephthah, Judges xii. 1, &c. Hereby is verified that of the wise man, Prov. xv. 1.

15. His constancy, in pursuing a victory well begun, Judges viii. 4, 11, 12. Many failing herein lose the glory and benefit of their former good success, which the prophet implieth, 2 Kings, xiii. 19.

16. His care to refresh his soldiers, weary with pursuing their enemies, Judges viii. 5, 8. Jonathan doth set out the benefit hereof, 1 Sam. xiv. 27.

17. His just revenge on the inhuman and scornful men of Succoth and Peniel, Judges viii. 15, &c. However he might seem therein cruel, yet it was both just and expedient.

18. His modesty, in refusing that honour which the people would have conferred upon him, Judges viii. 23. How few are of that mind!

19. His care to preserve peace, after he had got full conquest upon his enemies; for it is noted, that after that conquest the country was in quietness all his days, Judges xviii. 28. This is the most proper end of war.

20. His contentedness with his own private means, Judges viii. 29. In which respect he is said to 'dwell in his own house.'

The principal observation concerning Gideon's faith is, that it made him with three hundred unarmed men, upon God's command, set upon an army of many thousands, Judges vii. 7; so as faith resteth on God with small means as confidently as with great, 1 Sam. xiv. 6, 2 Chron. xiv. 11.

Sec. 198. *Of Barak's name, infirmities, and virtues.*

The second particular is Barak, which, according to the notation of the Hebrew word, בָּרַק, signifies lightning, Ezek. i. 13. He was a terrible lightning to Sisera and his host.

He was chosen general against the army of Jabin, king of Canaan, who had oppressed Israel twenty years, Judges iv. 2, 3.

One infirmity is noted of him, which was this, that being called of God he refused to go, except Deborah would go with him, Judges iv. 8. This shewed both diffidence in God's power and truth, and also disobedience to God's charge. But it seemeth that these came rather from the weakness of his flesh, than from the obstinacy of his disposition; for he quickly recovered himself.

His virtues were these:

1. Prudence, in preparing an army out of those among whom he dwelt, and whom he might best command, and in whom he might best confide.

2. Obedience, in ordering matters according to the charge given unto him, Judges iv. 6, 10.

3. Courage, in setting upon a huge host well prepared with so few as he did, Judges iv. 3, 14.

4. Constancy, in pursuing the victory, Judges iv. 16.

5. Piety, in returning the praise to God, Judges v. 1.

In Barak's example we have a proof that such as are weak in faith may become strong.

Sec. 199. *Of Samson's name, and sin.*

The third particular is of Samson.

Some will have his name, שִׁשְׁי, derived from a noun, שֶׁשֶׁי, which signifieth the sun. The last letter save one of the name (י, *affixum relativum*), is relative, as intimating his sun, in reference to God. The last letter of all, י, is the note of a noun. Thus it implieth two things,

1. That he was appointed of God.

2. That he was set amongst the people as the sun among the stars, more excellent than any of them: and that by reason of the power of God's Spirit on him.

This was a fit name: for by reason of his unparalleled strength, his fame shined throughout the world. Never was there such a man heard of for strength.

The heathen report much of Hercules. Certainly the ground of that strength which they divulge about their Hercules, arose from some fragments that they had heard concerning this Samson.

Many of their reports concerning Hercules are fabulous; but if all were true, yet are they not comparable to that which is recorded in the word of truth of Samson.

One notorious fruit of the flesh is noted of him, which was his strange dotage on strange flesh.

For once and again he went in to harlots, Judges xvi. 1, 4. Hereby he implunged himself into great dangers. Once by his great strength he escaped the danger; but afterwards by the impudent importunity of his cursed Delilah, whom he too too much doted upon, he was brought to bewray wherein his great strength lay. Thus he fell into his enemies' hands.

Hereby it is manifest that God will not suffer scandalous crimes to pass unpunished—no, not in his dearest children. 'I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes,' saith the Lord of his dear children, Ps. lxxxix. 32.

This is a good item to such as have evidences of the Spirit's abode in them; that they be not too proud, too bold, too secure, too loose.

Sec. 200. *Of Samson's excellencies.*

The special excellencies commended in Samson were two—

1. His great strength.

2. His right use thereof.

The greatness of his strength was manifested two ways.

1. By the things which he did.

2. By the means, and manner of doing them.

For the things which he accomplished, they were such as thereby nothing seemed too strong for him: he vanquished and removed whatsoever stood against him.

1. He tore a lion, Judges xiv. 6.

2. He oft slew multitudes of men, and that by himself alone, Judges xiv. 19, and xv. 8, 15.

3. He carried away the gates and posts of a city.

These were, questionless, very massy, and fast fixed in their places, Judges xvi. 4.

4. He brake cords, withes, and all other bonds whereby they sought to bind him, as flax burnt with fire.

5. He pulled down at once two strong pillars of a great house, the roof whereof could bear three thousand people, Judges xvi. 29, 30.

The means and manner of doing many of these were with his own hands; so he tore a lion, Judges xiv. 6, and took the doors and posts of the gate of a city, and carried them away upon his own shoulders, Judges xvi. 3. And by himself alone brake all the bands wherewith he was bound. All the means that we read that ever he used, was once the jaw-bone of an ass, wherewith he slew a thousand men, Judges xv. 15. It is said, that he 'smote his enemies hip and thigh, with a great slaughter,' Judges xv. 8; that is, with kicking and spurning them.

As Samson's excellency was manifested by the greatness of his strength, so also by the right use thereof.

This was manifested two ways.

1. By using it against the enemies of God and his church. Though his own countrymen provoked him much, by coming to bind him, and to deliver him into the hands of his enemies, yet he was so far from taking revenge of them, as voluntarily he suffered them to bind him, and to deliver him up to his enemies, Judges xv. 13.

2. In all his conflicts with enemies he never put any to hazard but himself. Other judges, generals, and commanders, in war against their enemies, have put their soldiers upon the greatest dangers.

This instance of Samson giveth evidence of God's power in enabling his people against their enemies. This general might be proved by many other instances, but none like to this.

In God is all power. He can derive it to whom he pleaseth, and in as great measure as seemeth good to himself, so as a divine power shall be manifested in human weakness.

A great encouragement this is against all sorts of enemies, and against all their assaults, especially spiritual.

In these doth God most usually manifest his greatest power.

See. 201. *Of Samson's strength lying in his hair.*

About Samson four memorable matters are worthy our due consideration—

1. How his strength lay in his hair.

2. How far he recovered after his fall.

3. Whether he were a self-murderer.

4. Wherein he was a type of Christ.

Concerning that which he himself saith, 'If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me,' Judges xvi. 17: it is not to be taken as if his hair were a natural cause of his strength. That cannot be in these respects,

1. Hair is no integral or essential part of the body: it is a mere excrement.

2. It hath no stability in itself, as bones have, but is exceeding weak.

3. Hair draweth strength out of a man's body, as weeds out of the ground. Therefore they use to shave off the hair of weak ones, especially when they are much wasted with a consumption or other sickness.

Yet to Samson, in particular, his hair was a sign, yea, and a means of his extraordinary strength, and that by God's voluntary appointment. For this is to be granted, that his strength came from God. God enabled him to do what he did. When he was not able to do as he had done before, God took away his strength. That his strength was of God, is evident by this phrase, 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon him,' which is used upon his achieving great matters, Judges xiii. 25, xiv. 6, 19, and xv. 14. And upon falling of his strength it is said, 'the Lord departed from him,' Judges xvi. 20.

God sanctified Samson, from his mother's womb, to be a Nazarite, Judges xiii. 5. And according to the law of Nazarites, the Lord charged that no razor should come upon his head, Num. vi. 5. Answerably, Hannah, who vowed Samuel as a Nazarite to the Lord, used this phrase, 'there shall no razor come upon his head,' 1 Sam. i. 11.

That rite implied,

1. Comeliness. For the hair is an ornament by nature. Had not man sinned, his hair would have had no need of polling. By sin it is that long hair becomes uncomely.

2. Purity. For the keeping of the razor from the hair shewed that they were clean, and needed not to be shaven, as the leper that was unclean needed, Lev. xiv. 8, 9. Yea, if a Nazarite by any occasion became unclean, he was to shave his hair, Num. vi. 9.

3. Subjection. For as the woman's hair is a token of her subjection, 1 Cor. xi. 10, so the Nazarite's hair of his special subjection to God, to which subjection he had by vow bound himself. This was sometimes by the vow of the parties themselves, Num. vi. 2: sometimes by the vow of their parents, 1 Sam. i. 11: sometimes by God's own special appointment, Judges xiii. 5.

Samson's hair being thus a sign of more than ordinary comeliness, purity, and subjection, so long as, in testimony of his inward piety, that external rite

was observed, God's Spirit continued his assistance to him, and gave that evidence thereof, his extraordinary strength. But when, by a violation of that rite, he manifested his impure, disobedient, and rebellious disposition against God, God took away his Spirit, and, as an evidence thereof, his extraordinary strength; but when, by the judgment that followed thereupon, he repented, the sign being renewed, the Spirit returned, Judges xvi. 22.

This example of Samson in provoking the Spirit to depart from him, and take away his strength, giveth proof that prime professors may so far grieve the Spirit as he may be moved to forsake them, and withdraw his assistance. Hereof see Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 131, &c.

#### Sec. 202. *Of Samson's recovery.*

Though Samson's fall were very great, yet it is said that 'the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven,' which was a sign of the Spirit's return unto him, Judges xvi. 22. This was yet further manifested by the extraordinary strength wherewith he was endued. It was no less than before, if not greater; for the last evidence of his strength was the greatest. More was done thereby than all his life before, Judges xvi. 30.

This giveth proof that grace decayed may, by repentance, be recovered, and that with the greater advantage. Instance David, and the psalms that he penned after his great sin. Instance also Peter, manifested by Christ's question to him, and his answer thereupon, John xxi. 15-17. For true saving grace cannot be utterly lost. See more hereof, Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 132, &c.

This is a great enforcement to such as by any occasion have fallen from grace, and grieved God's good Spirit, thoroughly to repent thereof, and to turn to their God again.

#### Sec. 203. *Of Samson's kind of death.*

The last act of Samson was the greatest and best. It was the greatest evidence of his faith, and the most profitable to God's church. Yet out of it a double question ariseth.

1. Whether it were a lawful act.

2. Whether the like may lawfully be done by others.

His act was this, that he pulled down a great house where he was, upon himself, and upon the enemies of the church which were in and upon that house, Judges xvi. 27, &c. This personal act was in itself, as he did it, lawful. For,

1. He did it with true devotion and invocation of God's name, Judges xvi. 28. So true, so hearty, so entire was his devotion, as God had respect thereto, even as he had to his prophet, Jonah ii. 2.

2. He did it with a true and steadfast faith; for it was his last act, and he is here brought in as a pat-

tern of faith. Of him, as well as of others, it is said, 'these all having obtained a good report through faith,' &c., ver. 39.

3. He did it by virtue of his vocation and function, which was deputed to him from his mother's womb, Judges xii. 3, which was to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. If a valiant soldier should cut asunder a post of a bridge whereon an army of enemies stand, though the bridge should fall upon himself, yet he did but what his calling required.

4. He did it with a well-composed mind—not in any such passion or perplexity of mind as self-murderers do. It was a zeal of God's glory, love of the church, of his, and of his own country, due and just revenge on the church's enemies, and a recompense of his former folly.

5. He did it with a special warrant, which was the immediate and extraordinary motion of God's Spirit.

He did it with such a spirit as Elijah did, when he called for fire upon the messengers that came to apprehend him, 2 Kings i. 10.

6. He did it as a type of Christ. Hereof see Sec. 206.

#### Sec. 204. *Of self-murder.*

Concerning the second question (Sec. 203), whether the like may be lawful in others, a negative answer must be given, unless they have such a spirit. This answer of Christ, 'Ye know not of what manner of spirit ye are of,' Luke ix. 55, is pertinent to the point in hand.

Self-murder is in itself a capital and damnable sin; for,

1. It is apparently against the very letter and sense of the moral law, Exod. xx. 13.

2. It is against the rule of charity. For this phrase, 'thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' Mat. xxii. 39, sheweth that a man's self is the rule of loving another. For a man therefore to destroy himself, is to break the very rule of love.

3. Divine revenge is expressly threatened against it. For this distinction of God's requiring blood 'at the hand of man,' and 'at the hand of every man's brother,' Gen. ix. 5, sheweth that God will require that blood which one man sheds of himself, as well as of his brother.

4. Self-murder is the highest pitch of tempting God. This was it which the devil essayed to bring Christ unto, Mat. iv. 6, 7. It provoketh God to let the soul sink into hell, or in an unusual and strange manner to save it.

5. It is a presumptuous usurpation of God's prerogative, unto whom 'belong the issues of death,' Ps. lxxviii. 20.

6. It is a preposterous prevention of God's call, thrusting a man's self out of that place wherein his Lord hath set him.

7. It sets a dam against God's mercy, for 'who

can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? Jonah iii. 9. But self-murderers give judgment against themselves, as if they knew that God would not turn away from his anger.

8. It is a violent preemption of the place, time, and means of one's own repentance. The place is a body animated by the soul: a dead carcass cannot repent. The time is this life, Heb. iii. 13. The means are God's word, Christian conference, invocation, and such like; whereof the self-murderer depriveth himself.

9. It is against the most principal principle of nature, which is to preserve its own being.

10. It is against that remainder of God's image which is reserved in man: by virtue whereof sundry of the heathen philosophers<sup>1</sup> and others have condemned it. The Roman orator<sup>2</sup> excludes them out of heaven. The prime of Roman poets<sup>3</sup> placeth them in hell, wishing that they might be on earth to endure any want or hard labour.

Sec. 205. *Of the future estate of self-murderers.*

A question is moved of self-murderers, whether there is any hope of their salvation, or no.

Ans. 1. All the instances that the Scripture giveth of self-murderers are branded for reprobates,—as Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas.

2. We have as little ground of hope for them as for any.

3. The order of the church in denying them Christian burial imports as much.

4. The very heathen had such a law, which forbid their burial.<sup>4</sup>

Yet because the ways of the Lord are unsearchable, and the mercies of the Lord infinite, and the work of his Spirit unconceivable (for at the moment of death the Spirit can work faith and repentance), we cannot, we may not, pass a peremptory sentence on them.

Pretences alleged for the hope of the salvation of many of them, are these—

1. They may be distracted in their wits.

Ans. Such are not to be accounted self-murderers. Our law doth acquit such.

2. They do it to avoid sin, or to prevent such tortures as, they fear, may draw them from the profession of the true faith.<sup>5</sup>

Ans. 1. They are undue pretences. For—

(1.) No evil is to be done upon pretence of good, Rom. iii. 8.

(2.) A mere passive evil is not sin.

(3.) The pretended evil may, by the divine providence, be prevented.

<sup>1</sup> Plato, in Crit.; Arist. in Ethic.; Senec.

<sup>2</sup> Cie. in Somn. Scip.

<sup>3</sup> Quam vellent aethere in alto

Nunc et pauperiem et duros perferre labores!

—Virg. *Æn.* 6.

<sup>4</sup> Insepultus alijciatur.—*Senec. Controvers.* lib. viii.

<sup>5</sup> Euseb. *Eccles. Hist.* lib. viii. cap. 12.

(1.) The remedy used is the worst of evils. It is like the flounders leaping out of hot water into flaming fire.

The pretence of preventing torments that might cause apostasy, implieth pusillanimity and infidelity; as if God could not prevent or mitigate, or give sufficient strength, courage, and comfort in all tortures.

3. Some pretend a hastening of their heavenly glory thereby. Heathen authors<sup>1</sup> give instances hereof,—namely, of Cleombrotus and Cato.

Ans. That is no way to hasten, but for ever to exclude, one's self from heavenly glory.

4. Some, thinking to give evidences of their salvation, set down the confidence they have in God's mercy, and leave it written in their pockets, that it may be seen by survivors.

Ans. It is a plain mockage of God to crave pardon for a sin to be committed. It is like the prayers of single combatants, who, immediately before their seeking to kill one another, make pretence of praying to God. This, their pretence, is an evidence against them.

This should move people to take heed of tempting God. It was the answer that Christ gave to the devil when he tempted him to cast himself down from a pinnacle of the temple, whereby he might have killed himself, Mat. iv. 7.

For preventing this sin—

1. Give no place to the devil, Eph. iv. 27.

2. Resist the devil, steadfast in the faith, 1 Pet. v. 9.

3. Pray against spiritual desertions, Ps. li. 11.

4. Oft meditate on the horrible nature and fearful issue of this sin.

5. Take heed of solitariness.

6. Set God always before thee, and reason as Joseph did, Gen. xxxix. 9.

Sec. 206. *Of Samson being a type of Christ.*

Samson and David were two of the most eminent types of Christ that are registered in the Old Testament. It will therefore be meet distinctly to declare in this place wherein Samson was a type of Christ. This will appear in the particulars following—

1. The name *Samson*, and notation thereof, which is, *his sun*. See Sec. 199. Christ is called 'the Sun of righteousness,' Mal. iv. 2.

2. The prediction of his conception; compare Judges xiii. 3, &c., with Luke i. 31.

3. His sanctification in his mother's womb; compare Judges xiii. 5 with Luke i. 32.

4. His special separation to be a Nazarite; compare Judges xiii. 5 with Mat. ii. 23.

5. His miraculous birth. Samson was born of a barren woman, Judges xiii. 3; Christ was born of a virgin, Luke i. 34, 35.

<sup>1</sup> Cie. *Tusc. Quest.* 1, lib. i. Senec. *Epist.* 24.

6. His principal function, which was to deliver God's people, Judges xiii. 5; so Christ, Matt. i. 21.

7. His growth to admiration, Judges xiii. 24; so Christ, Luke ii. 52.

8. His marriage to a Philistine, Judges xiv. 1, &c.; so Christ was espoused to the Gentiles.

9. His great strength, Judges xiii. 25. Christ is said to 'travail in his strength,' Isa. lxiii. 1.

10. The subject whereabout his strength was manifested, as a lion, Judges xiv. 5, 6, and the enemies of God's people, who were the Philistines, Judges xiv. 4. So Christ exercised his strength upon the devil, who is a roaring lion, 1 Pet. v. 7, and in rescuing God's people from their enemies, Luke i. 71.

11. His manner of teaching by riddles, Judges xiv. 12. So Christ by parables.

12. The honey that Samson took out of the lion whom he had slain, Judges xiv. 8. Much sweetness comes from the destruction of the devil.

13. Samson's binding, Judges xv. 13, and xvi. 8. So Christ was bound when they apprehended him, John xviii. 12.

14. His breaking the bonds with which he was bound, Judges xv. 14. So Christ brake the bonds of death, Acts ii. 24.

15. His thirst, Judges xv. 18. So Christ thirsted, John xix. 28.

16. His subjection under his enemies for a time, Judges xvi. 21. So was Christ for a while under the power of his enemies, Mat. xxvii. 2.

17. His being sold for a sum of money, Judges xvi. 18. So was Christ, Mat. xxvi. 15.

18. God's seeming to forsake him for a time, Judges xvi. 20. Christ complained hereof, Mat. xxvii. 46.

19. The scorn whereunto he was put by men, Judges xvi. 25. So Christ was scorned of men, Mat. xxvii. 39.

20. His victorious death, Judges xvi. 30. Much more victorious was Christ's death, Col. ii. 15.

#### Sec. 207. Of Jephthah's name and birth.

The fourth particular mentioned in this brief catalogue is Jephthah. His history is recorded, Judges xi. and xii. About him we are to consider,

1. His name.

2. His birth.

3. His infirmities.

4. His excellencies.

I. His name is derived from a Hebrew verb, פתח, which signifieth to open. It is oft used of drawing a sword out of the scabbard, Ps. xxxvii. 14. The first letter, פ, useth to be prefixed before nouns; according to the notation, פתח, Jephthah implieth *one that openeth*. It was a fit name, for in his time the Israelites were so kept under by the Ammonites that there was none to open a way of liberty for them, none to draw a sword in their defence. Jephthah

first drew out his sword, vanquished the enemies, and opened a free passage for the Israelites.

II. His birth was infamous, for he was basely born, Judges xi. 1, 2. Bastardy hath in all ages been accounted a great infamy. God by his law barred them from public functions, even unto the tenth generation, Deut. xxiii. 2. This number of years is the greatest that we read of any sort of people so barred.

Bastards, by the law of many nations, have been excluded from inheritances. He is not accounted an heir by our law. He is said to be *nullius filius*, no man's child.

States have thus judged them in sundry respects,

1. In detestation of the foul sin of uncleanness.

2. In reference to that evil disposition that is for the most part in them; God laying a curse on such a corrupt brood.

3. In respect of their dissolute education. Bastards use much to be neglected therein. This phrase of the apostle, 'if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards,' Heb. xii. 8, seemeth to allude therunto.

Yet God here in an especial and extraordinary manner conferreth his Spirit on this Jephthah, and advanceth him to the highest dignity and function amongst his people, and prospered him exceedingly.

By this it appeareth, that no outward condition, be it never so base, is a hinderance to God's grace: witness Rahab, a harlot; Ruth, a Gentile; Judah and Thamar, adulterers; Phares, born in incest. All these reckoned up in the catalogue of Christ's progenitors, Mat. i. 3-5. Many like instances are registered in sacred Scripture.

God hereby sheweth the freeness of his grace, extended to unworthy ones, and the riches of his mercy conferred upon the worst kind of sinners, and the power of his Spirit, whereby 'valleys are exalted, and crooked things made straight, and rough places plain,' Isa. xl. 4.

1. This may be an encouragement, even to those who are base born, to be diligent in using means of grace, and fervent in prayer for grace, setting before their eyes this instance of Jephthah.

2. This may be a direction to others, as they see any evidences of God's Spirit, even in such as are base born, to take notice thereof, and to make the best use thereof that they can. The elders of Gilead took notice of a more than ordinary spirit in Jephthah, and answerably made use thereof, and had good success thereby, Judges xi. 6, 29.

3. This should quicken up such as being base born are made partakers of a new birth, to be the more thankful, and to walk the more worthy of that privilege, 1 Tim. i. 12-14, and say, 'thus hath the Lord dealt with me, to take away my reproach among men.' It is a great means to enlarge the heart unto all thankfulness, well to weigh our former vile condition, Eph. ii. 11-13.



'Sec. 208. Of Jephthah's infirmities, and of his rash vow.

III. Some reckon up Jephthah's entertaining vain men, Judges xi. 3, to be one of his infirmities. But that rightly taken is rather to be reckoned among his excellencies, as we shall hear hereafter.

There are two apparent infirmities registered of him :

1. His rash vow, Judges xi. 30, 31.

2. His hasty and fierce revenge, Judges xii. 4, 6.

His vow is on all sides granted to be over rash, but for the extent of it great question is made, whether he did absolutely vow to sacrifice whatsoever should first meet him.

Arguments produced for that large extent thereof are these and such like :

1. These express words thereof, 'whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering,' Judges xi. 31.

*Ans.* The copulative, *ו*, betwixt the two sentences of the vow, thus, '*and I will*,' is oft used disjunctively. So it is used, Exod. xxi. 17, and translated *or*. The evangelist, Mat. xv. 4, quoting that text, plainly setteth down this disjunctive particle, *or*, *ἢ*, Greek. So it is used, Lev. x. 3, when God thus saith, 'I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, or before all the people I will be glorified;' and Gen. xxvi. 11, in these words, 'He that toucheth this man or his wife.'

2. The extreme passion of Jephthah upon beholding his daughter to be the first that came to meet him out of his house, Judges xi. 35.

*Ans.* That passion arose from this, that his daughter was his only child; and that by dedicating her to the Lord, all hope of issue was taken away. Children were always, among the seed of Abraham, accounted a great blessing. Abraham himself said to the Lord, when he promised him an exceeding great reward, 'What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?' Gen. xv. 1, 2. And Jacob's wife said to her husband, 'Give me children, or else I die,' Gen. xxx. 1. They counted it to be a reproach to die without children, 1 Sam. i. 6, 2 Sam. vi. 23, Luke i. 25.

3. The daughters of Israel much lamented the daughter of Jephthah upon her father's performing his vow upon her.

*Ans.* 1. The Hebrew word translated to *lament*, is nowhere else in that sense used.

2. There was great cause to lament her, though she were not offered up a sacrifice; even because by her father's vow she was kept from marriage.

Arguments to prove that Jephthah did not offer up his daughter for a burnt-offering are these :

1. Such an act had been against the light of nature.

2. It is expressly forbidden by God's word, Exod. xx. 13.

*Obj.* Why then did God command Abraham to offer up Isaac? Gen. xxii. 2.

*Ans.* 1. That was only for trial of Abraham's obedience; God never intended that Abraham should so do.

2. God's express charge in a particular case giveth a dispensation against general laws.

3. Such an act is against the evidence of that faith which is here hinted of Jephthah.

4. Nor priests nor people would have suffered Jephthah to have committed such a fact. When Uzziah, a king, would have burnt incense upon the altar of incense, Azariah the priest, and fourscore other priests, withstood the king, 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, &c.; when Saul would have unjustly put his son Jonathan to death, the people kept him from it, 1 Sam. xiv. 45.

5. It is said that Jephthah's daughter desired leave of her father to 'bewail her virginity,' Judges xi. 37. It would have been said, to bewail her death, if she had been to be offered up.

6. She is said to know no man, Judges xi. 39. What doth this imply, but that being dedicated to the Lord she continued a virgin all her days?

7. It is expressly said that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah, Judges xi. 40. Had she been sacrificed, they would rather have buried such a fact in perpetual oblivion, than have revived it by an annual memorial.

The word, *לננות*, translated to *lament*, Judges xi. 40, is nowhere used in that sense throughout the whole Old Testament. It properly signifieth to *declare*, or to *rehearse*, Judges v. 11. It here signifieth to *talk with*: for the daughters of Israel went yearly to confer with the daughter of Jephthah, and to comfort her, in that she was kept from marriage. This affordeth a strong argument against sacrificing her.

9. Such a one as Jephthah could not be so far besotted as to vow that anything, whatsoever it was, that came forth of the doors of his house to meet him, should be offered up as a burnt-offering. What if one of the princes had come out? or another man? What if a dog or a swine, which were unclean, had first come out, would he have offered up any of these? God expressly forbade the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog to be brought into his house, Deut. xxiii. 18.

*Quest.* 1. If it be granted that he only dedicated his daughter to God, to live unmarried, as a virgin all the days of her life, was that lawful?

*Ans.* No, for we do not read that to consecrate a female to God is anywhere warranted. Neither is this answer here alleged to justify Jephthah's vow, but only to mitigate his fault, *Excusat non a toto, sed a tanto*, and to excuse him from such an abominable fact as sacrificing his own child. Papists, therefore, can from this example have no warrant for a vow of perpetual virginity. Jephthah's vow, take it in the

best sense that you can, was exceeding rash, and no good pattern.

*Quest. 2.* Was his vow, being rashly made, to be performed?

*Ans.* No, it failing in the matter of a vow, the performing of it proved a double iniquity; one in making it, another in performing it. When David was put in mind of a rash vow he forbore to perform it, yea, and blessed God for affording means to keep him from the performance thereof, 1 Sam. xxv. 32.

Here learn to take heed of rash vows, and to be well advised about vowing. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 14, Sec. 91.

#### Sec. 209. Of Jephthah's fierce revenge.

Another infirmity of Jephthah was his too great revenge of the Ephraimites' insolency, Judges xii. 4-6.

True it is that the Ephraimites first provoked him, and in such a manner as they justly deserved that score revenge; so as, what I shall say of Jephthah's revenge is not to excuse the Ephraimites.

But that Jephthah failed in the excess of his wrath is evident by Gideon's contrary carriage in a like case with the predecessors of these Ephraimites, whereof see Sec. 197. Had Jephthah dealt so mildly with the Ephraimites as Gideon did, he might have pacified them and saved the lives of forty and two thousand of the people of God.

By this instance of Jephthah it is verified that 'wrath is cruel and anger outrageous,' Prov. xxvii. 4. Old Jacob upon such a ground thus checked the rage of two of his sons, 'Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel,' Gen. xlix. 7. Wrath is like an unbridled sturdy horse that carrieth his rider whither it list, even to his own and his rider's destruction. As the passion itself is very violent, so the effects thereof are very fearful.

It will be our wisdom to repress and redress it.

#### Sec. 210. Of Jephthah's excellencies.

IV. Many excellencies are in the history of Jephthah expressly registered.

1. His valour; he was 'a mighty man of valour,' Judges xi. 1. That phrase implieth that he was a man of a strong body and courageous mind. Valour rightly used is of much use against the enemies of the church and commonwealth in time of war, and against impudent offenders in time of peace, and against persecutors in time of persecution. God himself exhorteth Joshua hereunto, Josh. i. 6. David and his worthies are commended for it by the Holy Ghost. It is reckoned up as one of the prime graces of faith, ver. 33.

2. His improvement of his valour against enemies—though he were disgracefully thrust out by his countrymen—as is implied in this phrase *went out*, Judges xi. 3. He spent not his time in base idleness,

nor in more base robbing and stealing; nor yet in plotting treason, or practising revenge. A worthy precedent this is for high minds that are disgracefully dealt with.

3. His care of others like himself. 'He went out with them that were gathered to him,' Judges xi. 3; so dealt David with his, 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2.

4. His providence in securing himself and his country for the future, which was manifested by binding them to make him their head, Judges xi. 9-11. So long as he was head he had power to order matters, and he was privy to his own purpose and the integrity thereof.

5. His fair dealing with his enemies, Judges xi. 12, 13, &c. He expostulates their wrongs; he adviseth them to desist; he manifesteth the equity and necessity of the engagements. All these he did to obtain peace without bloodshed. Herein he followed the direction of the law, Deut. xx. 10, a commendable pattern this is for commanders in war.

6. His piety in waging war, Judges xi. 30, 31. Though he failed in the manner by reason of his rash vow, yet his course was commendable. It becomes God's people to begin all their weighty affairs with God. The heathen do it. *A Jove principium.*

7. His faith, which herein had an excellency, that he had no special and extraordinary charge or promise; but he rested on God's general promise, Deut. xxx. 1-3, &c., and upon the people's repentance manifested, Judges x. 15, 16.

*Obj.* It is said that 'the Spirit of the Lord came upon him,' Judges xi. 29, whereby a special, extraordinary motion and instinct is implied.

*Ans.* That is noted after his resolution and preparation for the war, which were the effects of his faith. That of the Spirit's coming upon him sheweth God's approbation of what he undertook, and his encouragement thereunto, and his assistance therein.

#### Sec. 211. Of David's name and frailties.

The fifth particular instance of the apostle's general catalogue is David. Of all the worthies before mentioned, his history is the most copiously set down. It is as a large and thick wood, out of which a passage is not easily found after one is entered into it. But as, by a long thread, a man that is entered into a great labyrinth may be brought out of it again, so, by the help of method, a passage will be made out of this copious matter. The method which I propound in handling the points that concern David is distinctly to declare,

1. His name.

2. His frailties and failings, that in him we may see what the best are subject to.

3. His crosses, partly for trial and partly for punishments, to make us the more wary.

4. His graces, that we may understand what to endeavour after.

5. His privileges, or the recompenses which God gave him to encourage us in our warrantable endeavours.

I. His name, דָּוִיד, דָּוִיד, 1 Chron. xi. 1, according to the notation of it, importeth a *lovely* or friendly one. It is derived from a noun, דָּוָה, *amicus, dilectus*, Cant. v. 9, that denoteth a friend: thence this name, David. The name importeth such a one as he was—amiable and lovely before God and man, and friendly to all God's people. He was 'a man after God's own heart,' 1 Sam. xiii. 14; 'all Israel and Judah loved him,' 1 Sam. xviii. 16; 'in the saints was all his delight,' Ps. xvi. 3.

II. His frailties were these:

1. His rash anger and too great desire of revenge, aggravated by an undue binding of himself thereto, even by an oath. That he sinned herein is evident by his after-repentance thereof, and by blessing God, and the instrument that kept him from accomplishing his rash purpose of revenge, 1 Sam. xxv. 22, 32, 33.

2. His wavering in faith. Though God had endued him with a great measure of faith, yet manifold trials made him waver. Once, in distrust, he said, 'I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul,' 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. This was spoken in diffidence: so also this, 'I said in my heart, All men are liars;' hereof see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 11.

3. His polygamy, or taking many wives and concubines together, 2 Sam. v. 13. That this was ever a sin, Christ himself doth manifest, Mat. xix. 4-6.

4. His undue removing of God's ark. The law required that the ark should be carried on the priests' shoulders, Exod. xxv. 14, 15, Num. iv. 15, and vii. 9, Josh. iii. 14. So as David herein consulted not with the law of God, but rather imitated the uncircumcised Philistines, 1 Sam. vi. 7. He himself afterwards discerned how he failed herein, 1 Chron. xv. 13.

5. His adultery and murder; the former drew on the latter, 2 Sam. xi. 2, &c. These were two notorious crimes, accounted most heinous by the very heathen. They were sorely punished.

6. His foolish indulgency to his children, 1 Kings i. 6, 2 Sam. xviii. 5, 33, for which God sorely punished him in those children.

7. His sudden and undue sentence before both parties were heard, 2 Sam. xvi. 4. Much injustice and great wrong oft followeth hereupon. Read Prov. xviii. 17.

8. Pride in the multitude of his soldiers, 2 Sam. xxiv. 2. The issue sheweth how far God was provoked therewith.

See. 212. *Of David's crosses.*

III. David's crosses were of two sorts—I. Trial; 2. Punishments.

His trials were these—

1. His brother's curious interpretation of that

which he did by divine instinct, 1 Sam. xvii. 28. This kind of trials pierceth deep in the soul.

2. Saul's fierce persecution of him. Persecution in itself is a great trial, but David's was aggravated by many circumstances—

(1.) By the person who persecuted him, his own sovereign, 'the Lord's anointed.' In this respect, he could not get such assistance as otherwise he might have had; nor might he do that to free himself which otherwise he might have done, 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, and xxvi. 11.

(2.) By the undue cause, which was no wrong on his part, Ps. xxxv. 7, 19, x. 3, cxix. 161, and lxix. 4. The causes which Saul took to persecute him were those—

His valour, wisdom, success; people's acknowledgment thereof; the love which the king's son and servants bare him; and the notice which Saul had that David should be king after him.

(3.) By the extent of his persecution: it was unto blood. For this cause Saul raised up armies to pursue him.

(4.) By the consequences following thereon, which were—

[1.] The destruction of the Lord's priests, 1 Sam. xiii. 18, 19.

[2.] The danger of his parents and kindred, 1 Sam. xiii. 3.

[3.] His own expulsion from the people of God, and from the house of God, 1 Sam. xxi. 10, and xxvii. 2. This pierced deepest to his soul, Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 1 Sam. xxi. 19.

3. The jealousy which they had of him to whom he fled for succour, 1 Sam. xxi. 11, and xxix. 4. How great this trial was is evident by changing his behaviour, 1 Sam. xxi. 13, and by the psalms which he penned thereupon, as Ps. xxxiv. 1, and lvi. 1.

4. The spoiling of the city which he had allotted to him for himself, his soldiers, and all that belonged to him. This trial was the greater because his soldiers thereby were stirred up to mutiny against him, 1 Sam. xxx. 1, 6.

5. The setting up of Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, after Saul was dead, against him, and that by the General Abner and the greatest part of Israel, 2 Sam. ii. 8.

Those trials David was brought unto betwixt the time that he was first anointed and well settled in his kingdoms.

Hereby we see that God will not have great preferments easily attained to; witness Joseph's case.

To those trials may be added others which befell him in his kingdom, as,

6. The indignity which was offered to his ambassadors (2 Sam. x. 4), whereby his intended kindness was misinterpreted and perverted.

7. David's fainting in the battle, 2 Sam. xxi. 15; such was the consequence thereof, that if one of his

worthies had not resented him, he might have then perished, 2 Sam. xxi. 15.

The trials which arose from his sons, as Amnon, Absalom, Adonijah, were punishments of his sins, as we shall afterwards see.

Sec. 213. *Of punishments inflicted on David for his sins.*

Other kind of trials whereunto David was brought were apparent punishments of his sins, which, being public, God would not suffer to go unpunished. I will therefore distinctly note both his particular sins, and also the punishments that were inflicted thereupon. They were these that follow;—

1. His rash anger: this stirred up a purpose of revenge on Nabal and all his house, 1 Sam. xxv. 22. He did not put that his purpose into execution, but repented thereof, and blessed God for preventing him in shedding blood; so as we do not read of any punishment inflicted for that sin, yet it may be that Saul's unsatiable desire of revenge on him and all his was a punishment of his foresaid purpose of revenge.

2. His distrust, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1: this was punished with the jealousy of the princes of the Philistines on him, 1 Sam. xxix. 4, and with the sacking of Ziklag, and the insurrection of the soldiers against him, 1 Sam. xxx. 1, 6.

3. His polygamy, 2 Sam. v. 13: the children of those various wives proved great crosses unto him.

4. His undue manner of carrying the ark: this was so punished as David was afraid of the Lord, 2 Sam. vi. 3, 7, 9.

5. His adultery with Bathsheba, and murder of her husband: as these were most heinous sins, so punishments inflicted for these were the most grievous. The heads of them are generally set down, 2 Sam. xii. 10, 11, 14. The sequel of the history declareth the accomplishment of them. They were these that follow:

1. His child died, 2 Sam. xii. 18.  
2. His daughter was deflowered by her brother, 2 Sam. xiii. 14.

3. His son lay with his concubines on the roof of a house in the sight of all the people, 2 Sam. xvi. 22.  
4. The sword departed not from his house, for—

(1.) One of his sons killed another, 2 Sam. xiii. 28, 29.

(2.) That son of his thrust David out of his kingdom; whereupon such a battle was fought as twenty thousands were slain, together with that ungracious son, 2 Sam. xviii. &c.

(3.) Another battle arose thereupon through the indignation of Sheba, 2 Sam. xx. 1.

(4.) Another son took the crown before his father's death, and that against his mind, 1 Kings i. 5.

(5.) His inward troubles were yet greater, for—  
[1.] The Spirit withdrew his presence, so as to

David's present sense it clean departed from him. Thereupon David thus prayeth, 'Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me,' Ps. li. 10.

[2.] A deprivation of that joy and comfort which formerly he had. Whereupon in his prayer he thus addeth, 'Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,' Ps. li. 12.

[3.] No sense of any assistance of the Spirit for growth in grace, but only a bare, formal profession remained. This is intended under this phrase, 'uphold me with thy free Spirit,' Ps. li. 12.

[4.] He apprehended God's wrath, and feared a dereliction, in this phrase, 'hide thy face from my sins,' Ps. li. 9; but more fully is this thus expressed, 'O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger,' Ps. vi. 1.

[5.] His conscience was a rack unto him, which made him use this expression, 'the bones which thou hast broken.' Behold here what a fearful thing it is for such as profess the name of God to grieve the good Spirit of God!

(6.) His undue cockering of his children, 1 Sam. xiii. 39, 1 Kings xvi. Two of his children so cockered proved a heavy cross to him, and a fearful curse to themselves. They both proved traitors to their father, and brought themselves to an untimely death—namely, Absalom and Adonijah.

(7.) His hasty sentence against Mephibosheth. Compare 2 Sam. xvi. 4 with ver. 8.

(8.) His pride in numbering of his people was punished with the loss of threescore and ten thousand in three days.

Sec. 214. *Of David's graces in reference to God.*

IV. The graces of David were many and great. They may be ranked into two heads—

1. Such as had an immediate respect to God.
2. Such as had respect to man.

The graces which had immediate respect to God were these—

1. His care to be instructed in and directed by God's word, and that both ordinarily, Ps. cxix. 24, 105, and also extraordinarily, 1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 2 Sam. vii. 2, and xxi. 1. This made him to walk with a right foot, and this kept him from many by-paths.

2. His faith. Most of those evidences which the apostle in the verses following, to set forth the faith of God's ancient worthies indefinitely, may be in particular applied to David. For David by faith,

(1.) Subdued kingdoms. None more, after the Israelites were settled in Canaan, 2 Sam. viii. 12, 14.

(2.) Wrought righteousness—that is, justly governed his people, doing right to all, 2 Sam. viii. 15, Ps. lxxvii. 72.

(3.) Obtained promises—namely, of being king, and having a wise son to build God's temple, and the descending of the Messiah from him.

(4.) Stopped the mouths of lions. David killed a lion indeed, and lion-like men.

(5.) Quenched the violence of fire—that is, of fiery persecutors, of fiery slanderers, and of other fiery enemies; yea, he rescued Ziklag that was burnt with fire.

(6.) Escaped the edge of the sword—namely, of Saul's sword, or the swords of the Philistines, and others.

(7.) Out of weakness was made strong. Being weakened by sickness, weakened by persecution, weakened by jealousy of enemies, by mutiny of his own soldiers, by insurrections and rebellions, he recovered strength.

(8.) Waxed valiant in fight, against Goliath, against the Philistines, and others.

(9.) Turned to flight the armies of the aliens, even of all that were round about Israel, and enemies thereto.

3. His repentance. Many sins were before noted of him, Sec. 113. His repentance for them all is expressly registered, as—

(1.) For his rash anger and intent of revenge. Upon intimation of that sin, he blessed God for withholding him, and did forbear to execute his wrath. A true penitent will not persist in sin. Repentance is an alteration of the mind.

(2.) For his distrust. He confesseth it to be in haste, and after believed, Ps. cxvi. 10, 11. Yea, he checketh and rouseth up his soul, and that again and again, Ps. xlii. 5, 11, and xliii. 5. Repentance makes men careful to redress what is done amiss.

(3.) For his polygamy. This being according to the error of the times, his repentance hereof may be comprised under this phrase, 'Who can understand his errors?—Cleanse thou me from secret faults,' Ps. xix. 12; and under this, 'blot out all mine iniquities,' Ps. li. 9. When a penitent, upon confessing of some sins, craveth pardon for all sins, it implieth penitency for the sin whereof he is ignorant, and yet guilty.

(4.) For his miscarriage about the ark, his repentance was manifested—

[1.] By grief at the judgment and cause thereof, 2 Sam. vi. 8.

[2.] By his future redress of that sin, 1 Chron. xv. 1, 2, 12, 13, &c. Repentance makes men observant of the cause of the sin, and inquisitive after the remedy.

(5.) For his indulgency towards Absalom and Adonijah, his repentance for this is manifested by his prudent and pious care over Solomon, Prov. iv. 3, 4, 1 Chron. xxii. 7, and xxviii. 9. Repentance makes men amend in others what they have done amiss in some.

(6.) For his adultery and murder, 2 Sam. xii. 13, the fifty-first Psalm is a sufficient proof hereof.

(7.) For his rash and unjust judgment against Mephibosheth, his repentance herein is manifested by

restoring to Mephibosheth what he had unduly caused to be taken from him. Restitution in case of wrong is a note of repentance.

(8.) For his pride. This is manifest by the contrition of his heart, confession of his sin, supplication for pardon, so soon as it was committed, and by laying the load of the sin upon himself rather than upon the people, and by following a prophet's direction for appeasing God's wrath, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10, 17, 18.

To this head of repentance may be referred the tenderness of his conscience, manifested in this phrase (which is proper to David), 'his heart smote him,' 1 Sam. xxiv. 5, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10.

4. His sincerity and soundness of heart. This is that innocency, pureness, uprightness, and perfection for which he is much commended, and wherein he is made a pattern to others; inasmuch as if any of his posterity were upright and perfect in heart, they are said to be 'as David their father,' 2 Kings xviii. 3, and xxii. 6; and, on the contrary, they that were not upright are said not to be as David their father, 1 Kings xv. 3, and 2 Kings xiv. 3.

5. His integrity, which was a due respect to everything that is pleasing to God. Sincerity hath respect to the manner of doing good; integrity to the extent thereof. This integrity David professeth of himself both affirmatively and negatively, Ps. cxix. 128. Hereunto David exhorteth his princes and his son, 1 Chron. xxviii. 8.

Exception is made about the case of Uriah, 1 Kings xv. 5.

Ans. As one swallow maketh not a summer, so one sin dasheth not a constant course.

2. That sin was not committed with the full bent of his will, but through the violence of temptation.

3. By his faith and repentance that sin, as others, was washed away.

6. His delight in God's law. It was his love and his joy; sweeter than honey, prized above gold. Therefore his meditation was thereon day and night.

7. His fervent zeal of God's glory. This was manifested,

(1.) By many divine forms of praising God. Never were all the figures of rhetoric so expressed to the life as in David's psalms.

(2.) By his forwardness and cheerfulness in bringing God's ark, the evidence of the Lord's presence, into a fit place, 2 Sam. vi. 13, 14.

(3.) By his great desire to build a temple to God, 2 Sam. vii. 1, which, because he was not himself permitted to do, he made great preparations for his son to do it, and prescribes a pattern thereof, and both instructs his son and princes how to do it, and also incited them to be conscionable therein.

8. His great devotion, manifested by the ardency and frequency thereof. His deep sighs and groans, his floods of tears, his cryings, and sundry other expressions; his constancy in praying, morning and

evening—yea, and at noon too (Ps. lv. 17). and at midnight on special occasions (Ps. cxix. 62)—yea, and seven times a day (Ps. cxix. 164). All these gave evidence to his great devotion.

9. His humble and patient submission to God in his greatest distresses, Ps. xxxix. 9, 2 Sam. xv. 26. Under this may be comprised his acknowledgment of God's righteous dealing. Such a disposition moveth pity in God, and procureth ease and deliverance.

10. His renouncing of all worth or merit in himself—yea, an acknowledgment of his own emptiness and unworthiness, 2 Sam. vii. 21, 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 15, Ps. cxliii. 2. The contrary to this takes away the glory of whatsoever we do, Luke xviii. 11–14.

Sec. 215. *Of David's graces in reference to man.*

The distinction of David's graces in reference to God and man is in regard of their end; as the former had immediate respect to God and his glory, so these to man and his good. Particulars are these:—

1. His loyalty to his sovereign, 1 Sam. xviii. 5, and xxii. 14. So far he excelled herein, as, though Saul persecuted him to death, yet he would not take any advantage of doing the least wrong to Saul, but rebuked those that advised him to lay hands on his king, or that offered to do it themselves, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5–8, and xxvi. 8, 9.

2. His faithfulness in his calling. So he was from his youth all his days. His father appointing him to keep his sheep, he did it diligently. Though there were a solemn meeting and a great sacrifice, whereat his father and all his brothers were, yet did not he stir from his charge till he was sent for, 1 Sam. xvi. 11. When his father sent him of an errand to his brethren at the camp, he rose early in the morning and went, but left his father's sheep with a keeper; and when a lion and a bear fell upon the flock, he adventured his life upon them both, and killed them, 1 Sam. xvii. 20, 34, &c. Great also was his faithfulness in other and higher callings.

3. His putting forth himself to the uttermost for God's church. Witness his combat with Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 32), and with the Philistines and other enemies on all occasions. God having given him extraordinary valour, he improved it to the best advantage that he could for the good of others. He so improved other gifts, as his skill in music to the quieting of Saul's spirit, 1 Sam. xvi. 18.

4. His justice. This is implied under this phrase, 'he fed them according to the integrity of his heart,' Ps. lxxviii. 72.

5. His keeping covenant with men; witness the kindness that he shewed to Jonathan's son, 2 Sam. ix. 1. This is a note of a righteous man, Ps. xv. 4. Failing herein is accounted a heathenish abomination, Rom. i. 30. God's vengeance is manifested against

covenant-breaking even with men, Jer. xxxiv. 18 Ezek. xvii. 16.

6. His mercy to the poor and needy. The frequent mention which he maketh of such giveth proof that he himself was such a one, Ps. xli. 1, and cxii. 4, 9.

7. His sympathy at others' distresses, Ps. xxxv. 13, 14.

8. His liberality and bounty, 1 Chron. xvi. 3.

9. His retribution of kindness for kindness. This was it that moved him to send comforters to Hanun the king of Ammon, 2 Sam. x. 2, and to shew what kindness he could to Barzillai, 2 Sam. xix. 33, &c.

10. His meek and patient bearing of wrongs. Instance the case of Shimei.

*Obj.* He upon his death-bed advised Solomon his son to bring his hoar head down to the grave in blood, 1 Kings ii. 9.

*Ans.* He did not bid his son revenge that wrong, but only take such notice thereof, as if he found him faulty in any other thing to punish him. So much is implied in David's charge; and the sequel of the history doth ratify the same.

2. David's patience towards him was sufficiently manifested in forbearing him for his own time. The charge which he gave to Solomon was but a fruit of justice.

David's patient bearing of wrongs shewed that there was more than flesh and blood in him.

11. His recompensing good for evil. This he oft professeth of himself, Ps. xxxv. 12–14, and cix. 4—yea, Saul acknowledgeth so much of David, 1 Sam. xxiv. 18.

This proceedeth from a divine spirit; this is of true spiritual virtue, which the apostle requireth, Rom. xii. 21. We have a worthy pattern hereof in Stephen, Acts vii. 60; but a more worthy pattern in Christ, Luke xxiii. 34.

This is it which will give us assurance of God's overcoming our evil with his goodness, Mat. vi. 12.

Sec. 216. *Of David's privileges.*

V. The fifth point about David concerneth those privileges which, in way of recompense, God bestowed on him. In particular, they were these:

1. His preferment before and above others; for, (1.) The tribe of Judah (whereof he was) was accounted the chief of the tribes, Ps. lxxviii. 67, 68.

(2.) His father's house was much advanced, 1 Sam. xvi. 1: with this doth David beat down Michal's pride, 2 Sam. vi. 21.

(3.) David himself was preferred before all his elder brethren, 1 Sam. xvi. 11. David's preferments are much amplified by a due consideration of the two terms of motion, *from what to what*: from a shepherd to a king, 2 Sam. vii. 8, Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71. God's recompenses are to admiration.

2. The favour which he had of all sorts.

(1.) Jonathan loved him, 1 Sam. xviii. 1.

(2.) Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him also, 1 Sam. xiii. 20.

(3.) He was accepted in the sight of all the people, yea, and of Saul's servants, 1 Sam. xviii. 5, 16.

(4.) Samuel the prophet, and Ahimelech the priest, even when Saul persecuted him, much respected him and succoured him, 1 Sam. xix. 18, and xxi. 6, 9.

(5.) Achish, king of Gath, bare good-will towards him, 1 Sam. xxvii. 6.

(6.) Other enemies sought his favour, 2 Sam. viii. 10.

Thus God can turn the hearts of all sorts, even of enemies, towards his saints.

3. Preservation against the attempts of all that sought his hurt; as against Saul, Achish, his own soldiers, 1 Sam. xxx. 6, Absalom his son, Sheba, and others.

To this head may be referred such recoveries he had from deadly distresses, whether by sickness or other ways, Ps. vi. 1, xxxi. 21, and cxvi. 3.

Such were the foresaid deliverances, as David penned many psalms in memorial of them; witness the titles of Ps. iii., xviii., xxxiv., lvi., lvii., and lix.

In David, see how safe they are whom the Lord doth keep.

4. The puissant armies and brave commanders in war which he had. For multitude, he had fifteen hundred thousand, and seventy thousand men of war, in ten of his tribes; for the number of two tribes was not given up, 1 Chron. xxi. 5. We count thirty or forty thousand a very great army; fifty thousand is counted a camp-royal; what, then, a hundred thousand! what a hundred thousand multiplied fifteen times, and seventy thousand added to them? Wise Solomon accounts it an honour to a king to have a multitude of people, Prov. xiv. 28; what is it, then, to have a multitude of such people as are men of war, able to defend their king and kingdom? This must needs be a great honour, safety, and security.

Among these there were very many such worthies as never any prince or state had: one of the least could resist a hundred, and one of the greatest a thousand, 1 Chron. xii. 14; so as in his time was accomplished that promise which is made, Josh. xxiii. 10. For particular instances, observe 1 Chron. xi. 11, 18, 20, 22, 23, and xx. 4, &c.

Where the Lord setteth a man apart to great matters, he will raise up answerable means.

5. Victories over all his enemies. Never the like from Joshua's days to his: he was never put to flight in any pitched battle; indeed he fled from Saul and from Absalom, but not as overcome, but as a prudent man, to prevent danger and avoid effusion of the blood of God's people. David by himself alone overthrew Goliath; so did sundry of his worthies destroy other giants. By David's victories the peace of the land was settled, and the safety of God's people secured.

Thereby Solomon his son became such a man of peace as he himself was of war: so many and so great were his victories, as he is accounted one of the nine worthies of the world. The glory, fame, and triumph arising from conquest over enemies, hath ever been accounted one of the greatest.

6. A great and a good name, and that while he lived, and after he was dead, among Jews and Christians, to this very day. Upon the first shewing of himself against the enemy, his name was extolled above the king's, 1 Sam. xviii. 7. His fame was spread abroad, not only throughout all Israel, but also in other countries, even among the enemies, 1 Sam. xxi. 11, and xxix. 5; yea, it is said that 'his name was much set by,' 1 Sam. xviii. 30.

The Lord himself saith, 'I have made thee a great name,' &c., 2 Sam. vii. 9. No man's name after his death was more famous than David's. If any were of good name or note, they were said to be like David, 2 Kings xviii. 3, and xxii. 2. If any of his posterity degenerated, they were said to be unlike David, as 1 Kings xi. 4, 6, xiv. 8, and xv. 3: yea, the royal throne and city was styled the throne and city of David, 1 Kings viii. 1; the sepulchres where kings were buried, sepulchres of David, Neh. iii. 16; and the promises concerning Christ are called 'the sure mercies of David,' Isa. lv. 3, Acts xiii. 34. When God speaketh of him, he ordinarily giveth him this title, 'David my servant,' 1 Kings xi. 13; and God is styled 'the God of David,' 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4, 'the Lord God of David,' Isa. xxxviii. 5; and David is called 'the man of God,' Neh. xii. 36.

They who desire a good name, let them endeavour to be like David.

7. A stock of the regal line. One king there was before David, namely, Saul; but he and his posterity were cut off. David's posterity continued to sit on his throne so long as there was any king of Jerusalem. Herein a difference is made betwixt Saul and David, 2 Sam. vii. 15, 16. Though many of his posterity deserved to be cut off, yet for David's sake God continued them, 1 Kings xi. 11-13, 34, 35, and xv. 4, 2 Chron. xxi. 7.

8. A stock of Christ's kingdom. In this respect David's kingdom is said to endure for ever, 1 Sam. vii. 16, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; therefore the evangelist Matthew, who sets down the legal pedigree of Christ, begins with David, Mat. i. 1.

Sec. 217. *Of David's being a type of Christ.*

David in sundry excellencies was an especial type of Christ, as appeareth by the particulars following:

1. His name: for Christ is oft called by that name of David, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, and xxxvii. 21, 25.

Besides, David's name doth signify *beloved* (see Sec. 211), and Christ was the beloved of God, Mat. iii. 17.

2. His particular calling. David was a shepherd ; so Christ, John x. 11.

3. His faithful keeping of his father's sheep, 1 Sam. xvii. 34. In this respect Christ is called 'the good shepherd,' John x. 14.

4. His manifold crosses. Christ was envied, scorned, persecuted, and other ways afflicted, as David was.

5. His patient bearing of crosses. Of David's patience we heard before (Sec. 214) ; but Christ's far surpassed David's.

6. His special functions, royal and prophetic. Christ also was a king and prophet.

7. His duel with Goliath. Christ in like manner did combat with, and overcame that great Goliath, the devil.

8. His victories over all his enemies. So Christ hath and will subdue all.

#### Sec. 218. *Of the fruits of David's faith.*

A question may be moved, how those things before mentioned may be accounted fruits of David's faith. For he, as others, are brought in as patterns of faith.

Ans. 1. His name, which signifieth *beloved*, shewed that he believed in God.

2. His sins, though they came not from faith, yet they made way to the greater manifestation and exercise of his faith.

3. His manifold crosses did much more manifest and exercise his faith.

4. His graces were apparent fruits of faith. The apostle hath produced all the worthy works of other saints as fruits of faith ; in like manner were David's. Faith is a mother grace, from which all other graces do proceed.

5. His privileges were a recompense of his faith ; as God's accepting Abel, translating Enoch, saving Noah ; and other recompenses of other saints followed upon their faith, and were evidences thereof.

#### Sec. 219. *Of Samuel's name.*

The sixth particular instance of the apostle's general catalogue is Samuel. David and Samuel are joined together by a double copulative, *Δαβὶδ τε καὶ Σαμουὴλ*. For besides that they lived together at the same time, they both sustained two great functions,—one civil, the supreme governor ; the other ecclesiastical, an extraordinary prophet.

In Samuel we may observe,

1. His name.

2. His birth.

3. His education.

4. His life and conversation.

5. His crosses.

6. His blessings.

7. His rest in the typical resemblance of Christ in the grave.

1. His name, *שמואל*, *Samuel*, is compounded of three words, the first letter only of some of them being used. The Hebrew word signifieth thus much, *שאלתי אתו כאל*, *I asked him of the Lord*, for he was a child of prayer. This reason is rendered, 1 Sam. i. 20.

By this name we see,

1. What faithful and fervent prayer may do ; even open a barren womb.

2. Memorials of God's mercies are to be kept. This name preserved a memorial, both of God's mercy in giving a son, and also of the means of obtaining that mercy, which was prayer.

3. Fit names are good memorials. They oft bring to mind the memorable matter for which the name is given.

4. God's hearing prayer is a matter worthy to be remembered.

#### Sec. 220. *Of Samuel's birth and education.*

1. Samuel's birth was extraordinary, for it was out of a barren womb. So was Isaac's, Gen. xi. 30 ; Jacob's, Gen. xxv. 21 ; Joseph's, Gen. xxix. 31 ; Samson's, Judges xiii. 2 ; the Shunammite's son, 2 Kings iv. 14 ; John Baptist's, Luke i. 7.

Hereby we see that matters above hope are under hope, Rom. iv. 18. This chapter giveth many evidences thereof.

III. Samuel's education was from his childhood seasoned with piety. As upon prayer he was conceived, so for his birth solemn praise was given to God, 1 Sam. ii. 1. By vow, before he was conceived, he was devoted to God ; and in his infancy he was actually dedicated to God. From his childhood he was trained up in the house of God.

These acts of piety in his parents God rewarded with sundry other children, and with extraordinary endowments on this Samuel.

God spake to him while he was yet a child, and after so inspired him as he became an extraordinary prophet.

Oh that parents would set the parents of Samuel as a pattern before them ! Assuredly they should, some way or other, find an abundant recompense.

#### Sec. 221. *Of Samuel's life and conversation.*

IV. Samuel's life and conversation may be considered two ways :

1. In his younger years, while he was under government.

2. In his riper and elder years, while he was a governor.

1. While he was young he ministered unto the Lord before Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 11, and iii. 1. There he manifested his obedience,

(1.) To his parents, by abiding in that place and calling wherein they settled him.

(2.) To his tutor or master, to whom he was by his parents committed, as is intended under this



phrase, 'he ministered before Eli,' 1 Sam. iii. 1. This is further confirmed by his readiness to run again and again, and that in the night time, when he supposed that Eli had called him, and by declaring the whole message which he had received from the Lord, to Eli, upon his charge, 1 Sam. iii. 18.

A worthy pattern this is for such as are under authority.

2. When he came to riper years he became a prophet and a judge.

As a prophet he was faithful, 1 Sam. iii. 20. This is an especial property of a good prophet, 1 Cor. iv. 2.

His faithfulness was manifested two ways.

(1.) In declaring God's mind to the people.

(2.) In putting up the people's desire unto God, which was by prayer, wherein he was very powerful, Jer. xv. 1, Ps. xcix. 6.

He took a right course to make his prayer available for the people, for,

(1.) He brought the people together to join with him in public prayer.

(2.) He fitted them to that public duty, by calling them to forsake their sins.

(3.) He caused them deeply to humble themselves, and to pour out their souls before God. In which respect they are said to 'draw water, and pour it out before the Lord.'

(4.) He brought them further to sanctify and enlarge their humiliation by fasting, 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4, &c.

(5.) He promiseth to pray for the people himself, and acknowledgeth it a sin to omit that duty, 1 Sam. xii. 23.

(6.) His own prayer was so powerful, as thereby he did not only obtain preservation from enemies, but also such extraordinary thunder as scattered the enemies, 1 Sam. vii. 10.

The other function, whereby Samuel's life in his elder years is set out, respecteth his government, as he was a judge. Hereof two things are especially recorded :

1. His sedulity. 2. His integrity. To these two heads may all things becoming a good governor be referred.

Either of these without the other makes one's government very defective and faulty. Let a governor take indefatigable pains, yet if he be corrupt, his pains may prove the more pernicious. Let him be upright; if he be negligent and idle, where is the glory of his uprightness? But if both concur, much may be expected from the government of such a one; for much will be performed thereby, as was by Samuel, in whom both concurred.

This testified his diligence, that he stayed not at his own house for all the people to come thither for judgment: but he went from place to place. He had his yearly progress and circuit, not for his own pleasure, but for his people's ease and good. The places whither he went in his yearly circuit were Bethel,

and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, 1 Sam. vii. 16, all of them in the utmost wastes of Israel.

Concerning his incorruptness, he challengeth all the people, if any way they could impeach him. But they were so far from that, as they bare public witness to his integrity.

Oh that Christian magistrates would set Samuel as a pattern before them, in sedulity and integrity!

#### Sec. 222. *Of Samuel's crosses.*

V. It could not be but that Samuel, living and ruling in such evil times as he did, should meet with many crosses. Among them two are most observable. One in the beginning, the other toward the end of his government.

Samuel began with one of the most lamentable tragedies that had befallen that state since they were settled in Canaan. Israel was twice smitten before their enemies. Once about four thousand men were slain, and at another time three thousand, and withal the ark of God was taken, and the priests that carried it were slain. So dismal was this news, as old Eli, who then was judge, and whom Samuel succeeded, at the first news thereof fell from off his seat backward, and brake his neck. Such an entrance into the government could not but be a heavy cross to Samuel, who was their governor.

The other cross, about the end of his government, was his rejection: aggravated by the quarrel which was picked to colour the same—that it was his sons' ill government, 1 Sam. viii. 5.

To reject him whom God had chosen and settled for a judge over his people, could not be but a heavy cross to that good old man, and that two ways:

1. In regard of himself, who was much disgraced hereby.

2. In regard of the people, who herein manifested a tumultuous mind against God, and provoked him to give them a king in anger, Hosea xiii. 11.

But that they should lay the cause thereof on him and his sons must needs much more pierce his soul: therefore it is said that 'it displeased him,' 1 Sam. viii. 6.

True it is that his sons were corrupt judges; but must the father be rejected thereupon? This was a remedy worse than the malady.

Though it be said that 'he made his sons judges over Israel;' yet doth not that phrase intend that he gave over the whole government to them, much less that he justified them in their mal-governments. The people might have made their complaint to him for redress, which if he had refused, or neglected to do, they might have had some more colour for what they did.

The advantage which the people took at Samuel's sons' ill government, sheweth what pious parents may suffer for their impious children. This was before manifested in Eli's case.

Sec. 223. *Of blessings conferred on Samuel.*

VI. The blessings conferred on Samuel were many and great : as,

1. His extraordinary birth. He was a child of prayer: and after an especial manner given of God.

2. God's Son appearing unto him, even when he was a child.

3. His high advancement to be a prophet and a judge.

4. God's continual abode with him, and fulfilling his prophecy, 1 Sam. iii. 19.

5. God's hearing his prayers.

6. God's blessing his government with the conversion of his people, and confusion of his enemies, 1 Sam. vii. 3, &c.

7. God's associating himself with him when he was rejected, 1 Sam. viii. 7.

8. God's sealing up his integrity by a visible sign, whereby the people were brought to see their sin, 1 Sam. xii. 18, 19.

9. The esteem wherein both king and people had him, even after Saul was made king, 1 Sam. xi. 7.

10. The fulness of days whereto he attained, 1 Sam. viii. 1, and xxviii. 14.

11. An honourable funeral, 1 Sam. xxv. 1.

12. Resting after his death. This I do the rather note in opposition to that popish position of Samuel's being raised by a woman that had a familiar spirit, 1 Sam. xxviii. 11, 12, &c. For quietly to rest after death is a common privilege of all saints.

True it is that the bodies of the best may be taken out of the grave, and may be hurried up and down : but the question here is, concerning the soul, which animated the body while it lived, and is severed from it by death, whether it do, or can before the resurrection enter into that body again, and in that body perform any duty of a living man without a miracle, for papists teach that the soul of Samuel appeared unto Saul after he was dead.<sup>1</sup> For this they render these reasons :

1. The Scripture expressly saith, that Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and that Samuel said to Saul, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14, 15.

*Ans.* It is usual in Scripture to give the names of things to resemblances of them, even to such things as are like them.

Besides, Saul might be deceived, and think that he perceived that to be Samuel which was not so.

2. He that is called Samuel foretold things to come, even such things as did answerably fall out, 1 Sam. xxviii. 19.

*Ans.* 1. There was probability of that which he that appeared to Saul did foretell, namely, that Israel should be delivered into the hands of the Philistines the next day, and that Saul and his sons should be dead. For the enemies were very strong, well pre-

<sup>1</sup> Bellarm. De Christ. Anim., lib. iv. cap. 11.

pared to battle, and resolved to put it to the trial the next day : withal he knew that God had forsaken Saul, and supposed that God would leave him in that strait, and thereupon conclude that he and his sons should be destroyed.

2. God might use evil spirits to declare some things to come, as well as evil men, Deut. xiii. 2.

3. What did the devil care, if that which he foretold had proved untrue? He is the father of lies, and cares not to be found a liar, so as he may work any mischief by his lie.

That it was not the soul of Samuel, appears by these arguments :

1. The souls of those that depart in the Lord are so preserved by the Lord, as nor witches, nor sorcerers, nor the devil himself can disquiet them, and bring them to their bodies again.

2. The uniting of body and soul again after they are separated by death, is a divine work, and cannot be done by a diabolical power. Elijah and Elisha were declared to be the prophets of God by a like work, 1 Kings xvii. 22, 2 Kings iv. 35, 36, and xiii. 21.

So Christ declared himself to be the Son of God by like acts, Mat. ix. 25, Luke vii. 15, John xi. 44. And Peter hereby shewed himself to be an apostle of Christ, Acts ix. 30 ; so did Paul, Acts xx. 10.

3. Had he been Samuel indeed, he would not have suffered himself to be worshipped, as Saul worshipped that personage which appeared to him. An angel would not suffer divine worship to be done unto him, Rev. xix. 10 ; nor Peter, Acts x. 25, 26.

We may therefore well conclude that Samuel himself being dead, quietly rested, and could not be molested by the devil upon any one's motion, as is suggested.

Sec. 224. *Of Samuel's being a type of Christ.*

VII. The last point to be observed about Samuel is to shew wherein he was a type of Christ. This will appear in the particulars following.

1. In the ground of his birth, Samuel was a child of prayer and a child of promise, intended in this phrase, 'God grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him,' 1 Sam. i. 17. This he spake as high priest, by the Spirit of God. So was Christ, Isa. ix. 6, and xiv. 7.

2. In the great favour and especial grace wherein he grew up after he was born, 1 Sam. ii. 26. So did Christ, Luke ii. 40, 52.

3. In the rejoicing that was after his birth. A solemn form of praise was sprung thereupon, 1 Sam. ii. 1. So after Christ's birth, Luke ii. 13, 14.

4. In the stock out of which he was brought forth, which was a barren woman, 1 Sam. i. 15. So Christ out of a virgin, Mat. i. 23, 25.

5. In his worth and excellency, for so were all children of prayer and promise of singular worth,

1 Sam. iii. 19, &c. But Christ herein infinitely surpassed all.

6. In God's timely manifesting himself to him, even when he was but a child, 1 Sam. iii. 1, &c. So in Christ at twelve years old, Luke ii. 42.

7. In his distinct offices: for Samuel was a priest, 1 Sam. vii. 10, a prophet, 1 Sam. iii. 20, and a judge, 1 Sam. vii. 15. So was Christ a priest, a prophet, and a king.

8. In his faithfulness, 1 Sam. iii. 20. Christ surpassed all sorts; as in other things, so in faithfulness, Heb. iii. 2.

9. In the end of his raising up, which was to rescue God's people from their enemies, 1 Sam. vii. 13, 14. This was the end of Christ assuming our nature, Luke i. 71. Therefore at the time, when the one and the other were raised up, the people of God were in great servitude.

10. In that ingratitude of the people against him, notwithstanding his diligence in well governing them, and the great deliverances wrought by him, he was rejected, 1 Sam. viii. 5. So was Christ dealt withal, Luke xix. 14, Mat. xxi. 42.

Sec. 225. *Of the special evidences of the prophets' faith.*

The seventh and last particular is more indefinite than the former were. They were set down by their distinct rooms.<sup>1</sup>

These are many of them implied under this title of function, *προφηται*, *prophets*. The word is of the plural number, because there were many included under it.

Of this title *prophet*, of the function comprised under it, of the distinct kinds thereof, of their extraordinary endowments, of the reasons why they were raised up, and of sundry other points concerning them, see Chap. i. 1, Sec. 12.

That which I here intend to add about them is concerning the special evidences of their faith; for for that end is mention here made of them.

The evidences were these:

1. Faithfulness in their function; this is manifested two ways.

(1.) They delivered nothing but what they had received; hereupon many of their prophecies began with this style, 'Thus saith the Lord,' 'The word of the Lord,' Isa. vii. 7, Zech. iv. 6.

(2.) They concealed nothing they had received, though it were a burden. This therefore was another phrase of prophets, 'The burden of the Lord,' Mal. i. 1. When by reason of the people's unworthiness, Jeremiah had a thought of concealing God's word, it was in his heart as 'a burning fire shut up,' Jer. xx. 9.

2. Diligence in their calling. This is set out by their rising betimes, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15; and rising up early every day, Jer. vii. 25.

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'names'—Ed.

3. Courage: they would not be daunted with people's opposition. Their faces were hardy, strong as an adamant, Ezek. iii. 8, 9.

4. A humble submission, to whatsoever God should call them. Isaiah walked barefoot, Isa. x. 3. Jeremiah went with a yoke about his neck, Jer. xxvii. 2, and xxviii. 10. Ezekiel ate his bread made of all sorts of coarse corn mingled together, and drunk water by a stinted measure, which was a very small measure, Ezek. iv. 14, 12.

5. Patient bearing of all manner of persecution. Christ testifieth thus much of them, Mat. v. 12, and Stephen, Acts vii. 52, and an apostle, James v. 10.

6. Power in prayer. Of Samuel's power we heard before, Sec. 221. An apostle giveth testimony of Elijah's power herein, James v. 17, 18. The like is noted of Isaiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 20, 21, and of Daniel, Dan. ii. 18, and ix. 23.

Sec. 226. *Of the analysis of, and observations from, Heb. xi. 32.*

Ver. 32. *And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets.*

The sum of this verse is a succinct catalogue of sundry worthies. Herein we may observe,

1. A transition.
2. An induction.

In the transition, observe,

1. The manner.
2. The matter.

The manner is by way of interrogation.

The matter notheth out,

1. An extent.
2. A restraint.

The extent implicitly that there were more worthies than he reckoned up.

The restraint implicitly that it was not meet for him to reckon up all.

The induction setteth down sundry particular persons, and that two ways,

1. By their distinct names, which are in number six; *Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel.*

2. By their function, *prophets.*

*Doctrines.*

I. *Faith is the grace that much commends men.* All here set down are commended by their faith, as the inference of this catalogue upon the former sheweth.

11. *God had more worthies than are requisite to be made known.* This interrogation, *What should I more say?* intendeth as much. See Sec. 192.

111. *Great is the multitude of believers.* Time would fail to reckon them up all. See Sec. 192.

IV. *Toliousness is to be avoided.* This is the reason why the apostle forbearth to go on as largely as he had done before. See Sec. 192.

V. *Grace maketh honourable.* All these that for honour's sake are put into this catalogue were endued with grace.

VI. *God enableth men to accomplish what he calleth them unto.* All these here mentioned were called unto great achievements, and answerably enabled.

VII. *A mean man may be enabled to great matters.* So was Gideon. See Sec. 195, &c.

VIII. *Such as are weak in faith may become strong.* So did Barak. See Sec. 198.

IX. *God can give strength to admiration.* Instance Samson.

X. *Grace lost may be recovered.* So it was in Samson.

XI. *Men of eminent parts are subject to gross sins.* So was Samson and other of the worthies here mentioned. Of these three last doctrines, see Sec. 199, &c.

XII. *Bastardy is no bar to regeneration.* Jephthah was base born, yet new born. See Sec. 207.

XIII. *Rash vows are dangerous.* Witness Jephthah's vow. See Sec. 208.

XIV. *Best saints are subject to sorest trials.* Witness David. See Sec. 212.

XV. *God punishes sin in his dearest children.* So he did in David, and in Samson before him. See Sec. 213.

XVI. *God can make a child to be a prophet.* So he made Samuel. See Sec. 220.

XVII. *The most faithful governor may be rejected.* So was Samuel. See Sec. 222.

XVIII. *God, of old, had extraordinary ministers of his word.* See Sec. 225.

XIX. *Faith exerciseth itself in men of extraordinary parts.* Such were the prophets, and such were all the extraordinary persons who are commended. See Sec. 225.

Sec. 227. *Of subduing kingdoms through faith.*

Ver. 33. *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.*

The faith of the forementioned worthies is in this, and the verses following, commended by sundry rare effects, which may be brought to two heads:

1. Great things done, ver. 33, 34.

2. Sore things endured, ver. 35-37.

This relative, *of*, hath reference to the worthies mentioned in the former verse, of whom some did some of the things here mentioned; others did others, as we shall shew upon the particular acts.

This phrase, *διὰ πίστεως*, through faith, is set down in the beginning, to shew that faith extended itself to all those kinds of works done, and sufferings endured; and it sheweth, that by faith matters above human power may be done. So were many of the following instances.

Faith eyeth God, and resteth on him, yea, and draweth virtue from him, to do or endure whatsoever shall seem good to him.

The first of the great things here mentioned to be done is thus expressed, *subdued kingdoms.*

The Greek word, *καταγωνισατο*, which we translate *subdued*, is a compound. The root whence it cometh, *ἀγων*, *certamen*, is a noun that signifieth *strife*, or *fight*; and the simple verb thence derived, *ἀγωνίζομαι*, signifieth to *strive* or to *fight*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. This compound, *καταγωνισατο*, implieth, by striving or fighting, to subdue and destroy.

As our English word *kingdom* hath its notation from a *king*, so the Greek word *βασιλεία*, used by the apostle; and by kingdoms he meaneth whole nations, consisting of many towns, cities, and people in them; and those several nations under the government of several kings.

This instance of subduing kingdoms being brought in as an effect of faith, giveth proof to the lawfulness of war; for war is the ordinary means of subduing kingdoms. Hereof see more, Chap. vii. 1, Sec. 9.

Yea, further, this giveth proof that by war nations may be subdued; and that either by bringing the inhabitants thereof under subjection, or by destroying of them.

This effect hath in special reference to David. All the forementioned judges, as Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, and Samuel, subdued such kingdoms as in their time tyrannised over the people of God; but none of them brought under and destroyed so many as David did.

To subdue and destroy so many as David did, may imply a bloody and cruel disposition; but such a disposition may not be imagined to be in him who was so guided by faith as David was, and who was endued with such excellent graces as hath been observed to be in David, Secs. 214, 215.

They who take a warrant from Joshua and the judges that succeeded him, or from David and the kings that succeeded him, must be sure of a good ground; that it may be said of them, *through faith* they waged war, and subdued kingdoms. Thus may they with courage attempt such matters; and upon their good success rejoice and give the praise to God.

Of the just grounds of war, see *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 9, Secs. 18, 19.

Sec. 228. *Of working righteousness.*

A second effect of faith is thus set down, *wrought righteousness.* The verb, *ἀεργάσατο*, translated *wrought*, cometh from a noun, *ἔργον*, that signifieth *work*, and the verb, *ἐργάζομαι*, to *work*, Mat. xxvi. 10. It being applied to faith, as an effect thereof, plainly demonstrateth that faith is operative, James ii. 22, Gal. v. 6, 1 Thes. i. 3.

There is such a life, vigour, and spirit in it, as will not, as cannot, be wholly smothered. The spirit

of faith forsooth the believer to speak, 2 Cor. iv. 13; so also to walk, and to do. So long as a man hath life and spirit in him, there will be motion—at least there will be breathing.

By working, we may give evidence of the truth of faith in us.

See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 59.

The proper work of faith is here said to be *δικαιοσύνη*, righteousness.

Of righteousness, what it is, and of the distinct parts thereof, see Chap. i. 9, Sec. 114.

Of the excellency of righteousness, see Ver. 7, Sec. 33.

This effect of faith hath reference to all the fore-mentioned worthies; for all of them wrought righteousness, both in the good which they did for God's people, and also in the righteous vengeance which they executed on their enemies. So did Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, and Samuel.

Of David, it is expressly said that 'he executed judgment and justice unto all his people,' 2 Sam. viii. 15.

Of righteousness in governors, which is here especially meant, see Chap. vii. 2, Sec. 20.

#### Sec. 229. Of receiving promises.

The third effect of the faith of the foresaid worthies was this, *they obtained promises*.

Of the Greek word, *ἐτίσχυον*, translated *obtained*, see Chap. vi. 15, Sec. 109.

Of the other word, *ἔπαγγελόμην*, translated *promises*, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 6.

To obtain promises, implicth three things—

1. To be accounted in the number of those to whom the promises belong, Acts ii. 39. In this respect, such are called 'heirs of the promise,' Heb. vi. 17.

2. To believe those promises, and thereby to apply them as matters which concern ourselves in particular. Thus, to *believe* and to *receive* are put for one and the same thing, John i. 12.

3. To enjoy the things promised. Thus, promises are taken metonymically; the efficient put for the effect, as Heb. vi. 12, and x. 36.

All these may well stand together; neither of them cross the other, but do very fitly depend one upon another, as so many links upon one and the same chain: for the gospel, assuring those that live under it and attend unto it that the promises belong to them and their children, they thereupon believe them, as Acts ii. 39, 41; and through this faith they come, in time, to enjoy the things promised, as the saints of old did, Heb. vi. 12.

The last of the foresaid respects, which is to enjoy the things promised, is here especially meant; and that is most agreeable to the word of obtaining, or enjoying (*ἐτίσχυον*), here used by the apostle.

<sup>1</sup> Adepti sunt, *Vulg. Lat.*; assecuti sunt, *Beza*.

*Obj.* It is said of the ancient patriarchs, that they 'received not the promises,' ver. 13; yea, as much is said of all that lived before Christ, ver. 39.

*Ans.* 1. There are three distinct Greek words in this and the two other verses, out of which the objection is raised,—*ἐπαγγελία*, ver. 13, *ἐτίσχυον*, ver. 33, *ἐκπαύσασθε*, ver. 39;—yet I cannot deny but that those three words do oft signify one and the same thing.

2. We must distinguish betwixt times. The worthies mentioned ver. 17, lived long before those that are in this text. In the former place he speaketh of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and such as lived before Israel's entrance into Canaan; but here of the judges, kings, and prophets, that possessed that land. Thus the former received not the promises of driving out the Canaanites, inhabiting their land, and being a populous and settled polity. These did enjoy those promises.

3. Observe the difference of promises. Some were of special matters belonging to themselves, as a promise was made to Joshua of subduing the nations, Josh. i. 5. Promises to several judges of victory over those enemies, which in their days oppressed the people, Judges iv. 7, and vi. 14. To David a kingdom was promised, 1 Sam. xvi. 13. These they obtained. Other promises were of the mystical truth and spiritual substance of the external and typical promises. That truth and substance was Christ himself actually exhibited, and all things which he did and endured for man's redemption and salvation. None that lived within the time that the apostle here speaketh of received these promises, as ver. 39.

4. Put difference, *inter spem et rem*, betwixt an assured expectation and a present fruition; and betwixt that evidence which faith giveth, ver. 1, and that which is by sense. In the former respect, namely, in an assured expectation, all the faithful embraced and received all the promises made to them, even before they were accomplished. Abraham saw Christ's day, John viii. 56. Thus David saw Christ crucified (Ps. xxii. 1, &c.), raised (Ps. xvi. 10), ascended (Ps. lxxviii. 18), set at God's right hand (Ps. cxix. 1). In the latter respect none received the promises, but they that lived when they were actually exhibited, Acts xiii. 32, 33.

5. Distinguish betwixt Christ himself, and the things which he did and endured on the one side; and the benefits which flow from thence on the other side, which are remission of sins, and eternal salvation. Though they enjoyed not the former, yet they did these latter, Heb. vi. 12, Acts xv. 11.

This that is here noted as a fruit of their faith, that they obtained the promises, clearly demonstrateth, that divine promises are the ground of faith, as hath been proved, Chap. vi. 13, Sec. 96.

This also doth further demonstrate, that by faith things promised are obtained. By faith Abraham obtained the promised son.

By faith Moses carried the Israelites out of Egypt. By faith Joshua vanquished the nations, and divided their land amongst the Israelites. The like might be exemplified in all other accomplishments of God's promises. Hereupon it is said, 'Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established,' 2 Chron. xx. 20. On this ground, said old Elizabeth to the Virgin Mary, 'Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord,' Luke i. 45.

Faith is that means which God hath sanctified to this end. Hereof see more in *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 27, Sec. 43.

#### Sec. 230. *Of stopping the mouths of lions.*

A fourth effect of the faith of the foresaid worthies is thus expressed, *stopped the mouths of lions.*

The word, *ἔπαυεν αὐτοὺς τὸ στόμα, obturo*, translated *stopped*, signifieth the hindering of the force and violence of a thing. It is thrice only used in the New Testament.

1. It is used in reference to a man's mouth, so as he cannot utter anything against this or that point, nor reason against the same, in this phrase, 'that every mouth may be stopped,' Rom. iii. 19.

2. In reference to a man's credit, thus, 'no man shall stop me of this boasting,' 2 Cor. xi. 10.

3. In reference to the fierceness of lions; so here. Thus it may be taken literally, and have reference to those lions among whom Daniel was cast; their mouths were so shut as they could not hurt Daniel, Dan. vi. 22. It may be metonymically extended to every way of hindering lions from doing any hurt: as to Samson, who tore a lion, and so kept him from doing hurt to himself, or to any that were in his company, Judges xiv. 6; and to David, who slew a lion and a bear, that entered upon his father's flock, 1 Sam. xvii. 34, &c.; and to Benaiah, who also slew a lion, 2 Sam. xxiii. 20.

Lions are of all living creatures the most fierce, cruel, and irresistible, Prov. xxx. 30. Their very roaring is terrible, Amos iii. 8. They live upon other living creatures, sparing none, no, not men, Ezek. xix. 3, Dan. vi. 24. Their walking is to devour, 1 Pet. v. 8. They devour with their mouths: therefore by stopping their mouths, they are kept from devouring, Dan. vi. 22.

*Obj.* They can with their claws tear their prey all to pieces.

*Ans.* Synecdochically their most dangerous part is put for all other parts wherewith they do mischief. Therefore to stop their mouths extendeth to a restraining of them from doing hurt, yea, and to killing of them, as in some of the cases before propounded.

Hereunto may be applied this promise, 'Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet,' Ps. xci. 13. Metaphorically also, it may be applied to such men

as for cruelty and strength are as lions. Thus it is said, that Benaiah 'slew two lion-like men,' 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. David thus expoundeth this metaphor, 'My soul is among lions, even the sons of men,' &c., Ps. lvii. 4. Paul was delivered from such a lion, 2 Tim. iv. 17. Prayer is made against such, Ps. xxii. 21, xxxv. 17, and lviii. 6.

Yea, the metaphor may be extended to the devil, who by faith is vanquished, 1 Pet. v. 8, 9.

This must needs be a fruit of faith, for man by his strength is not able to stop the mouths of lions. Daniel was but one, yet he believing, the mouths of many lions were stopt: but his adversaries and accusers were many; when they and theirs were cast into the den of lions, the lions quickly had the mastery of them, Dan. vi. 22, 24.

Thus it appeareth, that that may be done by faith, which otherwise cannot be done.

#### Sec. 231. *Of quenching the violence of fire.*

Ver. 34. *Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, raised valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

This verse dependeth on the former, as going on with an enumeration of other effects of the faith of the forenamed worthies; so as a fit effect is thus expressed, *quenched the violence of fire.*

The word, *ἐσβίασεν αὐτὸν τὸ πῦρ, extinguo*, translated *quenched*, is applied to the wasting of lamps and their going out, Mat. xxii. 8, and to the flax that taketh fire, Mat. xii. 20, and to fiery darts, Eph. vi. 16, yea, and to the fire of hell; but negatively, because it can never be quenched, Mark ix. 44. Metaphorically it is applied to the Spirit, and to the fervour thereof, which we ought in no wise to quench, 1 Thess. v. 19.

Here it is properly taken in that it is applied to fire; for fire is properly said to be quenched, and then especially when so much water is poured upon it as taketh away all the heat thereof; for water is a contrary element, so as when fire and water meet, the stronger overcometh.

It may also be extended to any manner of way or means of putting out fire, and taking away the heat thereof.

Fire is of all senseless creatures the most terrible, dangerous, and pernicious. We say in our proverb, fire and water are merciless; whole cities have been destroyed therewith, Josh. viii. 28, Judges xx. 47; yea, many cities together, Gen. xix. 24, 25. The whole world shall be destroyed with fire, 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12.

Metaphorically God's wrath is so styled fire, 2 Sam. xxii. 9; yea, God himself, when he is incensed, is so styled (Deut. iv. 24), and divine vengeance (Heb. x. 27), and hell torment, Mat. xxv. 41.

The word, *δύναμις*, translated *violence*, properly

signifieth *force*, or *power*. Fithly it is attributed to fire; because fire overcometh everything, and nothing can withstand it. But then, especially, fire getteth force, strength, and violence when much fuel is put to it, and when it is kept in, as in an oven, furnace, or any other like place. By keeping it in, the force and violence of it is much increased, as Dan. iii. 19, 22.

This violence of fire is, in general, said to be quenched, when it is kept from burning, and that is not only by pouring water upon it, but also when fuel is drawn from it, Prov. xxvi. 20.

This effect of faith hath an especial respect to the three companions of Daniel, who being cast into the midst of a burning, fiery furnace, were no whit at all hurt thereby, 1 Dan. iii. 21, 25.

To them the fire was as quenched; yea, this may be applied to the burning of martyrs, who (though they were consumed to ashes), by reason of their patient enduring thereof, may be said to quench the violence of that fire. Many of them sang in the midst of the flames of fire, whereby it appears that they were not so terrified thereby as to deny that truth for which they suffered.

This also is an evidence of a true and great faith. As the former instance, of stopping the mouths of lions, gave proof of the power of faith over the fiercest and strongest of unreasonable creatures, so this instance giveth proof of the power thereof over the fiercest and strongest of senseless creatures.

That which is said of fire may also be applied to water, another merciless creature, Jonah ii. 10, 2 Cor. xi. 25, Isa. xliii. 2.

See. 232. *Of escaping the edge of the sword.*

The sixth effect of the faith of the forenamed worthies is this, *they escaped the edge of the sword.*

A *sword* is a sharp, piercing, mortal instrument. Many have in all ages been destroyed thereby.

The Greek word, μάχαιρα, is derived from a verb, μάχεσθαι, that signifieth *fight*, or *strive*, James iv. 2, Acts vii. 2. Hence a noun, μάχη, which signifieth a fight, or strife, James iv. 1. A sword is used either for defence, Luke xxii. 38, or offence, Mat. xxvi. 51. Magistrates use the sword against malefactors, Rom. xiii. 4. Others, against such as they are displeased withal, Gen. xxxiv. 25. All have ever used it against their enemies, Exod. xvii. 13.

The word, σέκουρα, translated *edge*, properly signifieth *mouth*.

In all the learned languages the edge of a sword is called the mouth of a sword; for as a mouth devoureth that which entereth into it, so a sword by the sharp edge of it destroyeth that which is smitten by it, and is said to devour, 2 Sam. ii. 26, and . 25.

<sup>1</sup> פִּי חֶרֶב; σέκουρα μάχαιρας; os gladii.

In the Greek the plural number is used, thus, *mouths*, or *edges*, either to shew a sword of two edges, which is the sharpest, Chap. iv. 12. See. 71, or many swords; for faith makes men escape both the greatest dangers, and also many dangers.

In Hebrew one and the same word signifieth a *sword*, and *destruction*. *Sword* is here synecdochically put for javelin, spear, stone, or any other mortal instrument.

To escape the edge of the sword is to avoid that danger, which by a drawn sword, or other mortal instrument, is intended against one; as if a naked sword were by an enemy held at one's breast, and yet he escape safe. Thus David escaped Saul's spear, which in regard of danger was as a naked sword, 1 Sam. xviii. 11, and xix. 10; yea, though Saul commanded his servants to kill David (1 Sam. xix. 1, 11), and pursued him himself (1 Sam. xix. 22), and that with an army (1 Sam. xxiii. 8), yet David escaped. So Elijah escaped the edge of Ahab's and Abaziah's sword, 1 Kings xviii. 10, and xix. 2, 2 Kings i. 9; so Micaiah, 1 Kings xxii. 28, and Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 14, 31.

This instance sheweth that by faith desperate dangers may be escaped. I say desperate, not in regard of God and his power, as if there were no hope of help in him, but in regard of man; the danger being above his strength to stand against it, and above his ability to overcome it, or to free himself from it. That which to sense is desperate, without, beyond, above hope, to faith in God, is sperable, under hope, and recoverable. David was in danger of death, Ps. xviii. 4, 5, cxvi. 2; so Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 10, 11, &c., and Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 8-10, and xi. 23, 24; yet were they all delivered from those deadly dangers.

Faith makes a man depend on him who is able to deliver him in the greatest straits. A heathenish king could say to Daniel, 'Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee;' and again, 'Is thy God able to deliver thee from the lions?' Dan. vi. 16, 20. But much more to the purpose is this of an apostle, 'We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but God which raiseth the dead,' &c., 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

Quest. May saints in confidence expect every deliverance that God can give?

Ans. Not simply, but with submission unto his will, as they who said, 'Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us; and he will deliver us: but if not, we will not serve thy gods,' &c., Dan. iii. 17, 18. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 8, Sec. 52.

This is a great consolation and encouragement in the greatest straits and distresses whereunto in this world we are, or may be brought. None are or can be so great as to give just occasion of despair; because none do, or can exceed God's ability to help.

On this ground the believer is confident, when that man that walketh only by sense utterly despaireth.

Sec. 233. *Of saints being weak.*

A seventh effect of faith is thus set down, *out of weakness were made strong.*

These words, *were made strong*, are the interpretation of one Greek compound verb, ἐνδυναμώσθαι. It is used both actively and passively.

The simple verb, *ἐνδυναμει*, whence it is compounded, signifieth to be able.

This compound, to make able, or to make strong. It is applied to God, 1 Tim. i. 12, 2 Tim. iv. 17.

In the passive it is attributed to Abraham, Rom. iv. 12; to Paul, Acts ix. 22; to Timothy, 2 Tim. ii. 1; and to all Christians, Eph. vi. 10.

Here it is passively taken, and may be applied to sundry of God's worthies, who were brought to great weakness, but yet recovered, and made strong.

Of the Greek word translated *weakness*, see Chap. iv. 16, Sec. 89.

To aggravate the weakness whereunto they were brought, the abstract is used. He doth not say, *of weak* (which is the concrete), but *out of weakness* (which is the abstract), were made strong.

This carrieth emphasis, and implieth such an extremity of weakness, as there was little or no hope of recovery from the same.

This fruit of faith, in being made strong out of weakness, differeth from other fruits before mentioned in this, that it setteth out the vigour of faith in a man's weakness.

The former instances shewed the vigour of faith against other strong and violent things, as kingdoms, lions, fire, and sword, which presupposed strength in those that believed. But here is weakness, weakness in themselves, and out of that made strong.

This may fitly be applied to the bodily weakness of Hezekiah, he was 'sick unto death.' And thereupon he received this message from the Lord, 'Thou shalt die, and not live;' 2 Kings xx. 1. It appears that he was sick of the plague or pestilence, for he had a boil, or plague-sore, which arose on his body, and was afterwards healed by a lump of figs. The venom of that sickness had seized on his vital parts; and it is probable that the tokens appeared upon his body, which are counted apparent signs of death. In this respect it was truly said, according to the course of nature, 'Thou shalt die, and not live.'

Thus was Hezekiah, very 'weakness;' so weak as there was no hope of gathering strength. Yet out of this weakness was he made strong—that is, he recovered his health and strength again. This recovery was extraordinary; yet was it obtained by faith, as is evident by the faithful prayer which he made, 2 Kings xx. 3, and which was graciously heard, whereupon we may conclude that it was in faith, for 'the prayer of faith shall save the sick,' James v. 15.

*Obj.* In his prayer he pleads his walking with God, which implieth works.

*Ans.* 1. He pleaded not the merit of his works, but his sincerity in doing what he did, as an evidence of God's Spirit in him, and of his respect to God.

2. He doth not plead his walking before God as a thing done by him, but as a condition prescribed by God, whereby it might be known to whom God's promise did belong; for God had said that David 'should not want one of his seed to sit on the throne of Israel, if they did take heed to their way, to walk before God in truth,' 1 Kings ii. 4. But Hezekiah, being conscious to his own integrity, and having at that time no son to succeed him on the throne, in his prayer calls God's promise to mind, and pleads that to God. The word *remember*, in Hezekiah's prayer, sheweth that he had reference to God's promise, as Moses had in his prayer, Exod. xxxii. 13.

This sheweth that by faith incurable diseases may be cured.

*Quest.* May recovery of health and longer life, when one is sick, be prayed for?

*Ans.* Yes, with submission to God's will, and that on these grounds:

1. They are comprised in the fourth petition.
2. Christians are enjoined so to do, James v. 14, 15.
3. Such things are promised as a blessing, Exod. xxiii. 25, Ps. xli. 3.
4. Saints have prayed for those blessings, 2 Sam. xii. 16.
5. God hath accepted and granted such prayers, Phil. ii. 27.

6. Saints' recovery and continuance on earth is a blessing to the church, Phil. i. 24.

Though the weakness here intended may be applied to bodily sickness, yet is it not to be restrained thereunto; for the word *weakness* is such an indefinite word as may be applied to all manner of weakness, whether of body or soul. Under weakness of soul are comprised all manner of troubled passions, as anger, grief, fear, with the like; so also Satan's manifold temptations, and sundry effects following thereupon, as trouble and anguish of mind, doubting, despairing, and other the like.

Under weakness of body are comprised external maladies, as blindness, lameness, sores, boils, and such like. Job and Lazarus were much afflicted with such, Job ii. 7, Luke xvi. 20.

Inward, are all manner of distempered humours and diseases within the body, as fevers, Mark i. 30, and other sicknesses.

There are also weaknesses partly within and partly without a man's body, as hunger, thirst, wearisomeness, and such like.

The primary ground of all these was man's defection from God.

This subjection, even of saints, to manifold weaknesses, admonisheth all of all sorts to take heed of



two dangerous extremes, which are security and insolency. These do commonly arise from health, strength, peace, and all manner of prosperity. David, in his prosperity, said, 'I shall never be moved,' Ps. xxx. 6. We ought to be the more watchful against these, in that not only wicked worldlings, but also the best saints are subject thereunto.

The former, which is security, maketh men little to regard God, as they who say unto God, 'Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,' Job xxi. 14.

The latter, which is insolency, maketh God little regard them, for 'though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off,' Ps. cxxxviii. 6.

Sec. 234. *Of making strong such as are weak.*

The main end of the apostle's mentioning such as are weak, is to amplify the power of faith, in that they are *unb. strong*.

By faith weak children have been made strong; witness Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 1, 2; and Samuel, 1 Sam. iii. 1, 2; David, 1 Sam. xvii. 42; and others. So weak women were made strong, as Deborah and Jael, Judges iv. 9, 21. And men, after they have been weakened, as Samson, Judges xvi. 22; Job, chap. xlii. 10; David, Ps. lvi. 13; and Peter, John xxi. 15.

The apostle expressly saith that 'God is able to make him' that is weak 'stand,' Rom. xiv. 4.

Yea, God himself saith that his 'strength is made perfect in weakness,' 2 Cor. xii. 9.

1. This is sufficient to keep such as are weak from despair. God is as near to all his in their greatest dangers, and in their greatest weakness, as Jesus was to Peter when he began to sink, and was in danger of drowning, Mat. xiv. 31.

2. This directeth such as feel their weakness, and find themselves ready to faint, to look up unto God, and say, 'We know not what to do, but our eyes are upon thee,' 2 Cor. ix. 12.

3. This should keep us from despising such as are weak, because the Lord is able to establish them, and to make them strong, Rom. xiv. 4.

4. Christ teacheth such as are out of weakness made strong to do what they can to strengthen their brethren, Luke xxii. 32.

The apostle thus layeth down the end of God's strengthening and comforting such as have been weak, 'God comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble,' 2 Cor. i. 4. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 8, Sec. 56.

Sec. 235. *Of making valiant in fight.*

The eighth effect of the vigour of faith is thus expressed, *warred valiant in fight*.

The word, *ἐγερθενα*, translated *wared*, is for the most part used as the verb substantive, to set out

the being of a thing, as if it were thus translated, *were valiant*.

The word, *ισχυει*, translated *valiant*, is spoken of such things as are irresistible, and cannot be stood against. Of the derivation and emphasis of the word, see Chap. v. 7, Sec. 37.

It is applied not only to bodily substances, but also to spiritual, as to angels, Rev. v. 2, to Christ, the angel of the covenant, Rev. x. 1, and to God himself, Rev. xviii. 8. Our translators, therefore, have well and fitly turned it *valiant*, which word hath especial relation to the mind and courage of man; for a man little in stature, and not very strong-limbed, may be of great valour; and on the other side, a tall and strong-limbed man may be a very coward.

It is probable that David was but a little man, 1 Sam. xvii. 33, yet of mighty valour; so as he set upon a bear, a lion, a giant, and vanquished them, 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 50.

The apostle addeth this clause, *ἐν πολέμῳ*, *in fight*, as a further proof of their valour. The word translated *fight*, is derived from a verb that signifieth to turn, overturn, or destroy. It is ordinarily translated *war*.

By it more than by anything else, men, cities, nations have been overthrown.

Others will have this word derived from a verb, *ὀλοω*, that signifieth to *destroy*.

Others will have it compounded of two words that signify *much blood*, *πολύ αίμα*, *as si esset πολυαιματος*.

Whatsoever the original of the word be, experience sheweth that it importeth destruction. As it is taken indefinitely for war, so more especially for a battle or for fight, as our English have here translated it. Not for a monomachy or duel, which is a single combat betwixt two on a private quarrel: that rather argueth choler than courage; vainglory, rather than valour; a fruit of natural and corrupt flesh, than of true faith. But it importeth a pitched battle in field, a fight against public enemies. Such a fight will prove the valour of a man. Many seem very valorous till they come into the field to the fight, who, when they see armies of men and horses well prepared against them with glittering swords and long spears, when they hear the sound of trumpet and drums and the thundering of guns and cannons, when they observe bullets flying about their ears, and multitudes of men slain on this hand and on that, then their spirits faint and fail in them. Therefore in war and in fight not to be daunted, but to retain spirit and courage, importeth great valour. Such valour is here noted to be the fruit of faith, 'through faith they waxed valiant in fight.'

Here then we have an exemplification of faith's vigour, in this phrase, *warred valiant*, and an amplification thereof, in this word, *fight*.

The exemplification giveth proof that true valour is praiseworthy. The application hereof to faith

giveth further proof that faith makes valorous in greatest danger, even in fight.

Sec. 236. *Of valour.*

That true valour is praiseworthy is herein evident, that it is set down among those things for which 'the elders obtained a good report,' ver. 2.

1. Valour is a grace which God expressly requires, Josh. i. 7.

2. It is promised as a blessing, Lev. xxvi. 8.

3. A reward is promised to it, Deut. xxxi. 23.

4. It is commended in those that had it, 1 Chron. xi. 10, &c., and xii. 1, 8, &c.

5. A recompense hath been given to it, Josh. xiv. 14. These particulars demonstrate God's approbation of valour.

6. Saints have prayed for it, Acts iv. 29.

7. They have incited one another thereto, 2 Chron. xxxii. 7.

8. Praises have been sung in commendation of it, 1 Sam. xviii. 7.

9. Thanks hath been given to God for it, Ps. cxliv. 1.

True valour is an evidence of more than a human spirit, even of a divine one. When Samson did any valorous act, it is said that the Spirit of God came upon him, Judges xiv. 6, 19, and xv. 14. When that Spirit went from him he became weak as other men, Judges xvi. 17.

*Obj.* 1. This was an extraordinary example.

*Ans.* Yet it giveth evidence also of ordinary courage, for the same Spirit worketh ordinary and extraordinary valour. It is said of Caleb, whose courage was but ordinary, that he had another spirit, Num. xiv. 24, another than the other timorous and faint-hearted spies that discouraged the people.

*Obj.* 2. Sundry heathen men were men of great valour, as Hector, Achilles, Alexander, Scipio, Pompey, Caesar, and others.

*Ans.* 1. That valour which they had was rather vainglory than true valour.

2. What was good in it was by the Spirit; for the Spirit worketh on the unregenerate as well as on the regenerate, though not in the same manner. The Spirit of God came upon Balaam, Num. xxiv. 2, and upon Saul, 1 Sam. x. 10. In this respect Cyrus is styled 'God's anointed,' Isa. xlv. 1, that is, deputed and enabled of God to destroy the Babylonians, and to restore Israel.

True valour aimeth at God's glory and his church's good. It produceth many worthy effects. It daunteth the impudency of the wicked. It maintaineth good causes. It freeth the oppressed. It preventeth many mischiefs.

Heathen philosophers could say that true fortitude is always accompanied with justice and truth. Christians may further add, that it is joined with piety and faith.

What an incitation is this for every one to labour for this grace!

This is one of the things whereon the apostle would have us think, Phil. iv. 8.

In special and peculiar this is to be heeded of captains and soldiers, whose calling is to go to war; for here it is said, 'they waxed valiant in fight;' see *The Dignity of Chivalry*, on 2 Chron. ii. 9, Sec. 10.

It may also be applied to all sorts of governors, who, by reason of men's rebellious disposition against good and wholesome laws, have great need of valour and courage; therefore it is one of the characters of a good magistrate, Exod. xviii. 21. Ministers also, in regard of men's adverse disposition against God's laws, have great need hereof, Jer. i. 17, Ezek. iii. 6, 1 Tim. v. 20, Tit. i. 9, 10.

Yea, all Christians, in regard of the many stout enemies which continually fight against them, have great need hereof, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 10, Sec. 4, and on Eph. vi. 14, Sec. 3.

Sec. 237. *Of faith's making valorous.*

The means of attaining to the foresaid valour is implied, by this phrase, *through faith*, in the beginning of ver. 33, for all the particulars following after have reference thereunto. Faith makes so valorous as no fight, no pitched battle, can daunt him. If not fight, what other danger can do it? 'I will not be afraid for ten thousands of people,' saith a believer, Ps. iii. 6. Many like passages hath that man of faith in his psalms. The like might be exemplified in Caleb and Joshua, Num. xiv. 9, in Jonathan, 1 Sam. xiv. 6, in Nehemiah, chap. iv. 14, in Daniel and his three companions, Dan. vi. 10, and iii. 18.

1. Faith looketh higher than the bodily sight can. In fights it beholdeth that Captain which appeared unto Joshua, Josh. v. 13, and from sight of him receiveth much courage.

2. Faith assureth a man of his reconciliation with God, of God's fatherly care over him, of God's wisdom in ordering all things, and turning them to the best advantage for his children's good. This is it that makes a man valorous and venturesome as a lion, Prov. xxviii. 1. The believer's conscience will not suffer him to adventure on anything but that which is lawful and warrantable, and his faith makes him valorous therein. They say that sundry passions will supply the want of blood in a wounded man; but no passion can so support a man as the spirit of faith. This makes a man more regard the cause than the event. If he prevail in his attempt, he is an apparent conqueror. If he lose his life therein, he gains a more glorious, though a less visible, triumph: and that with the glorified saints in heaven.

Among other points before noted, this sheweth the necessity and benefit of faith; and that as in general for all men, so in particular for soldiers. All have need of courage,—magistrates, ministers, parents,

masters, yea, subjects and other inferiors; for all in their places have need of courage; but without faith there can be no true valour. The greater danger men are in, the more need they have of faith. Soldiers therefore must of all. There can be no courageous standing in the field without faith. Therefore I may say unto them, 'above all take the shield of faith,' Eph. vi. 16.

Sec. 238. *Of turning to flight the armies of the aliens.*

The ninth effect of faith is in these words, *turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

The word, *παρεβόηται*, translated *armies*, signifieth a setting in order, or ranking soldiers, or pitching their tents, or armies set in array.

Of the notation and divers acceptions of the word, see Chap. xiii. 3, Sec. 127. Here it setteth out such armies as are encamped, very strong, and well fenced; so as it is an amplification of the valour of believers, who are here said to *put to flight* (*ἐκλιναν*) such armies. The Greek verb, *κλινω*, properly signifieth to *lay*, Luke ix. 58, and to *bow down*, Luke xxiv. 5, or to *wear away*, Luke ix. 12. It is here used after the manner of the last conjugation in Hebrew (Hithpacl), to *make one depart*, and applied to soldiers in battle array, to make them give ground, or turn the back, which is to run or fly away. Thus the word is here fully translated, *turned to flight*.

The persons against whom they so prevailed are here styled *ἀλλοτρίων*, *aliens*, in opposition to the people of God. Of the notation, and divers acceptions of the Greek word, see Chap. ix. 25, Sec. 127.

Aliens are properly opposed to free denizens or citizens; they are otherwise called strangers or foreigners; Christ opposeth these to children, Mat. xvii. 25. All the time of the law till Christ was offered up, all that were not of the commonwealth of Israel were counted aliens (Eph. ii. 12), because they had no right to the privileges of Israel, who were then the only visible church of God. This is here noted, to shew the ground of their overthrow—even because they were not of the people of God. God protected his people against aliens, who were not his people.

This, and the former effect of faith, do much commend it. They shew that faith is of force, not only to keep men from danger (as these instances, stopping God's of lions, quenching fire, escaping the sword, may be from weakness, import), but also to enable 2 Cor. i. 10 others, in that it maketh valiant in on Ps. cxviii. to flight the armies of the aliens.

Of these two noteth out valour; the Sec. 235. So as this latter is an effect of the The eighth is an effect of valour: faith works pressed, *ωρκεν* or produceth victory. Hereby it is The word, *ἐγερ*, arising from faith, proves victo-most part used stories of believing saints give proof

hereunto; as of Abraham, Gen. xiv. 15; of Moses, Num. xxi. 24, 35, and xxxv. 7, 8; of Joshua, and of the judges and kings after him.

Faith brings God to be a party: believers will enterprise nothing without God. In effect they say to God, as Barak did to Deborah, 'If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go,' Judges iv. 8. So said Moses to God, 'If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence,' Exod. xxxiii. 15, 16.

Therefore God goeth with them. As a visible evidence hereof, the Lord appeared to Joshua, and told him that, 'as captain of the host of the Lord, he was come,' Josh. v. 14. Hence is it that God is oft styled the Lord of hosts: he goeth out with the armies of his people; he ordereth them; he giveth victory to them, Ps. xlviii. 1. Thus is God himself and his honour engaged in his saints' battles, which are styled 'the battles of the Lord,' 1 Sam. xxv. 28.

This therefore doth Joshua thus plead; 'O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies? What wilt thou do unto thy great name?' Josh. vii. 8, 9.

Hence may be inferred one reason of the ill success which many that profess the true faith have in war. In general this is it: they do not well exercise their faith.

Particulars to prove this are these that follow:

1. Israel, in Joshua's time, fled before their enemies, Josh. vii. 4; for it is an especial fruit of faith to make men search into themselves, and into them who join with them, whether there be anything that might keep off God from them; which they did not at that time; yet had they just cause to do so, because of the strict charge that was given them, and that upon pain of a curse, Josh. vi. 18.

2. The eleven tribes that fought against Benjamin in a good cause, were twice overthrown, Judges xx. 21, 25. For—

(1.) It is probable that they were too confident in the number of their men, so as they fought not in faith.

(2.) They took upon them to punish other men's sins before they had repented of their own, which is not to fight in faith. After they had lost two and twenty thousand in one battle, and eighteen thousand in another, and thoroughly repented, with fasting and weeping (Judges xx. 26), they prevailed.

3. Jonathan, a true believer, perished in war, 1 Sam. xxxi. 2; for—

Though Jonathan did in general believe, to the salvation of his soul, yet could he not, in faith, enter into that war, whereby he perished; for he could not be ignorant of God's refusing to answer his father; and he might also be privy to his father's consulting with a witch, 1 Sam. xxviii. 6, 7.

But, concerning Jonathan's cause—

(1.) God may suffer an army to be overthrown for

the sins of some, and in that overthrow suffer believers to be slain for their good, as to free them from the evil to come. This was the case of Jonathan. God would not suffer him, who was heir-apparent to the crown, see another sit upon the throne.

(2.) God translates his saints in such overthrows from earth to heaven, where they triumph over all their enemies.

4. Believing Josiah was slain in war, because he enterprised not that war in faith, but against God's will, 2 Chron. xxxv. 21, 22. Saints may in their general course walk by faith, and yet in some particulars swerve from it, and God for that justly punish them; so he dealt with Moses, Num. xx. 12.

To conclude, if thorough examination be made of such battles as believing saints have lost, or wherein they have been slain, it will be found that their enterprises have been without warrant, or unwarrantably prosecuted. In such cases, God makes enemies his rod to scourge his children. But what do enemies get thereby? what do God's children lose thereby? When God's work is done, the rod is cast into the fire; they who were scourged, bettered thereby, received into grace and favour, and, in case they die, crowned with an incorruptible crown. They are 'judged in this world, that they might not be condemned in the world to come,' 1 Cor. xi. 32.

A good direction hence ariseth for making war prosperous; which is to get faith, and rightly to use and exercise it. For this end, observe these rules:

1. Acquaint thyself with God's word and promises. Thereby thou mayest learn what wars are lawful; how lawful wars are to be waged; to what wars God hath made a promise of victory, 2 Sam. v. 19.

2. Be sure of peace with God, and take heed that he have no quarrel against thee, Deut. xxiii. 14.

3. Renew thy covenant with God, renew thy repentance, Judges xx. 26; for we are all prone to fall from our former steadfastness.

4. In the best manner that thou canst, seek help of God, humble thy soul, sharpen thy prayer by fasting, 2 Chron. xx. 3.

5. Let thy soul remain steady with God, and faint not, Exod. xvii. 11.

6. The greater the danger is, the more confidently rest upon God, 2 Chron. xiii. 14.

#### Sec. 239. Of warring against aliens.

The persons over whom faith makes men valorous and victorious are here said to be *aliens*: such as are strangers from the covenant of God, none of his confederates, but rather opposite to them. Most of the victorious wars before mentioned, and approved in Scripture, were such.

They are God's enemies, and we may in that respect the more confidently rest upon God for his assistance. But for God's confederates to fight one against another

without just cause, is to make God to fight against himself: or rather to make God to be on neither part, but in justice to suffer them to devour one another, Gal. v. 15.

*Obj.* 1. After the division of the ten tribes from the house of David, there were wars betwixt Judah and Israel.

*Ans.* Israel separated themselves from the ordinances of God, and became no people of God. They were like those who said they were Jews, but were not so, Rev. ii. 9. Such are papists, who carry the name of Christians. What can papists more plead for right to the church of God than the ten tribes after their division could?

*Obj.* 2. There was long war betwixt the house of David and the house of Saul, 2 Sam. iii. 1.

*Ans.* The cause is to be considered as well as the persons. If such as profess the true faith offend other professors and invade them, they who are so offended may defend themselves: or if they do notoriously sin against their profession, and provoke God's wrath, they may by that public sword of justice, which is war, be punished, Josh. xxii. 12, Judges xx. 10. In such cases professors make themselves to be 'as heathen men and publicans,' Mat. xviii. 17.

Of war betwixt professors of the faith, see *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 9, Sec. 16.

1. By the foresaid point of warring with aliens, the ambitions, envies, jealousies, quarrels, and wars of Christians against Christians, and churches against churches, are justly taxed. This is a matter much to be lamented. Religion itself much suffers hereby: superstition, idolatry, heresy, and schism get too great ground hereby. While churches are at variance among themselves, enemies of the church get great advantage. Here that mind in us which was in Abraham (Gen. xiii. 8, &c.), the very consideration of this, that we are sons of the same father, the Lord God, and of the same mother, the church, would make us yield, as he did, from our right, rather than by bloody war seek to recover it.

2. Oh let us pray for the peace of the church, and every way seek it! If any desire to give proof of their valour, let them do it upon right objects: even such as are God's enemies, such as are aliens, idolaters, antichristians. Thus they may in faith expect and obtain such success and victory, as the weakening of enemies may prove to be the strengthening of the church.

#### Sec. 240. Of the meaning of these words, 'Women received their dead raised to life again.'

Ver. 35. *Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection.*

A tenth effect of the vigour of faith is in these words, *women received their dead, &c.*

This differeth from the former nine, two ways.

1. In the persons who manifested that effect, *γυναῖκες, women*.

2. In the strangeness of the effect, which was a *receiving their dead to life*.

The persons were of the weaker sex. This hath a particular respect to a widow at Zarephath, 1 Kings xv. 23. and to a married wife at Shunam, 2 Kings iv. 36, 37. For throughout the whole Old Testament we read of no other women to whom this evidence of faith can be applied.

Though these were of the weaker sex, yet the evidence here given is the greatest of all. For death is the most irresistible and irrecoverable that can be. Lions, fire, sword, armies of enemies, are nothing in comparison of death. That which makes those and other like terrible things formidable, is, that they are means to bring men to death. By strength, valour, agility, and quickness of body, or by wit, wariness, and such like properties of the mind, mouths of lions may be stopped, violence of fire may be quenched, the edge of the sword may be avoided, armies of men may be put to flight: but by no strength or wit of man can any be raised from the dead. Many of the other instances have been found among the heathen; but this last, of being raised from death, was never heard of, but in those that were endued with divine power.

The emphasis of this effect, which makes it to be applied to women, resteth upon this word, *ἐκάβη, received*, which is the proper signification of the Greek word.

*Obj.* It was the faith of prophets who raised the dead children, rather than of the women, who received them being raised.

*Ans.* The women first desired the prophets to restore their children being dead, which argued their faith, 1 Kings xvii. 18, 2 Kings iv. 30. Had not they believed and made known their desires to the prophets, the prophets would not have attempted to raise them. Nay, we may further say, that if the women had not believed that the prophets could have restored their children, the prophets could not have raised them up. It is said of Christ himself, that in his own country 'he could do no mighty work,' Mark vi. 5, the reason whereof is thus rendered, 'because of their unbelief,' Mat. xiii. 58. Christ said to one who desired the devil to be cast out of his son, 'If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth,' Mark ix. 23. And it was usual for him to say to others, 'Be it unto you according to your faith,' Mat. ix. 29. And of the woman of Canaan, who importuned him to dispossess her daughter, he said, 'O woman, great is thy faith,' Mat. xv. 28. So as faith is manifested in believing that the dead may be raised, even in those who received that benefit, though they be not themselves ministers or instruments to raise them.

The Syriac translation takes away this amplifica-

tion of faith by the persons, in turning the words thus, *Reddiderunt mulieribus mortuos eorum, They delivered to women their sons from the resurrection of the dead*. Thus this relative, *they*, hath reference to the prophets that raised the dead, and not to the women that received them being raised. But the original Greek is as our English and other translations have turned it. Only in the Greek it is, *ἐκ ἀναστάσεως, from, or out of the resurrection*. This is an elegant hyperbole. Whereas death had taken away their children, resurrection restored them: for if they had not been raised, their mothers could not have had them again. Our English hath plainly and fully expressed the meaning of the phrase by this paraphrase, *raised to life again*.

This phrase, *τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν, their dead*, hath reference to the sons of the foresaid women which were raised, and therefore well expressed in the masculine gender.

#### Sec. 241. *Of faith in raising the dead.*

The express mention of women in these great effects of faith giveth proof that women may give as good proof of faith as men. It hath been shewed in the former section, that this evidence of receiving their dead raised to life is the greatest effect that hath been noted of faith among all the worthies here set down. See more hereof, Ver. 11, Sec. 53.

The particular effect of faith here mentioned giveth further proof that the vigour of faith extends itself to the raising of the dead. Witness the two forementioned instances, of the widow of Zarephath, and the Shunammite. Witness also the faith of another widow, Luke vii. 15, and the faith of Jairus and his wife, Mark v. 40, and of Mary and Martha, John xi. 34, and of the widows that remained by Doreas's dead corpse, Acts ix. 39.

To raise the dead is within the compass of God's power, and not always against God's will, as the forementioned examples shew.

Now, what God can do, faith, in a humble submission to God's will, believeth.

1. Herein we have a confirmation of the eleventh article of the creed, concerning the resurrection of the dead.

2. Here is a demonstration of the want, or at least the weakness, of their faith, who are affrighted with such dangers as may prove deadly; especially if they be so frightened as to renounce their holy profession, or any way sin against God. He that can raise from death can prevent death, or sufficiently support a man in death. Faith in God's power of raising the dead will embolden a man to anything: witness martyrs.

3. It will be useful frequently and seriously to meditate on this evidence of faith: as it is the greatest evidence of God's power, so of the strength and vigour of man's faith.

4. By way of allusion and inference, we may be here stirred up to use all means for quickening the dead in sin, and to use them in faith; for we have more ground here in this world to believe the resurrection from death in sin than from a natural death. When Dorcas was dead, Peter was sent for, Acts viii. 38; so send for ministers, or at least carry thy children and other friends unto the means of quickening their souls, as the friends of him that had a dead palsy carried him unto Christ, Mark ii. 3.

Sec. 242. *Of believers receiving the benefit of others' faith.*

Though they were prophets that were the ministers of raising the dead, yet the women that believed the prophets in God's name could do it, received the benefit hereof: they 'received their dead.' Elijah delivered the child whom he raised unto his mother, 1 Kings xvii. 23; so did Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 36; and Christ delivered the young man whom he raised to his mother, Luke vii. 15; and Peter presented Dorcas, whom he raised from the dead, to the widows, Acts ix. 41. The like is noted of other miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles.

Yea, faith is of such power as it can draw virtue and benefit from the labour and gifts of others that receive not the benefit thereof themselves. They that entered into the ark enjoyed the benefit of their pains and skill who built the ark, though the builders thereof perished. The like may be said of those who were cured by wicked men's working miracles, Mat. vii. 22, 23, and who were wrought upon by the ministry of Judas, Mark vi. 12.

Faith hath an attractive virtue: it is to God's power, truth, mercy, and other like properties, whosoever they appear, as the loadstone to iron, drawing them, or rather the benefit of them, to itself.

1. This sheweth one reason of that little or no profit which is reaped from those excellent endowments which God hath conferred on many of his servants in these later days, and from those powerful means of grace which he hath afforded. The reason is unbelief.

2. To other motives of getting and nourishing faith, add this, thereby mayest thou partake of the benefit of all God's properties and excellencies in himself, in his Son, in his Spirit, in his saints, in other men, and in other creatures. Who would be without so useful, so behoveful a gift?

Sec. 243. *Of faith enabling saints to bear sore trials.*

In the two verses immediately before this, and former part of this verse, the apostle hath noted ten distinct rare acts whereby the vigour of the faith of God's ancient worthies was manifested. Here he becometh to add great sufferings, whereby a like vigour is demonstrated; they are ten in number, but may be drawn to three heads:

1. Of such as were professors.
2. Of such as were martyrs.
3. Of such as were confessors.

Of the first rank, five particulars are mentioned. The first is thus expressed, *and others were tortured, &c.*

This copulative, *and*, is in Greek, *et*, *but*, which being joined with this distributive particle, *et cetera*, *others*, implyeth that howsoever some may be enabled unto worthy exploits, yet God calls others to sore sufferings, and that faith is exercised and manifested in the one as well as in the other; for faith enables to endure as well as to do; and the excellency of this grace doth shine forth as much in the one as in the other; for this phrase, *through faith*, ver. 33, must be extended to all the particulars following to ver. 39. 1 cannot produce greater instances to prove the point than are here set down by our apostle; they shew to what trials saints are subject (hereof see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 15, Sec. 12), and how faith enables to pass through all.

Faith persuades the soul of such principles as are sufficient to support it in the greatest trials, even such as these:

1. God is our Father.
2. God ordereth our estate.
3. All our enemies can do no more than what our Father permits.
4. Our Father is with us in our greatest trial, even in fire and water, Isa. xliii. 2.
5. Our Father knoweth the greatness of our pressures.
6. He is not ignorant of our strength or weakness.
7. He can lighten the burden.
8. He can give us sufficient strength to bear it.
9. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear.
10. He will with the temptation make a way to escape, 1 Cor. x. 13.
11. He will make all things work together for our good, Rom. viii. 28.

Sec. 244. *Of the apostle's quoting things out of human authors.*

The particular instances wherein and whereby the trials of the saints are exemplified are such as are not registered in any part of the Old Testament: hereupon some infer that the trials of Christians for the gospel are here intended; but that is not probable: for,

1. This epistle was written by an apostle that lived in Christ's time. See Chap. ii. 3, Sec. 27.
2. It is said of all those that were brought to these trials, that 'they received not the promises,' ver. 39—namely, the promise of Christ exhibited, and of the full revelation of the gospel by Christ.

If they which received not the promises endured so much, what should not we endure?

It is more than probable that the apostle doth, in the suffering of saints, set down in this and the verses following, aim at the persecutions of the church after the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity.

*Quest.* How could the apostle come to the knowledge of them?

*Ans.* He might have them either out of human records, or from traditions conveyed from fathers to children, age after age. So had Paul the express names of Jaanes and Jambres, 2 Tim. iii. 8; so had another apostle the striving of Michael with the devil about the body of Moses; and the prophecy of Enoch, Jude 9, 11; and our apostle this of Moses, that he said, 'I fear and quake,' Heb. xii. 21.

*Quest.* Doth not this make human records as authentic as sacred Scripture? and traditions equal to the written word?

*Ans.* In no wise. For though in human records there may be and are many truths, yet we cannot absolutely rest upon them, because there may be falsehood in them; but sacred Scripture is the word of truth, James i. 18. Yea, truth itself, John xvii. 17, and that in three respects:

1. In regard of the author, who is the God of truth, Ps. xxxi. 5, from whom nothing but truth can come. He 'cannot lie,' Tit. i. 2.

2. In regard of the matter. There is nothing but truth in it, no falsehood, no errors, no uncertainty, Ps. xix. 8.

3. In regard of the effect. It persuades a man of the truth revealed in it, so as what God's word revealeth may safely, and ought to be confidently, believed. It is not so with human writings.

*Quest.* Why then doth the apostle produce matters to be believed out of human writings?

*Ans.* The Holy Ghost so assisted the apostles, as they were able to discern betwixt truth and falsehood, so as what they took out of human writers was without question most true, and by their quoting the same they have made them authentic.

The like may be said of those testimonies which the apostle quoted out of heathen poets, as Aratus, Acts xvii. 28, Menander, 1 Cor. xv. 33, Epimenides, Tit. i. 12. The apostle's quoting these hath now made them to be sacred. Thus can none do but they who have such a Spirit.

The same judgment is to be given of traditions. Apostles, by the immediate assistance of God's Spirit, could judge what traditions were true and divine; but we cannot. It sufficeth us that all things requisite to make us wise unto salvation are in sacred Scripture, 2 Tim. iii. 15, &c.

Some say that those stories wherunto our apostle hath here relation might be part of canonical Scripture, but now lost.

*Ans.* That conceit, that part of the canonical Scripture is lost, is not to be admitted; for,

1. It impeacheth that Scripture which we have of

imperfection, or else that which is lost of needlessness.

2. It impeacheth the providence of God, in suffering canonical Scripture to be lost.

3. It layeth a blemish on the fidelity of the church, which is the pillar of truth.

4. It takes away some means of our learning and grounds of our comfort and hope. For 'whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning,' &c., Rom. xv. 4.

As for the instances given of books of Scripture lost, they are either of politic records and chronicles, as 1 Kings xiv. 19, or of philosophical discourses, 1 Kings iv. 33, or of such books as are yet extant, but under other titles, as 1 Chron. xxix. 29.

#### Sec. 245. *Of professors' torments.*

The first particular pressure wherewith saints of old hath their faith tried is thus set down: *Were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* The pressure itself is in this word, *tortured*. The other words are an amplification thereof.

The Greek word, *ἐρμπαζιζόμενοι*, translated *tortured*, signifieth to stretch out, or to beat with bats. The root, *έρπαζω*, from whence it is derived, signifieth to beat, thence a noun, *έρματα*, which signifieth a bat or a staff. It signifieth also a drum, the heads whereof being skins, are stretched out very hard and stiff, and used to be beaten upon with drum-sticks. In reference hereunto, a rack, whereon men's bodies use to be stretched, and whereon, being so stretched, they were wont to be beaten; such a rack, I say, or instrument of torture, was called by the same name that a drum is, and they who are so racked and beaten were said to be *έρμπαζιζόμενοι*, stretched and beaten as a drum, or to be drummed. Thereupon our former English translators thus turned this word, *were racked*, but our last translators, taking the word more generally, turned it thus, *were tortured*; so as here is a double trope.

1. A metaphor taken from stretching and beating a drum.

2. A synecdoche, a particular kind of torment being put for any kind. It is probable that the apostle here hath some reference to the sufferings of saints, registered in the Book of Maccabees, for the torment wherunto Eleazar was put is expressed under a Greek word, *έρματα*, that ordinarily signifieth a drum, but is there translated *torment*, 2 Macc. vi. 19, 28. Yea, it is said that Eleazar might have been delivered, and would not, vers. 22, 30. It is also noted of a mother and her seven sons that they would not, on their persecutor's promises, be delivered, in hope to be raised up again, 2 Macc. vii. 14, 29.

This metaphor giveth an instance that professors of the truth may be brought to exquisite torments for their profession's sake. It is said of Joseph that

'they hurt his feet with fetters,' Ps. cv. 18. True it is that he was so dealt withal upon a false accusation, and upon suspicion of violence offered to his mistress; but if his fear of God had not kept him from committing folly with his mistress, he had escaped that torment. Jeremiah was apparently cast into a dun-geon, where he sunk in the mire for his faithfulness in delivering the word of the Lord, Jer. xxxviii. 6. Upon the same ground Micaiah was 'east into prison, and fed with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction,' 1 Kings xxii. 27. Job also was miserably tormented even for his integrity's sake, Job ii. 3, &c. The things which Christ endured, and his apostles, and all sorts of martyrs after their time, give further proof hereunto. See Sec. 255.

(1.) For the more thorough trial of his champions, that their courage, faith, patience, and other graces might be the more manifest.

(2.) To seal up that truth which they profess more firmly.

(3.) To establish other professors.

(4.) To give them some sensible evidence of what Christ endured for them.

(5.) To make them the better to conceive the torments of hell, for if they whom God loves, and whom in love he suffereth to endure what they endure, be grievously tortured, what may we think of those torments which God in wrath inflicteth upon those whom he hateth?

2. Satan and his instruments inflict such torments on professors of the truth in malice. Their delight is in cruelty, and they have mischievous ends, which are to discourage professors, to draw them from their holy profession, and to triumph over them.

1. This teacheth professors well to weigh what their profession may cost them; what they may undergo and endure for it. This is it which Christ adviseth his unto, Luke xiv. 27, 28, &c.

2. In that a holy profession may bring on it such torment, it becomes professors to take unto themselves an invincible courage, and resolve to endure whatsoever by man or devil can be inflicted. A full resolution in this case is of singular use.

#### Sec. 246. Of suffering willingly.

The amplification of believers enduring the foresaid torment is set out two ways.

1. By the manner of their suffering, *not accepting deliverance.*

2. By the end which they aimed at, *a better resurrection.*

Of the Greek word translated *accepting*, see Chap. x. 34, Sec. 129. Of the other word translated *deliverance*, see Chap. ix. 13, Sec. 89.

This phrase of *not accepting deliverance*, hath reference to their persecutors offering them freedom from those torments, in case they would renounce their profession (2 Mac. vi. 21, &c., and vii. 24, &c.), which offer on such condition they would not accept; so as

this phrase, *they accepted not*, is not simply to be taken, but relatively to such terms as they could no way approve. This deliverance in this place is taken for setting one free from torment intended.

The whole phrase, in general, implieth that true professors willingly endure torments for their profession's sake. They are not as bears hauled to the stake, and brought perforce, to endure the baiting, biting, and tearing of persecuting dogs, but willingly yield. In another kind of suffering, it is said of Moses, that he refused honours, and chose to suffer affliction, Vers. 24, 25, Secs. 136, 137. It is in this respect said of Aquila and Priscilla, that they 'laid down their necks,' Rom. xvi. 4, which implieth a voluntary yielding to suffer. So doth this phrase, 'I am ready to die for the name of the Lord Jesus,' Acts xxi. 13.

They discern much good and great advantage to accrue by their sufferings, and that,

1. To God, whose glory in having such servants is set out, 1 Pet. iv. 14.

2. To the truth, which is maintained and ratified thereby, Phil. i. 17.

3. To other professors, who are encouraged and emboldened thereby, Phil. i. 14.

4. To succeeding ages, whose ground of faith, being by their predecessors left sealed unto them, they are made more confident in standing to it. Hence arose this Christian proverb, 'The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.'

5. In reference to enemies, who cannot be but much daunted and disappointed hereby.

6. To themselves, whose present joy and comfort is the more abundant, 2 Cor. i. 5, and whose recompense shall be great, Mat. v. 12.

This is a worthy pattern for us to set before us when we are called to suffer for the name of Christ. By yielding thereto willingly and cheerfully, we make a virtue of necessity, and we make that which we endure more acceptable to God; for God, who loveth a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. ix. 7, doth much more love a cheerful sufferer. All the sacrifices that we offer unto God must be freewill-offerings; much more this oblation of ourselves.

*Quest.* Ought professors to offer themselves to martyrdom?

*Ans.* In this case we must distinguish betwixt the ordinary course, wherein all ought to walk, and extraordinary occasions. In an ordinary course professors are not bound to offer themselves. There is no precept nor approved pattern in God's word to enforce this. The liberty that is granted for escaping, when a fair way is opened by the divine providence, maketh against this conceit, Mat. x. 23. Yea, if persecutors do truly let them go, they may go and escape; so did the apostles, Acts iv. 21, 23. But if God do give to any such a spirit as openly to make known himself, and so to offer himself to any persecution, we are to



account it a special motion, and not over-rashly to censure them. Verianus and Marcellianus, in the time of Decius the emperor, seeing Secundianus led to martyrdom, cried out that they also were Christians, and thereupon were apprehended and cruelly tortured to death. So many others. Polycarpus, being sought after, might have escaped, but would not—saying, as Paul did, Acts xxi. 14, 'The will of the Lord be done.' Apollonia leaped into the fire while they were moving her to recant. God hath in all ages been pleased to put more than an ordinary spirit into many of his servants.

See. 217. *Of persecutors offering release from tortures.*

This phrase, *not accepting deliverance*, presupposeth that deliverance was offered to them, otherwise they could not have rejected it; for their not accepting was a rejecting. That offering of deliverance was by their persecutors; but upon condition that they should yield to them. This is evident by that which Nebuchadnezzar said to Daniel's three companions, when they were accused for not worshipping his idol, which was this, 'If ye be ready to fall down and worship the image.' He thereby implies that they should be spared: for he addeth, 'If you worship not, you shall be cast into a fiery furnace,' Dan. iii. 15. Most evident is this in those to whom this apostle hath reference, 2 Mace. vi. 22, 30, and vii. 24; so also Acts iv. 18. This was usual with the persecuting emperors, and governors under them, in the first ten persecutions against Christians, and also with anti-christian persecutors, and particularly with such persecutors in England in Queen Mary's days.

1. Their envy and malice is more against the truth professed than against the professors thereof. If, therefore, the professors will relinquish the truth, they shall find favour enough. That their malice is not so much against the persons of professors as against the truth professed, is evident, in that they persecute strangers, whom they knew not before. It is said of Paul, that 'if he found any such he brought them bound,' Acts ix. 2. Yea, if the dearest to them, as father, child, brother, or any others linked unto them by near bond, shall profess the truth, they will persecute them, Mat. x. 21. Truth is a light that discovereth their darkness; therefore they persecute all that hold out that light, John iii. 19.

2. They aim at a corrupt triumph over the truth. In this respect they can be content to spare such as they hate, that they may get matter of this boasting, thinking thereby to justify themselves.

1. This is a great aggravation of the wretched and cursed disposition of persecutors. It is against God's truth, against God's manifested will, yea, and against God himself; so as, indeed, they are haters of God. Will God let such go scot free? He may use them for a while as his rod; but at length the rod shall be cast into the fire.

2. This may encourage professors of the truth more willingly and patiently to suffer what shall be inflicted upon them, in that they suffer more for the truth, yea, and for God himself, than for themselves. Will not God stand by such? Will he not give sufficient assistance to them? Yea, and an abundant recompense too.

3. It is a matter of great comfort and content to martyrs, that God's truth, yea, and God himself, suffers in them, and with them, and that more directly than they themselves.

See. 248. *Of the meaning of these words, 'That they might obtain a better resurrection.'*

The end of professors suffering what they do is thus set down, *that they might obtain a better resurrection*. Of the derivation of this word, *εὐζωω, obtain*, see Chap. vi. 15, Sec. 109. It here importeth again that<sup>1</sup> they aimed at. For the verb here, *εὐζωω, to obtain*, signifieth to get something by that which we do, undergo, or let go. To get, I say, not upon merit, but upon God's promise.

To shew that it was no small gain, he expresseth it under this word, *ἀνάστασις, resurrection*.

The Greek word translated *resurrection*, is a compound of a simple verb, *ίστημι*, that signifieth *to settle or establish*; from thence a compound, *ἀνίστημι*, with a preposition, *ἀνα*, that in composition signifieth *again*. The compound verb is sometimes used neutrally, and signifieth *to rise*, Rom. xiv. 9, and sometimes transitively, *to raise*, Acts ii. 24. Thence this word, *resurrection*. It presupposeth a former life; so as such rise, or are raised again to a new life.

Here in this place is meant the resurrection of the body at the last day, when the soul being united again with it, both shall enjoy eternal glory.

To amplify this pain<sup>2</sup> the more, it is set down comparatively, in this word of comparison, *εὐζωωτερος, better*, so as it hath reference to another resurrection, before which this is preferred. Was it that resurrection which is implied in the first clause of this verse, 'Women received their dead from a resurrection'?

*Ans.* They had no ground to expect such a resurrection. Was it then a greater degree of glory for sufferings?

*Ans.* This text maketh no comparison betwixt degrees of glory.

Is the comparison then made betwixt the resurrection of professors and persecutors?

*Ans.* No. The comparison is betwixt a resurrection which professors rejected, and which they obtained.

What was the resurrection which they rejected?

*Ans.* The deliverance before mentioned, upon condition of renouncing their profession. For when professors are in the clutches of bloody persecutors, they are as dead men; to escape out of their clutches is as

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'a gain of that'!—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Qu. 'gain'!—Ed.

a resurrection from the dead. In this sense, but in another case, Abraham is said to receive Isaac from the dead, ver. 19, because he was deputed to death. In that the professors here mentioned would not be delivered on the persecutors' terms, they may be said to reject a resurrection. Now, they aimed therein at the resurrection to eternal life, and this was a far better resurrection than any resurrection from their persecutors could be.

That this was the end of their suffering, is evident by the apostle's express setting it down so, with this final conjunction, *in*, *that*, so as they did it not rashly, but upon good advice, and to a good end. They had reason to do what they did.

#### Sec. 249. *Of believers suffering advisedly.*

The general expression of the end of saints' sufferings, noted in this causal particle, *that*, giveth us to understand that true believers advisedly endure what they endure for the faith's sake. 'So fight I,' saith the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 26, 'not as one that beatech the air'—that is, not as a madman that fighteth with a shadow, not weighing what he doth, but as a man of understanding, that have good cause to do what I do. This advisedness with reference to the cause he doth here set out: 'For the which cause I suffer these things; for I know whom I have believed,' 2 Tim. i. 12. All those texts which set down the causes and motives why saints were induced to suffer, give proof hereof.

Particulars were these—

1. Submission to the will of God, Mat. xxvi. 42.
2. Confirmation of the gospel, Phil. i. 17.
3. Establishing the professors thereof, Phil. i. 14.
4. That 'eternal weight of glory' which followeth thereupon, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

Believers are endured not only with reason (which in general moves men to prefer the more excellent), but also with spiritual understanding and divine wisdom, which makes them well weigh what they do and endure. Thereby also they are enabled to distinguish betwixt things that differ, and thereupon to choose and prefer the more excellent, needful, and useful.

Take notice hereby of the perverse censure which the men of this world do in this case pass upon believers. They judge them to be no better than sots, idiots, frantic, mad; if they suffer imprisonment, loss of goods, reproach, or any kind of censure, What madmen are these! say they, not knowing the ends which saints aim at, and that blessed fruit that will follow thereupon.

#### Sec. 250. *Of believers suffering with an eye to the better resurrection.*

The end that is here set down doth apparently surpass all that they lose or endure by their suffering, so as they suffer upon advantage. They 'obtain,' they get, they gain thereby. Well did he understand

this who said, 'Our light affliction worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' 2 Cor. iv. 17. All the rewards that are mentioned in Scripture of suffering, give proof hereunto.

This may not be imagined to be any mercenary matter, as arising from a man's own merit, but from God's promise, which ariseth from his free grace and good pleasure.

This sheweth that there is a mystery in this trade of suffering, which we shall do well to inquire into. In the things of this world, if we observe men by such and such courses to thrive, we use to be inquisitive after the same. Inquire therefore, and that with diligence, into God's word, and thou shalt find that by holding close to God, by holding fast a profession of his truth, by suffering for that same, thou shalt have an abundant recompense. God will not suffer anything to be done or endured for his sake in vain. The more and greater the sufferings be, the more ample and excellent will the reward be.

This is here exemplified by the resurrection. A resurrection was the end they aimed at.

Of the word translated *resurrection*, see Sec. 248.

The resurrection emboldens believers to do what they do.

This phrase, 'What advantageth it me if the dead rise not?' 1 Cor. xv. 32, sheweth that the apostle in his sufferings had an eye upon the resurrection; which also is implied, 2 Cor. iv. 14.

By the resurrection we are fully exempted from all manner of misery, and estated in that felicity as exceedeth all expression, all apprehension.

This is it that the world doth not understand, they know not what the resurrection meaneth. They dote only on things present, like brute beasts. The heathen, who wanted the light of God's word, never believed the resurrection of the body, though they had some glimpse of the immortality of the soul. Their philosophers counted Paul a babler, because he preached the resurrection, Acts xvii. 18.

Many that carry the name of Christians, and in general know and believe that there shall be a resurrection of the body, do not understand the difference betwixt the distinct kinds of resurrection—namely, that there is a 'resurrection of life,' and a 'resurrection of damnation,' John v. 29. Neither are they acquainted with the true grounds and sure evidences of that difference. Hence it is that both heathen and common formal Christians do so wonder as they do, that believers should be so forward to suffer, and so prodigal of their lives as they are. Faith in the resurrection of life will make a man less careful of preserving his mortal life in God's cause.

That resurrection whereon true believers have their eye in suffering, is here said to be a *better resurrection*—better than any deliverance in this world, better than anything that can be enjoyed in this life. Thus much the apostle implies in this phrase, 'to be

with Christ is far better,' Phil. i. 23; and in this, 'ye have in heaven a better substance,' Heb. x. 34.

This will the better appear by comparing this resurrection with other resurrections mentioned in Scripture.

1. We read of a 'first resurrection,' Rev. xx. 5, 6. This resurrection here spoken of by the apostle is the second resurrection, which is the end of the first. But the end of a thing is better than the means of attaining to it; besides, the first resurrection is but in part, till it be made perfect by this second resurrection.

2. We read of a resurrection in vision, Ezek. xxxvii. 10; but this is a real resurrection, and in that respect better.

3. We heard of a resurrection in a figure, ver. 9. That was but a supposition, or, at the best, a type; but this is the thing itself.

4. There is a resurrection from deadly danger. Such were many deliverances of the saints, as of Daniel and his three companions, Dan. iii. 26, and vi. 23; and of Jonah, chap. ii. 10. Yet those have not been exempted from all future dangers, as they are who are made partakers of this resurrection.

5. There hath been a resurrection of such as have been actually dead, but to this mortal life and to manifold infirmities, as 1 Kings xvii. 32; but this is a full freedom from every infirmity and from mortality.

6. There is a resurrection from the clutches of persecutors, whereof see Sec. 248. But the resurrection here intended is expressly said to be better than that.

What a folly is it so to dote on that resurrection from persecutors, as to forfeit this better resurrection! Woeful in this respect is the case of all apostates, who forsake the truth to be free from suffering for the truth.

To prevent this point of folly, let us advisedly meditate on the surpassing excellency of this better resurrection.

Sec. 251. *Of mockings, a kind of persecution.*

Ver. 30. *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourging.*

The apostle goes on in setting down other kinds of persecution.

And because that sundry persons endured sundry kinds of trials, he joyneth this verb with the former, as thus, *and others*. In Greek the copulative *and* is a disjunctive, *ἀν*, but: thus set down, *ἐνταῦθα ἀν*, but others.

The second kind of persecution there set down was *mocking*: which, because of the variety, and several kinds thereof, is set down in the plural number, *ἐνταῦθα μω*, mockings.

The Greek word is a compound, derived from a

noun, *παίζω*, that signifieth *a child*: thence a verb, *παίζω*, or *παίζω*, which signifieth to play as a child, 1 Cor. x. 7; and from thence a compound, *ἀνταίζω* or *ἐνταίζω*, which signifieth to mock, Mark xv. 20, 31; hence is derived the word used in this place, *ἐνταίμω*, which signifieth *mocking*; and another noun of the same composition, *ἐνταίμω*, which signifieth *mock*, 2 Pet. iii. 3, Jude 18.

To the word here used, our English add this epithet, *cruel*; which is not in the Greek, yet may it well be added to the mockings of the enemies of the gospel, because they use to be with all the despite that may be.

This kind of persecution, and the three others following, are thus brought in, they had trial of mockings, &c.

The word, *παίζω*, translated *trial*, signifieth also *experience*. It is supposed to be derived from a verb, *παίζω*, that signifieth *to pass over*.

From that noun is derived a verb, *παίζω*, that signifieth to try or to tempt.

The word, *ἐνταίζω*, translated *had*, properly signifieth *received*. They received those trials from their persecuting adversaries.

The word *received* is used in a threefold respect:

1. In that they were not only threatened with the kinds of persecutions, whereunto this phrase is annexed; but they did indeed fall upon them, they were afflicted with them, and so had experience of them.

2. In that persecutors thereby tried and essayed to draw them from their profession.

3. In that their faith was tried and proved thereby to be tight and sound.

Of trials and temptations we shall speak more, on ver. 37.

The setting down of mockings amongst other kinds of persecutions, giveth apparent proof that mocking is a plain persecution.

Hereof see more, Chap. xiii. ver. 13, Sec. 135.

Sec. 252. *Of scourging professors.*

The third kind of persecution is thus set down, *scourgings*.

This word *scourgings* doth properly set out the meaning of the Greek word, *μαστιγίσμα*. For a verb, *μαστιγίσω*, that is of the same notation, signifieth to scourge, Mat. x. 17, and xx. 19.

The word of the text is also applied to painful and tormenting diseases, Mark iii. 10.

This was a sore trial, very painful, and hard to be endured; especially as persecutors used to scourge saints with scourges of whiplcord, of wire, and other like things, that fetched blood, and tore the flesh of those who were scourged. In regard of this kind of punishment many a saint may say, 'the ploughers ploughed upon my back, and made long their furrows,' Ps. exix. 3. Thus this kind of persecution may be reckoned up under torments. This was

always counted a base kind of punishment. Vassals, slaves, base, beastly persons, were wont thus to be punished. Under the law, if a man were so base as to lie with a bondmaid, he was to be scourged, Lev. xix. 20.

Hereby we see that professors for their religion are punished in the basest and sorest manner that can be. So was Christ dealt withal, Mat. xxvii. 26, 29. So the apostles, Acts v. 40, and xvi. 23. So sorely were Paul and Silas scourged, as the wounds, made by the scourges, were suppled and washed by the jailer. In persecutions against Christians by the heathens, many were scourged in open and public places for the greater disgrace, and so cruelly, as they died thereof. The like hath been done by antichristians.

No such malice and hatred is ordinarily found in any, as in persecutors against professors of the gospel. For there is nothing so contrary to error, heresy, or idolatry, as God's truth. One error is not so contrary to another, nor one kind of heresy or idolatry, as divine truth is unto them all. No marvel, then, that the hatred and malice of persecutors hath been so insatiable against professors of the truth—whom they handle as slaves, yea, as beasts.

This teacheth us who are resolved to hold the truth, to be prepared against all kinds of trials, whether of shame or pain. It is said of Christ, that he 'endured the cross and despised the shame,' Heb. xii. 2. Look unto him, and consider the cause rather than the kind of suffering. It skilleth not how enemies of God's truth esteem us, and deal with us, so long as God, good angels, and holy men approve us.

#### Sec. 253. Of using professors as malefactors.

The fourth kind of persecution of professors was by bonds. The Greek word *δεσμός*, is here fitly translated *bonds*. For it is derived from a verb, *δέω*, that signifieth to *bind*. The bonds here meant are cords, and iron chains, and fetters, and manacles, wherewith they held men fast, and kept them from running away, or any other way escaping. Of the many ways of keeping men fast, and restraining them from liberty, see Chap. xiii. 3, Sec. 25.

The fifth kind of persecution is like unto this, which is said to be *φυλάξις*, imprisonment. For men are cast into prison to be kept fast, that they should not flee away. The verb *φυλάττω*, that is of the same root, signifieth to *keep*, and he that hath the charge of a prison, is called *φύλαξ*, a *keeper*: yea, there is a verb of the same notation, *φυλάττω*, which signifieth to *cast into prison*.

Because a prison is to hold men fast, prisons used to be as castles, strong built, of stone, or other like materials, with strong doors, iron bars, and grates, and jailers to look unto them.

Bonds and prisons are for murderers, thieves, and other malefactors. Now in that professors of the true faith had trial by bonds and imprisonment, it giveth

evidence that persecutors deal with professors of the truth, as with malefactors. Hereof see more in *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 3, Part 7, on Eph. vi. 20, Sec. 189.

1. This may be some comfort to such as are so handled in these our days. It is no worse with them than it was with their Lord and Master in his days, and with other his faithful servants in their days. 'So persecuted they the prophets, which were before you,' Mat. v. 12, and so the apostles, and so other saints age after age.

2. By way of allusion, professors of the truth may learn to keep their souls free from the bonds of sin; then need they not much care for men's bonds, at least they shall then more comfortably lie bound with men's bonds, and if they have learned to make every place a temple to worship God therein, even in prison they may worship God. The more they are restrained in their bodies, the more they may exercise their souls in divine meditations and contemplations.

3. Considering true saints are subject to bonds and imprisonments, and thereby kept from seeking needful and seasonable succour, it is our duty to inquire after such, and to afford them all the succour we can. Hereof see more, Chap. xiii. 3, Secs. 24, 26.

The manner of setting down the four kinds of persecution mentioned in this verse, thus, *had trial*, giveth us to understand that the persecutions of professors were real; they had experience of them; they had a sense and feeling of them, and in that respect *had trial*. See Sec. 251.

If racking, if scourging, if bonds and imprisonments be real persecutions, then were theirs real.

Such was the malice of persecutors, as they set themselves to make professors to feel the weight of their malice.

This sheweth the necessity of true sound and patience, yea, and of the perfect work thereof, that it be not only true and sound, but also large, extending itself to all manner of persecutions; yea, more in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 15, Treat. 2, Part 5, Secs. 14–16, &c.

#### Sec. 254. Of stoning professors of the truth.

Ver. 37. They were stoned, they were sown asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.

There are in this verse other sorts of persecutions, as well as these, which are such as brought professors to seal up their faith with their blood; so as those were the sufferings of martyrs.

The first of these, and the sixth kind of persecution, is thus expressed, *ἐλαύνοντες*, they were stoned. The Greek verb *ἐλαύνω*, is derived from a noun, *λίθος*, a stone, John viii. 7, for they were wont to throw stones at men, and thereby slay them.

This kind of death was of old more in use than now, and more common among the Jews than among other nations.

It was a kind of death appointed by God himself to be inflicted upon notorious malefactors, Lev. xx. 2.

That this kind of death may be the better conceived, I will distinctly shew,

1. How men were stoned.
2. Why this kind of death was used.

For the first, the manner of stoning was this :

A malefactor being condemned, heaps of stones were prepared, and brought to the place of execution, where the malefactor was fast bound to a stake, and then all the people took up stones, and threw at him till he was dead. In setting out this kind of death, it is said, 'the people shall stone them to death,' Lev. xx. 2; 'let all the congregation stone him,' Lev. xxiv. 14. For exemplification hereof, read Josh. vii. 24, 25.

For the second, these reasons may be given of this kind of death :

1. That all the people might testify their zeal and indignation against the crime so punished; for in throwing stones against a malefactor, they strived who should be the forwardest.

2. That the blame of condemning the malefactor might not lie wholly upon the judge; for all the people, executing the sentence of the judge, thereby gave approbation of it.

3. That there might be a more thorough expiation of the land from that crime for which the malefactor was stoned. As many men's conspiracy in sin, and making themselves accessory thereto, doth defile a land the more, so the zeal of many in punishing a public sin doth more cleanse the land, Josh. vii. 26.

This kind of death inflicted by persecutors on professors of the truth giveth evidence of two points.

1. That they accounted professors of the truth as notorious malefactors, or at least that they would have the people so to account them. Hereof see Sec. 253.

2. That many were brought to have their hands in the death of martyrs; for stoning was by the hands of many. The people were almost ready to stone Moses, Exod. xvii. 4; nay, they did stone Zechariah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 21.

The multitude cried to Pilate, and said of Jesus, 'Let him be crucified,' Mat. xxvii. 22. It was the multitude that stoned Stephen, Acts vii. 57, 58; so the people stoned Paul, Acts xiv. 19; and the multitude of them at another time were ready to have torn him in pieces, Acts xxi. 30, &c.

Experience of all ages have given too woeful proof hereof.

1. The greater sort of people <sup>ye</sup> remain in their natural condition, and cannot <sup>these</sup> discover the light of truth, which discovereth their darkness.

2. They are of a foolish disposition, ready to sway

with the times, and to do as their guides do, though with them they run blindfold to their destruction. As silly sheep will follow one another, though it be into the water, where they may be all drowned, so the common people will follow one another even to hell.

1. Learn hereby to take heed of judging persons or matters according to the judgment and censure of the multitude. This is a caveat, which God in his law doth give, Exod. xxiii. 2. A multitude is prone to run downhill, as all evil is.

2. This may be a good item to pray for good guides in church and commonwealth, that thereby the common people may be brought into the right way.

Where guides are idolaters, or otherwise corrupt, a pretence may be of taking away the life of God's saints by way of justice, though it be most unjustly, as in the case of Zechariah and others before mentioned; and likewise in the case of Naboth, 1 Kings xxi. 12, 13.

Or otherwise, heady people may tumultuously rise against God's servants, as in David's case, 1 Sam. xxx. 6; and in Christ's case, John viii. 59, and x. 31.

#### Sec. 255. Of saving professors asunder.

A seventh kind of persecution setteth out a second sort of death in this word, *ἐζιγνῶσθαι*, they were *sawn asunder*. The Greek word may seem to be derived from a noun, *ζῆλος*, that signifieth a *saw*. The word here is properly translated according to the usual succession thereof.

Some authors do also use it more generally for any cutting or pulling asunder; as in the story of Susanna, where it is said 'the angel waiteth with his sword to cut thee in two,' ver. 59; this word is used in the Greek. It is also used about cutting off the tongue, and utmost parts of the eldest son's body, 2 Macc. iv. 7.

We do not read in sacred Scriptures of any that were sawn asunder. But the Jews, among other their traditions, have this, that the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder with a wooden saw in the time of king Manasseh. Epiphanius, in setting out Isaiah's life, noteth as much; so doth Jerome, in the last close of the fifteenth book of his comment on Isaiah lvi.

Whether that be true of Isaiah or no, most sure it is that some have after such a manner been martyred, either by sawing them asunder, or by pulling the members of their body asunder. This testimony of the apostle is sufficient to assure us of the truth thereof, and it giveth an instance of the cruelty of persecutors, which sheweth itself even in the death of martyrs. They think it not enough to torment them beforehand, for trial's sake, to see if they can make them yield, nor after that to take away their lives, but to take them away with bitter and grievous torment, as sawing asunder, especially with a wooden saw. Thus

Antiochus, after he had cut out the tongues, flayed off the skins, pulled asunder many parts of the body of the seven brethren, fried them in pans to death. The Roman persecutors dealt as cruelly with the martyr St Lawrence; after they had scourged him, and plucked off a great deal of his flesh with red hot pinchers, they broiled him to death on a gridiron. They roasted others to death on spits; they boiled others to death in scalding lead; they brake the bones of others, and let them lie on engines till they died. Other like cruel kinds of death they put others unto.

The ordinary kind of means whereby papists put martyrs to death, is burning with fire, which is a cruel kind of death, especially as they used it; for some martyrs were hours together burning in the fire, and some had limb after limb dried up with the fire before their breath was taken away. Some had barrels of pitch over their head set on fire, to drop down and scald them on their head and other parts. Some were hanged upon a gibbet, with a pulley thereon, and a burning fire under them, into which they were let down till the lower part of their feet were burnt off; then drawn up and let down again, till other parts were consumed, and thus kept long under torment. Time will not suffer to set down all their kinds of cruelty. See Sec. 245.

The ground of all was their extreme hatred of truth, and malice against maintainers thereof, which made them cast out all bowels of pity, yea, it made them take a devilish delight in cruelty. Herein lieth a difference betwixt cruelty that tends to death, and that which is in death. The former may be to make men yield, but this is on malice, and a mere devilish disposition.

1. This giveth instance of the depth of man's corruption, which makes him as a devil incarnate, worse than the most savage beasts. Some tyrants have so far exceeded in cruelty, as they have hired men to invent instruments for cruel kinds of death. Phalaris among the heathens is famous, or rather infamous, for this. Perillus, at his motion, made a bull of brass, hollow within, which with fire might be heated red hot, and men put thereinto; their crying out for that torture seemed to be as the lowing of a bull, and thereupon no pity taken of them. Other like things are noted of Dionysius, Rouseris, and other tyrants.

2. These tortures do give demonstration of the unconceivable supportance and comfort of the divine Spirit, whereby martyrs have been enabled with patience to endure what cruelties could be inflicted on them, and in the midst of torments meekly and sweetly to commend their spirits into God's hand, to the world's astonishment.

3. How should this stir us up patiently to bear smaller trials, yea, not to be affrighted or discouraged with anything that man can do, but to rest upon this, that that God who hath enabled his servants in for-

mer times to endure such exquisite tortures unto death, will enable us to endure what he shall bring us unto! Pertinent to this purpose, is the advice of Christ, Luke xiv. 4, 5.

See. 256. *Of the danger of temptation on the right hand.*

Betwixt the second and third kind of death, this is inserted, *ἐπιμαρτυροῦνται, were tempted*, which is the eighth kind of persecution.

Great question is made concerning this word, *tempted*; and concerning the apostle's inserting it in this place.

Some conceive that it was not here inserted by the apostle, but put in the margin by some that would give a sum of all the trials here mentioned, and that afterwards it was by others put into the text. But thus it would imply a mixture of human inventions with sacred Scripture, which is not to be admitted.

Others conceive the Greek word was mistaken, through the mistake of a letter (*υ*); instead whereof a vowel (*α*) is here used. For the Greek word with the single letter, *ἐπιμαρτυροῦνται*, signifieth *to be burnt*. In sense this might well stand, and thus there would be four distinct kinds of death set down: 1. *Stoned*; 2. *Sawn asunder*; 3. *Burnt*; 4. *Slain with the sword*. Many of our later expositors yield to this; but seeing all the Greek copies agree in the former, which is, *were tempted*, I suppose it is not safe to open such a gap to atheists and papists about the imperfection of the original.

To take it, therefore, as it is in the text, *were tempted*, it may be inserted as a reason why they were put to such cruel deaths, even because, being tempted, they remained resolute, and would not yield to their persecutors.

Thus, in the next verse he inserts these words, *of whom the world was not worthy*, as the reason why saints wandered up and down so as they did.

In this sense it is agreeable to this phrase in the former verse, *they had trials of mockings, &c.*

Or else it may be taken for long and grievous oppressions, either by enemies in a strange land, or by cruel governors in their own country, which by their long continuance, proved great trials and temptations, even worse than death, and therefore here set among the kinds of death.

Yea, further, it may be taken for temptations on the right hand (as we speak), as riches, honours, promotions, immunities, pleasures, and other such like fair baits, and are here reckoned amongst the kinds of cruel death, because this kind of temptation was as dangerous as the cruellest death, if not more. For instance, take David, who, all the while he was persecuted by Saul, and while he had enemies in his kingdom, remained faithful and constant with his God; but peace and prosperity stole away his heart

to satisfy his lust, and to follow the same, to the taking away of the life of Uriah, 2 Sam. xi. 2, &c. Demas was an old disciple, and had long, in the time of fiery persecutions, held the true faith; yet, at length, the world made him revolt, 2 Tim. iv. 10. It is said of Antiochus, that 'by peace he should destroy many,' Dan. viii. 25. Though for many years after Christ was ascended the church was under fiery persecutions, yet then were the purest times thereof; and in that respect Satan is said to be bound, Rev. xx. 2. But when, through Constantine's and other emperors' large donations to the church, they enjoyed peace, obtained much wealth, and attained to high honours, they proved, in time, to be antichristian. In this respect Satan is said to be loosed, Rev. xx. 3. Experience of all ages giveth further proof hereof. In the latter end of Queen Mary's days, there were sundry professors, who, for the truth they held, had patiently and courageously endured long and hard imprisonment, and other trials for the truth's sake, and had remained so constant therein, as they were condemned to death, and ready to be burned; but by the sudden death of Queen Mary, were as brands pulled out of the fire, and set at liberty. Of these, many in the hazyon days of Queen Elizabeth, being preferred to high places, and having obtained much wealth, denied the power of godliness, and made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience.

There are two especial grounds hereof—

1. The deceitfulness of these temptations.

2. The foolishness of man's heart.

1. This epithet, *deceitfulness*, is in general added to sin, comprising under sin all temptations that lead thereto, Heb. iii. 13. In particular, it is attributed to riches, Mat. xiii. 22, and to pleasing lusts, Eph. iv. 22. Of the respects wherein sin is deceitful, see Chap. iii. 13, Sec. 148.

2. The foolishness of man's mind herein appeareth, that it so doteth on these temptations, as it is intoxicated therewith, and prefers them before all other things.

Voluptuous persons are 'lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 4.

Covetous persons are 'idolaters,' Eph. v. 5; they make their wealth their god.

Ambitious persons 'advance themselves above all that is called God,' 2 Thes. ii. 4.

Baits are not more dangerous to the silly fish, fowl, and beasts, than these temptations to men. They are like a sweet poison, the venom whereof is not discerned till it hath soaked out the vital vigour in man, and become incurable.

1. This informs us in the vigour of faith, that enables a man to stand against these temptations, as hath been exemplified in Moses, vers. 24, 25, 26.

2. This giveth proof of the subtlety of persecutors, who can so far fawn on them they hate, as to offer all pleasing things unto them. We have heard how

persecutors could offer freedom to professors, if they would yield, Sec. 217. They shew themselves herein to be guided by the spirit of the old wily serpent, who hath his wives, Eph. vi. 11. Thus he tempted Christ, reserving this kind of temptation to the last place, which Christ resisted with greatest indignation, Mat. iv. 8-10.

3. This instructeth us in the need, use, and benefit of crosses. They are especial means to keep us from those temptations, which are so dangerous. We have cause in this respect to bear crosses the more patiently, because they are means to wean us from this world.

4. This teacheth us to moderate our desire of the things of this world, in that they are temptations so dangerous. 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition,' 1 Tim. vi. 9.

We ought, therefore, to be so far from an immoderate desire of riches, as 'if they increase, not to set our hearts upon them,' Ps. lxxi. 10.

5. This is enough to keep us from envying those that have this world at will, they deserve more pity, for they are subject to dangerous temptations.

6. This also is enough to comfort such which want the preferments and profits and pleasures which others have. What want they? Nothing but dangerous temptations, snares, and such things as may make them for ever miserable.

Sec. 257. *Of persecutors seeking the blood of professors.*

The ninth kind of persecution, and last of the three which was to death, is thus set down, *were slain with the sword*, or word for word, *ἐν σὺν μαχαίρᾳ ἀπέθανον*, *they died in the slaughter of the sword*.

The sword hath in all ages been a usual instrument to put men to death therewith, and that by beheading them, or thrusting them through, or otherwise taking away their life. Much cruelty hath been shewed upon saints by the sword.

I suppose that this kind of death is in the last place noted, to intimate the multitude of martyrs that by their blood have sealed up God's truth. The apostle's phrase induceth me to suppose so much. The slaughter of the sword implicitly a great slaughter.

In this respect, *a mouth*, *פֶּה*, *os*, is attributed to the sword; and the sword is said, *כָּלַל*, to eat or devour; and the same word, *כָּלַל*, which signifieth *destruction*, is put for a *sword*, because thereby many are destroyed. See Sec. 232.

So many prophets and professors were slain with the sword in Ahab's time, as Elijah thought none to be left but himself, 1 Kings xix. 10.

That which is here said of *slain*, or *slaughter* (*ἐσθλῶς*), sheweth that professors may be brought to seal their profession by their blood. The first professor that ever was, was brought hitherunto, namely,

Abel, Gen. iv. 8; so was Zechariah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. I have the rather named these two in particular, because Christ hath made especial mention of them. Yet so, as he implies many more betwixt them, under this phrase, 'all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias,' Mat. xxiii. 35.

1. This ariseth from an immortal hatred of the truth, and an unsatiable thirst of the blood of professors thereof, in persecutors.

2. From a secret fear that persecutors have of professors, thinking they can never be secure till they be sure of the death of professors.

Hereby we see a necessity of preparing against the utmost that persecutors can do; which is, to kill, Luke xii. 4. This caution is hinted, in this phrase, 'ye have not yet resisted unto blood,' Heb. xii. 4. What advantage is it to have much resisted persecutors, if we yield before we die?

Sec. 258. *Of the multitudes which persecutors destroyed.*

The instrument, whereby the forementioned slaughter is made, is here set down to be the sword; which gives a hint that a few martyrs satisfieth not persecutors: for slaying with the sword implieth the slaughter of many. Witness Ahab's persecution, which was so great as Elijah thought he had slain all that professed the name of God, 1 Kings xix. 10. Nimrod in this respect is said to be a mighty hunter, Gen. x. 9. It is said of Manasseh that he shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, 2 Kings xxi. 16. An ancient father said, that there was no day in the year, except the first of January, wherein more than five thousand were not martyred. Papists have exceeded pagans herein: witness their many cruel massacres in France and other places; witness their burning and otherwise destroying houses full, barns full, churches full, towns full, cities full, and countries full of professors of the truth.

Their malice and thirst after the blood of professors of the faith is unsatiable. The Holy Ghost saith of the whore of Babylon, that she was drunk with the blood of saints, Rev. xvii. 6. It is said of Nero, that he wished all the necks of the inhabitants of Rome to be as one, that he might cut them all off at one blow.

1. This admonisheth those who live amongst such persecutors, and see their brethren martyred before them, to be the rather induced to prepare themselves for the like; not thinking that persecutors will spare them, because they have exercised their cruelty on many others. We may as well think that a wolf will give over worrying sheep, because he hath worried many. The wolfish nature remaining in him, he will take all opportunity of devouring more. Commonly wolves are made the more eager in seeking after

others, by sucking out the blood of some: so is it with persecutors.

2. This teacheth us to be the more earnest with God, in calling upon him to restrain the cruelty and unsatiable thirst of persecutors, and to keep the remainder of his flock from their clutches; and thereby to shew himself the potent, prudent, and provident pastor of his sheep. A good shepherd knowing the ravenous disposition of a wolf, when he observeth that the wolf hath worried some sheep, will with more vigilancy keep the other. But there is no such shepherd as God: only he expects that we should take all occasions of seeking help of him, Ps. lxxix. 1, 2, &c., Joel ii. 17.

Sec. 259. *Of flying in time of persecution.*

The third kind of sufferings here set down, are such as befall confessors.

Confessors were such as professed the truth, and stood constantly to it; but having a fair way made by the divine providence for escaping death, made use thereof: yet shrunk no whit at all from their holy profession.

All their sufferings may be comprised under this word, *wandered about*; but aggravated by many circumstances, which we shall note in order.

This phrase, *περιήλθον*, they *wandered about*, is the interpretation of one Greek compound word. The simple verb, *ἔρχομαι*, significth to *come*, or *go*.

The preposition, *περί*, *about*. It is very well according to the meaning of the word, *περιἔρχομαι*, *circumero*, *wandered about*. They could not with safety abide in their own house, or home, and thereupon went into other places, and not knowing where to abide securely, they wandered up and down, as those that fled from persecution to save their lives. Hereupon a question is raised, whether a professor of the truth may fly from persecution.

*Ans.* Yes, he may. The prophets have so done, 1 Kings xix. 3, and xviii. 13. Yea, God is said to hide his servants from persecutors, Jer. xxxvi. 19, 26. Many Christians fled from Jerusalem by reason of the persecution there, Acts viii. 1. Paul also fled from persecution, Acts ix. 25; yea, an angel was sent to free Peter out of prison, Acts xii. 7. Christ conveyed himself from persecutors, Luke iv. 30, John iv. 3, and viii. 59. Yea, Christ adviseth his disciples so to do, Mat. x. 23.

Times may alter, and more good may afterwards be done.

The valiantest captain that is may see a fit occasion of leaving the field. That which the apostle said of his continuing to live, may be fitly applied to this case: to abide in the flesh is more needful for you, Phil. i. 24.

*Obj.* Christ pronounceth them blessed that are persecuted, Mat. v. 10, &c., and martyrdom procureth a crown.



*Ans.* These are grounds to move Christians to stand stoutly to their cause, when they are called, though it be by suffering death, the case so standing, as they must die or deny the truth.

But as there is a season for all things, Eccles. iii. 1, there is a time to fly, and a time to die. Christ, who oft avoided the danger of persecution, in the season of suffering, would not be dissuaded from it, Mat. xvi. 23, Luke ix. 51; but offered himself thereunto, John xviii. 4.

That we may the better apply this, we must duly weigh and well distinguish these circumstances following:

1. The persons. Private persons have more liberty than they who have a charge. These latter must stand to the utmost, even for their charge's sake. This Christ exemplifieth in a good shepherd, John x. 11.

2. The kind of persecution. There may be a personal persecution against one particular person. In this case, Paul escaped from those that went about to slay him, Acts ix. 29, 30. There are also public persecutions, in which professors by standing maintain the cause that is persecuted.

3. The condition of persecutors. If sheep prove wolves, and people that are under good governors or ministers prove persecutors of them, such shepherds, governors, or ministers, by flying, do no wrong to their flock and people, but good to themselves. Thus the Jews, even the common sort, proved persecutors of Christ, therefore he oft avoided their persecution.

4. The time. Before a professor be taken, his hour of suffering is not come. In that case he may prudently avoid: but being apprehended, as a professor, he must then stand to it, for that event sheweth that then is his hour, Luke xxii. 53.

5. The means of escaping. They must be lawful; such as by the divine providence are afforded. If we use not such means, we may seem to neglect God's providence; but to use unlawful means, as breaking bars of the prison window, forcing open of the doors, bribing the keepers, or any other like indirect means, is to make ourselves trespassers of the law, and malefactors. Thus the cause for which we are first apprehended is lost, and such suffer as evil doers, which is expressly forbidden, 1 Peter iv. 15.

Considering that there are cases wherein professors may avoid persecution, and cases wherein they must stand to it,

1. Professors are to pray for wisdom, and also for a good conscience. Both are joined together by Christ, Mat. x. 16. By wisdom they may be kept from giving advantage to the adversaries of the gospel. By a good conscience they will be kept from giving offence to their brethren. They must be sure that the mark at which they aim be good, whether they stand or fly. The mark in general must be God's glory and the church's good; for these two are inseparably linked.

2. Charity is to be used in judging professors, whether they fly or die. As martyrs are not to be condemned for rashness, so, nor confessors for timorousness. Prophets, apostles, yea, and Christ himself, saw a time when to escape danger, and when to stand to the uttermost danger.

This land hath a great benefit, both by the courage of martyrs in Queen Mary's time, and also of confessors, that fled beyond the seas in her days.

#### Sec. 260. *Of confessors' wanderings.*

This word, *wander about*, is taken both in a good and bad sense; in a bad sense, for a sin or judgment.

For a sin, either in such as do wander, or in such as cause others to wander.

1. In such as wander. It is a sin when men wander up and down from the charge or place where they should abide, or wherein they should be firm and constant. This the apostle taxeth under this phrase, 'wandering about from house to house,' 1 Tim. v. 13. In this respect the common course of beggars is questionless sinful; but most sinful is their course who wander up and down to beguile such as know them not, as jugglers, sorcerers, and such as are called exorcists. The word here used, *περιεγχευοντο*, is applied unto them, and translated 'vagabonds,' or wanderers, Acts xix. 13. Like to these are Jesuits, friars, priests, and other popish vagrants, who wander up and down to ensnare men's souls, and to make them 'twofold more the children of hell, than themselves are,' Mat. xxiii. 15. They are like those whom the apostle describes, 2 Tim. iii. 6.

2. Wandering is a sin in such as cause men to wander unjustly through tyranny, oppression, or persecution.

Of these, the Lord thus saith, 'I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander,' Jer. xlviii. 12, Lam. iv. 16. Such therefore are accursed, Dent. xxvii. 18, Ezek. xxiv. 6.

3. Wandering may be counted a sin in superfluous gentlemen, who upon mere curiosity travel from place to place, and that many times to idolatrous countries, where they are seduced to idolatry.

Wandering is taken for a judgment when it is inflicted as a punishment for sin. Thus the Israelites' wandering forty years in the wilderness was a judgment, Num. xxxii. 13, Ps. cvii. 40. It is threatened as a judgment, Ps. lix. 15.

Wandering is taken in the better part, when men in God's cause, for maintaining his truth, keeping a good conscience, or for avoiding idolatry or any other evil, are forced to wander. Thus Abraham wandered, Gen. xx. 13; and sundry Levites and others in Jeroboam's time, 2 Chron. xi. 13, &c. In this sense is it here taken; so as believers may be wanderers; for this wandering is here brought in as an effect of saints' faith; besides the instances before noted, this

is exemplified in Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 3; yea, and in David, Ps. lvi. 8.

The grounds hereof are these,

1. The envy and hatred of the world against them, which will not suffer them to sit safely and securely on their own nests. The men of this world are to believers as fowls to fowls, and hunters to beasts; so was Saul to David, 1 Sam. xxiv. 11, 14, and xxvi. 20.

Heremito doth the prophet allude, Jer. xvi. 16, Micah vii. 2, Lam. iv. 18.

2. Saints' high esteem of the truth of God, and of the peace and quiet of their own conscience, which they prefer before house and home, kindred and country. They had rather wander with a quiet conscience, holding the truth, than sit at ease in their own house, under their own vines and fig-trees, with a torturing conscience, upon denying the truth.

3. God's wise providence, who opens a way for them to escape death; yet so as their faith is proved to be sound by this kind of trial, which is a great one; and in the consequence thereof may prove worse than a present death. Yea, further, God hereby keepeth the light of his truth from being put out, and causeth it to shine up and down in more places, Acts viii. 1, 5.

This being the condition whereunto believers may be brought, they who have settled places of abode ought to succour such wanderers. See Chap. xiii. 2, Sec. 12, &c.

This may be a motive to such as are put to this trial, patiently to pass it through. It is no other condition than what the best saints have been brought unto. An apostle useth this argument to bear all manner of crosses, because no temptation taketh them 'but such as is common to man,' 1 Cor. x. 13.

This then must needs be a strong motive to endure this trial, because it is no other than what is common to all saints.

That we may the better observe this, take notice of these rules:

1. Be well instructed in the nature of this world, and vanity of all things under heaven; how nothing is certain and sure. 'The fashion of this world passeth away,' 1 Cor. vii. 31. Why, then, should men seek a certain abiding in so uncertain a place?

2. Get assurance of that house, city, and country which is to come. Assurance thereof will make us more content to be without a house, city, and country here in this world. See Ver. 10, Sec. 17, and Ver. 13, Sec. 68, and Chap. xiii. 14, Secs. 138, 139.

3. In thy best security and most settled estate be a pilgrim in thy mind and disposition, as Abraham and other patriarchs were. See ver. 13.

Herewith the apostle supports Christians, 1 Cor. x. 13.

Sec. 261. *Of wandering in sheep-skins and goat-skins.*

The first branch of the aggravation of confessors wandering, is by the kind of apparel which they wore, here said to be *sheep-skins* and *goat-skins*. The noun, *όζυματα*, translated *skins*, derived from a verb, *όζω*, that signifieth *to flay*; for skins are flayed off from beasts or other creatures. An adjective, *όζυματινος*, derived from the same verb, is translated *leathern*, Mat. iii. 4.

The two epithets, *μηνωταις*, *αϊγίαις*, joined with skins, thus, *sheep-skins*, *goat-skins*, shew what kind of skins they were. For the former is derived from a word, *μήλον*, that signifieth *a sheep*, and the latter from another word, *αίς*, that signifieth *a goat*.

We call apparel made of such skins, *leathern*.

Some apply this [to] coarse apparel made of the wool of sheep and hair of goats which many prophets and others did voluntarily wear, and that on these grounds:

1. To shew their contempt of the world's vanity.

2. To manifest their own content in the meanest things.

3. To declare their compassion, sorrow, and mourning for the iniquity of the times wherein they lived.

4. To be distinguished thereby, and known from others. To these purposes it is said of Elijah that he was 'an hairy man, and girded with a girdle of leath,' 2 Kings i. 8; so of John Baptist, Mat. iii. 4; so much is implied of Isaiah, chap. xx. 2, &c. In imitation of true prophets, false prophets so attired themselves, Zech. xiii. 4. To this may be applied that which is spoken of sheeps' clothes, Mat. vii. 15.

Others apply this to wearing of sackcloth, Ps. lxxix. 11, Joel i. 13. This of old in common judgments was much practised.

Though the apostle's phrase may be applied to such kind of habits, yet his main scope is not so much to set out the attire, which sundry saints of old on special occasions did wear, and that voluntarily upon their own choice, but what through the violence of persecution they were forced unto, because they could get no better. This therefore maketh nothing for papists' superstition in wearing shirts of hair, grey-fleece, or other like coarse raiments.

The apostle here meaneth such mean apparel as we call (somewhat answerable to these phrases) *leathern pilches*, or skins of beasts cast over their back, and knit about their loins, so as they might be naked on many parts, and barefoot.

Thus this implieth that saints may be brought to wear the meanest apparel, even to clothe themselves with sheep-skins and goat-skins. This phrase, 'They caused the naked to lodge without clothing; &c., Job xxiv. 7, may somewhat tend thereunto. The opposition made betwixt Dives and Lazarus, that Dives was 'clothed in purple and fine linen,' but Lazarus as a beggar (Luke xvi. 20, 21), may intend as

much; so also that which the apostle speaketh of cold and nakedness, 2 Cor. xi. 27.

This giveth proof of the extent of the vigour of faith, whereby men are enabled, as patiently to bear reproaches, torments, and such other afflictions, so also want of apparel and such things as are needful for health; and to put on anything that may hide their nakedness, be it never so coarse.

This sheweth the vanity of over-brave and costly apparel. For if God's dear ones and worthies in the world were so meanly attired, as with sheep-skins and goat-skins, surely true glory and honour consisteth not in vain apparel. What the apostle saith of meat and drink, may fitly be applied to apparel, 'The kingdom of God is not therein,' Rom. xiv. 17.

Take heed therefore of setting your hearts too much on outward deckings of the body; you may be brought to such times and cases, as for keeping faith and a good conscience such bravery be abandoned. He whose heart is set upon apparel will hardly be brought to wander in sheep-skins and goat-skins to keep a good conscience. The young man that set his heart on wealth, left Christ rather than he would let go his wealth, Mat. xix. 21.

This caveat is now the more reasonable and useful, by reason of that dotage which possesseth most men and women about apparel; which yet is one of the basest dotages that can be: for it is not in anything that is in themselves, or done by themselves; not in gifts of mind, not in parts of body, but in weavers, tailors, sempsters, and other like curiosities. This is such a bewitching dotage as makes many spend their estate thereupon, and puffs them up far above that which is meet: preachers have just cause to take all occasions of beating down the pride of men and women herein.

Sec. 262. *Of the extreme want whereunto confessors may be brought.*

The second branch of the aggravation of confessors' wanderings is, in this phrase, *ὑποζώματα, being destitute.*

Of the notation and derivation of the Geek word, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 11. Here it implieth a want of succour.

When one wanteth this or that particular, then that particular useth to be joined with this word, as where it is said, *ὑπέροχενον οἶνον*, 'they wanted wine,' John ii. 3; but when it is put alone, it implieth a general want of all necessities, as where it is said of the prodigal, 'he began to be in want,' Luke xv. 14. In this general sense it is here taken. Thus it is opposed to a verb that signifieth to abound, as where it is said, *περισσεύειν, ὑπερβαίνειν*, 'to abound, and to suffer need,' Phil. iv. 12.

Here it implieth that the intended confessors were left succourless; they had no good apparel, as was noted in the former section, nor had they sufficient

food nor other necessities, nor yet did any pity them so far as to supply their wants.

Thus we see that saints may be brought to extreme exigencies. So was David, 1 Sam. xxi. 3. And Elijah, 1 Kings xvii. 6; had not a raven brought him provision, he might have starved; and so again, had not an angel provided for him, 1 Kings xix. 7, 8. So Lazarus, Luke xvi. 21: and many others in all ages.

1. God suffers this, that his children might be the rather moved to look up unto him, and wholly and only to depend upon him. External means are many times an occasion of drawing the hearts, even of saints, from God, Ps. xxx. 6. The wise man saith that 'the rich man's wealth is his strong city,' Prov. x. 15.

2. God suffers this, that his succouring of them might be the more manifested and magnified. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 6, Sec. 41; and of uses that may be made hereof, see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 3, Sec. 16.

Sec. 263. *Of the great perplexities whereunto confessors may be brought.*

The third branch whereby the wanderings of confessors is set forth, is in this word, *ὑποζώματα, afflicted.* Of the emphasis of the word, see Chap. x. 33, Sec. 125. A noun, *ὑπόζωμα*, commonly translated *affliction*, is thence derived.

The verb is applied to the pressing of grapes in a press, and to the pressing of people in a throng, and translated 'throng,' Mark iii. 9. It is oft metaphorically taken, to set forth some men's oppressing of others by violent injuries. It is applied both to outward oppressions and afflictions of the body, and also to inward perplexities and troubles of the mind, 2 Cor. i. 6, and vii. 5.

To join them both together, this sheweth that saints by persecutors' oppression may be brought to great perplexities, even to such as afflict them within and without, in mind and in body, 2 Cor. vii. 5. Such were Elijah's pressures, as he wished to die, 1 Kings xix. 4. The many complaints which David made, through Saul's persecuting him, give evident proof hereof, Ps. xviii. 3-5, and lvi. 1, 2, &c. But the greatest pressures of all were Christ's, John xii. 27. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 7, Sec. 44.

Quest. How can perplexities of mind stand with faith?

Ans. Distinguish betwixt flesh and spirit, which are together in saints, and that doubt may easily be reconciled. Faith is a fruit of the spirit: perplexity of mind is a fruit of the flesh. Therefore, as the flesh and spirit are in the same subject together, so the fruits of the one and the other may manifest themselves in the same persons.

Though these two may be together in the same person, yet believers must labour to subdue all the

fruits of the flesh ; and in particular concerning this, they must take heed that outward crosses do not too much afflict their spirits. For this end, these rules are to be observed :

1. Know that God hath a hand in all thy troubles, Ps. xxxix. 9, 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.
2. Get assurance of God's favour to thee, Ps. xxiii. 1, Heb. xiii. 6, 2 Pet. i. 10.
3. Acquaint thyself with God's promises, Isa. xlii. 2, Heb. xiii. 5.
4. Be instructed in the divine properties.
5. Call to mind God's former works, and these both to others, Ps. xxii. 4, and also to thyself, Gen. xxii. 10.
6. Possess thy soul with patience, Luke xxi. 9.
7. Stir up thy soul with wise expostulations, Ps. xliii. 5. See *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. xi. 7, Sec. 48.

Sec. 264. *Of evil entreating confessors.*

A fourth aggravation of the wandering of confessors is in the last word of this verse, *καταχρῆσαι*, which we thus translate, *tormented*. It is a compound of a noun, *κακός*, that signifieth *evil*, and a verb, *ἔχω*, that in the active signifieth *to have*, and in the passive, *to be handled*. According to the notation of it, it signifieth *be ill handled*, or *evilly dealt withal*. See more of it on Chap. xiii. 3, Sec. 38. The signification which our translators give of it—thus, *tormented*—is an effect of the intent of the word ; for they that are ill treated, or ill handled, are oft tormented. In this sense, it may intend such points as were noted on this word, *tortured*, Ver. 35, Sec. 245.

We will here handle this word in the proper signification thereof, and shew that saints in their wandering find ill usage. So soon as Israel came into the wilderness, the Amalekites set upon them, Deut. xxv. 17, 18, 1 Sam. xv. 2. Edom, in the day of Israel's affliction, ill treated them, Obad. 13, 14, Amos i. 11. Jeremiah much complaineth hereof, Lam. ii. 16. The apostles, wheresoever they came, were very ill entreated.

There is but one naked, single, simple truth ; but impiety, iniquity, falsehood, error, heresy, idolatry, and all infidelity, are hydras of innumerable heads. That one truth is light ; all the forenamed hydras, and others like unto them, are darkness of several kinds, to all which light is contrary. Therefore, all that are of any kind of darkness do mortally hate and abominate both the light itself, and all that hold it out, which confessors of the truth do wheresoever they go. Now, there being in every place some kind of darkness or other, how can it be but that confessors should be everywhere ill entreated ?

Besides, Satan is the god of this world, and his dominion extendeth to every part thereof. He hath everywhere subjects that are guided by his spirit. But in confessors there is the spirit of Christ, which

the spirit of Satan hath from the beginning resisted, Gen. iii. 15. How, then, can such look for any other than ill handling, wheresoever they are ?

1. This should teach confessors not to be over-forward in removing from place to place, upon surmise that they may in this or that place be quiet from troubles. I will not deny but that in some places they may be more free than in others ; but, to be wholly free, they cannot be in any place of this world.

2. This instructeth them that are forced to wander in sundry duties :

(1.) To prepare themselves for evil entreatings, whithersoever they come.

(2.) Not to think it strange when they meet with them.

(3.) To bear them patiently.

(4.) To get assurance of God's favour.

3. This should stir up those that, professing the true faith, meet with confessors that wander, to shew them all the courtesies they can, and thereby declare that the Spirit of God is as powerful in them to shew kindness to others that have the same Spirit, as the spirit of Satan can be to do any mischief to them.

Of entreating strangers, see Chap. xiii. 2, Sec. 15, &c. ; see also Chap. xiii. 3, Sec. 28.

Sec. 265. *Of the world's unworthiness of saints.*

Ver. 38. *Of whom the world was not worthy : they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

In the former verse, the apostle having set forth the wanderings of confessors in habitable places, in this verse he further setteth them out in places uninhabitable. But betwixt them, he rendereth a reason of their wanderings in the one and other kind of places, in these words,—*of whom the world was not worthy* ; which in many Greek copies and sundry translations are included in a parenthesis.

The reason is taken from the world's unworthiness of them, and compriseth a judgment inflicted on the world by this their wandering.

The reason may be thus framed :

It is just that they should be estranged from the world, of whom the world is not worthy :

But the world is not worthy of confessors of the truth : Therefore, it is just that they be estranged from the world.

The force of the argument lieth in God's just judgment against the world, manifested by removing such from it as might be means of much good to the world, if they were well entertained therein.

This reason is here inserted, to remove an offence which might be taken at the wandering of confessors ; for many imagine that they are forced to wander from place to place, and are left destitute, afflicted, and ill entreated of all men, because they are an unquiet generation, not worthy to live in any society among men.

To remove this scandal, the apostle setteth the saddle on the right horse, and sheweth that [it] is not any unworthiness in them, but the world's unworthiness of them, that causeth this distance and separation betwixt them and the world.

That the form of this reason may the better appear, two points are to be cleared :

1. Who are meant by the *world*.
2. How the world is unworthy of confessors.

Of the notation of the Greek word, *κόσμος*, translated *world*, see Chap. iv. 3, Sec. 29.

Of the metonymical acception of the word *world*, for the inhabitants thereof, and worse part of them, see Ver. 7, Sec. 32.

Here in general it signifieth the company of evil men in the world ; and in particular, such as persecute and evil entreat confessors of the truth. In this respect the *world* is opposed to such as confess Christ, and believe in him, John xv. 18, 19, and xvii. 14.

The word, *ἀξιος*, translated *worthy*, is derived from a verb, *ἄγω*, which signifieth *to poise*, and the metaphor is taken from things poised : such things as, being equally poised, carry the same weight in each balance, are counted worthy of one another ; but such as are not of a like weight are counted unworthy. Thus the world is very light in comparison of true believers, and therefore not worthy of them. They are not worthy in two respects :

1. By reason of that worth which is in saints. A true believer, by reason of his interest in Christ, and of the abode of the Spirit of sanctification in him, is more worth than millions of worlds ; as a rich and precious jewel is more worth than many loads of filthy mud.

2. By reason of that benefit which saints bring to the places where they are. The world, through ignorance, taketh no notice of that benefit, or, through obstinacy, scorneth it, or, through malice, persecute them who bring that benefit ; and thus shew themselves like hogs and dogs, and so are not worthy the society of saints.

In this reason two things are necessarily implied, and two others plainly expressed.

- (1.) The things implied are these :

- [1.] The worth and benefit of saints.
- [2.] The world's esteem of them.

- (2.) The things expressed are these :

- [1.] The world's vileness.
- [2.] The judgment following thereon.

See, 266. *Of the worth of saints.*

Of the first point employed, which is the worth and benefit of saints, see Chap. xiii. 1, Sec. 8.

One special ground thereof is God's favour to them. A mortal king's favour may make a mean man precious and of high account.

Instance Pharaoh's favour to Joseph, Gen. xli. 40, &c. ; and Darius his favour to Daniel, Dan. vi. 3 ;

and Ahasuerus his favour to Esther and Mordecai, Esth. ii. 17, and ix. 4 ; and the favour of other kings to their favourites in all ages. Much more will the favour of the eternal God, Almighty Lord, and King of kings, make men precious. There is a Hebrew word, *חסדים*, which fitly answereth to our English word *favourite* ; whereof see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 15, Secs. 95, 96.

Another ground is their union with Christ. As Christ assumed man's nature in general, so he hath united in special their persons to that mystical body whereof he is the head : they are all called 'Christ,' 1 Cor. xii. 12. In this respect they must needs be the most precious creatures of all.

A third ground is the abode of the Spirit of God in them, whereby they are enabled to do much good wheresoever they come.

1. This is a matter of high admiration, and requireth much gratulation.

2. It is a great incitement to be of this society and fraternity : men will serve seven years or more to be of a good company ; but what company like to this ?

3. This should make us content with this worthy estate and precious condition. With what estate shall any be content, if not with this ? The honourable man is in a slippery estate : witness Haman. The rich man holds an eel by the tail ; for 'riches fly away as an eagle,' Prov. xxiii. 5. The voluptuous man nourisheth an adder in his bosom ; for he that withheld not his heart from any joy, discerned 'all to be vanity and vexation of spirit,' Eccles. ii. 11. But believers, when they wander, have cause to be more content than they that dwell in stately palaces ; and they that are clothed with 'sheep-skins and goat-skins,' have more cause to rejoice than Herod in his 'royal apparel,' Acts xii. 21 ; when they are ' destitute,' they have more cause of content than Dives, who 'fared sumptuously every day,' Luke xvi. 19 ; when they are 'afflicted,' they are in a better condition than Belshazzar, when he was most 'merry with his princes, wives, and concubines,' Dan. v. 3, 4 ; when they are 'evil entreated,' they are better than they who are applauded as Herod was, Acts xii. 22 ; when they are 'tormented,' they are in a better case than they that 'stretch themselves upon beds of ivory,' Amos vi. 5.

4. The worth of saints teacheth them to walk worthy of that worth. They must be like the woman arrayed with the sun, which trampled the moon under her feet, Rev. xii. 1. Their worthy walking is to be heavenly-minded, and to have a heavenly conversation. Their condition calls them to contemn the world ; and their want of a settled place in this world should put them on to wander heavenward, and to seek that city which is to come. So did wanderers of old, ver. 16.

5. The aforesaid worth of saints is a great comfort and encouragement against the scoffs and scorns

of the men of this world. It is enough that (whatsoever the world judge of them) they are precious in God's sight, that good angels answerably have them in high esteem, and that other saints account them as God's chiefest treasure.

6. This affords a caveat to the men of this world to take heed of abusing these wanderers. These are they of whom the Lord saith, 'Touch not mine anointed,' Ps. cv. 15; and again, 'He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of mine eye,' Zech. ii. 8. God may in his unsearchable wisdom suffer his worthy ones to be tried, and thereupon suffer adversaries and persecutors to prevail against them for a while; but assuredly, as God's precious ones shall not be utterly forsaken, so their adversaries shall not go scot free, 2 Thes. i. 6, 7.

Sec. 267. *Of the world's vile esteem of saints.*

The other thing implied is the world's esteem of saints, and that is a base and vile esteem, as if they were not to be regarded; for the aforesaid instances, that 'they wandered in sheep-skins,' &c., doth manifest a vile esteem of them. They neglected, they rejected, they ill entreated them. Ishmael had a mean esteem of Isaac, manifested by mocking him, Gen. xxi. 9; so had Saul of David, 1 Sam. xxii. 11; and Michal his daughter, 2 Sam. vi. 16. David's oft complaints hereof, Ps. cxix. 51, and lxxix. 4; so Job, chap. xxx. 1, &c. The prophets observe this to be the common conceit of the world, Isa. lxii. 4, Jer. xxx. 17; so doth an apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 13. Woeful experience giveth too evident proof of the truth hereof even in these our days.

This is so by reason of many corruptions in the world; as,

1. Ignorance, both of the true worth of saints, and also of God's high account of them. The world is blind in spiritual matters, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

2. Unbelief. The world will give credit to nothing revealed out of God's word, Isa. liii. 1.

3. False principles. As false rules of judging, which are outward show, sense, and worldly glory. The world sets too high a price on external and earthly things.

4. Malice. This adds much to their blindness; yea, it casts dust upon the eye of their reason.

It becomes us to take heed of being beguiled with the world's esteem and account of men; yea, and to take heed that we be not over-credulous in believing the reports that the world giveth, and rumours that it spreadeth abroad of saints. What vile reports did they give of John the Baptist, and of Christ himself! Mat. xi. 12, 19. The like might be exemplified in every age of the world.

Sec. 268. *Of the world's unworthiness, a cause of saints' wandering.*

The first thing expressed in this reason of con-

fessors' wandering, is, the world's vileness. The world is not worthy of them.

This consequence is confirmed by this direction which Christ giveth to his disciples, 'inquire who is worthy, and there abide;' and, on the contrary, 'if the place be not worthy, let your peace return to you,' Mat. x. 11, 13; that is, let them receive no benefit from you. They who preferred the things of this world before communion with the great king, were counted not worthy of that favour to sit at his table, Mat. xxii. 4, 5.

Christ accomteth them as swine who trample pearls under their feet, and as dogs who fly in the faces of them that bring precious things unto them, Mat. vii. 6.

This should dissuade confessors of the truth to take heed of complying too much with the men of this world.

This had almost cost Jehoshaphat his life, 2 Chron. xviii. 31. He was sharply reproved for it by a prophet, 2 Chron. xix. 2.

Saints do herein undervalue themselves, and give occasion to be trampled under foot, yea, and torn to pieces.

The world may take great advantage hereby; but saints may be sure to get no good. Should saints comply with them whom God thinks to be unworthy of them?

This is the second thing expressed; for this phrase, *was not worthy*, is here set down as a judgment, which followed upon saints' wandering from them; so as the world's unworthiness depriveth them of the society of saints, which might be very beneficial unto them. On this ground Christ saith to the Jews, 'The kingdom of God shall be taken from you,' Mat. xxi. 43. And it is expressly noted that Christ returned back again from the unworthy Gadarenes, where they besought him to depart from them, Luke viii. 37.

This departing from the men of the world is sometimes done by the world's forcing them. Thus, by reason of a great persecution of the church, professors are scattered abroad, Acts viii. 1. Sometimes by professors' voluntary leaving them; for Christ gives this advice, 'when they persecute you in this city, fly you into another,' Mat. x. 23.

Thus God, in his wise providence, maketh persecutors spoilers of themselves. Potiphar spoiled himself of a very faithful and profitable servant, by casting him into prison, Gen. xxxix. 20; so the Jews spoiled themselves of Christ, John vii. 33, 34; and of the apostles, who carried the light of the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46, 47.

1. Here we have one special reason of saints' suffering what they do by the world. It is not God's displeasure against them; for in love to them, and for their present and future glory, are they here persecuted. It is for the punishment of the world,

to deprive it of those that would be their greatest honour, comfort, and profit, if they were well entertained among them.

2. Herein appeareth the world's sottishness, in punishing themselves by their attempts to punish saints.

They may spoil saints of earthly habitations and revenues; they may put them to bodily pains, and deprive them of life; but they spoil themselves of the means of spiritual grace, of peace of conscience, and comfort of soul, yea, and of eternal life, and plunge themselves into caseless and endless torments.

3. This sheweth whose case is the worst, whether theirs that are persecuted, or theirs who do persecute. Surely if all things be duly weighed, we shall easily discern that the persecutors' case is the worst. The persecuted, therefore, may say, 'weep not for us, but weep for yourselves,' Luke xxiii. 28. The persecuted are as the figs, the good figs which were very good; but persecutors like the evil figs, 'very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil,' Jer. xxiv. 3.

4. This giveth occasion to such as are deprived of faithful ministers, and godly neighbours, to examine themselves, and consider whether their unworthiness hath not been the cause thereof.

5. This exhorteth us to esteem ministers, saints, divine ordinances, and other holy things appertaining to the kingdom of God, so as God may account us worthy still to enjoy them, and not take them away by reason of our unworthiness.

Sec. 269. *Of the meaning of these words, 'They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.'*

The apostle having shewed the true reason of saints' suffering in this world, returns to set out their wanderings, not only from one habitable place to another, but also to desolate places, and habitations of wild beasts. Hereof he giveth four distinct instances:

1. Deserts; 2. mountains; 3. dens; 4. caves of the earth.

In expressing the main point of wandering, the apostle useth another word, *παραώμενοι*, than before.

The former, *περιγίγοντες*, implied a going up and down from one city, or town, or house, to another, in hope somewhere to find succour; but they utterly failed of their hope, as the forementioned aggravations shew.

The word here used implieth such a wandering as is without hope of succour—a wandering in unknown places, when men know not where they are, nor whither they may go, but are as blind men; for they are said thus to wander, Lam. iv. 14, Deut. xxvii. 18.

The Hebrew word signifieth the very same thing. It is used of Abraham's wandering from his country,

Gen. xx. 13, concerning which it is said, that 'he went out, not knowing whither he went,' ver. 8. It is also used of Hagar's wandering, she knew not whither, Gen. xxi. 12; and of Joseph's wandering in the field, Gen. xxxvii. 15.

The LXX do use to expound that Hebrew word with the word, *παραώμενοι*, here used by the apostle. It is attributed to a sheep that goeth astray, called a wandering sheep, Ps. cxix. ult., Ezek. xxxiv. 6, Mat. xviii. 12.

The aggravation of this word by the places here expressed, sheweth that such a kind of wandering is here meant.

The first is styled *deserts*, and that according to the true meaning and notation of the Greek and Latin word, *ἐρημία*, *desertum*—places deserted and forsaken of men, waste places, no way tilled; none inhabiting there but wild beasts.

The second is, *ἄβυσσος*, *mountains*. These, by reason of their height, are unfit for habitation, and left desolate; yet fit to hide from the sight of other men, Josh. ii. 16.

The third, *σπηλαίος*, *dens*. These were holes in rocks, which, by reason of the craggy-ness of stones, do many times grow naturally, and beasts oft take them for their resting-places.

Sometimes holes in rocks are made by art of men, as the grave where Christ was laid, Mat. xxvii. 60. It is probable that Lazarus his grave was such a one; it hath this name given unto it, *σπηλαιον*, John xi. 38, and we translate it 'a cave.'

The apostle here seemeth so to take it, because the other place signifieth such a secret place, for

The fourth place, according to the notation thereof, *ὁπταῖς τῆς γῆς*, signifieth such a secret place as he that is in it may espy others, and not be seen himself; we translate it *caves of the earth*, so as this setteth out holes in the earth, as the former set out holes in rocks.

Such as these, both men and beasts doth make.

The former are oft in Scripture styled 'holes in rocks,' Isa. vii. 19, Jer. xvi. 16; and they are distinguished, as here, from caves of the earth.

Some caves were so big as they could lodge fifty men together, 1 Kings xviii. 4; yea, six hundred; for David had an army of about six hundred men, 1 Sam. xxiii. 13, and they were in a cave together. When men were in dens and caves, it was when they durst abide nowhere else, as the Israelites, 1 Sam. xiii. 6, and the prophets, 1 Kings xviii. 4; therefore they are said to be hid therein.

Ordinarily, and most usually, deserts, mountains, dens and caves of the earth, are the habitations of wild and savage beasts, Mark i. 13; which implieth that confessors of the true faith have less feared wild and savage beasts than persecuting men, for they have fled from the habitation of such men to the habitation of beasts.

Sec. 270. *Of confessors keeping out of the sight of persecutors.*

The wandering of confessors in places not habited by men, such as were deserts, mountains, dens and caves of the earth, plainly demonstrateth that they lived in such times as they durst not be known where they were. This was the case of David, 1 Sam. xliii. 13, 16, and xxiv. 3; and of Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 3, 4; and of the hundred prophets whose Obadiah fed in two caves, 1 Kings xviii. 4; and of Jeremiah and Baruch, Jer. xxxvi. 26: so of others in other ages.

This so fell out, not upon any guilt or wrong done by them, but by the implacable hatred of the world against them. Could the men of this world get them into their clutches, they would do with them as dogs do with hares, even tear them all to pieces. As hares, therefore, and other like creatures, keep as much as they can out of the sight of hunters and hounds, so do these keep themselves from the sight of persecutors.

1. Papists hence infer that it is lawful and commendable, yea, more than ordinarily meritorious, to live as hermits in deserts, dens and caves, to give themselves, as they pretend, to contemplation and devotion; but, to give a full answer to these—

(1.) They clean mistake their grounds, for these did not voluntarily affect such places; they were forced to do what they did.

(2.) Popish hermits and anchorites now dwell by towns, cities, and highways, to make a gain to themselves thereby.

(3.) They cast themselves out of all callings, whereby they might do more honour to God and good to men than by their pretended devotion.

(4.) Their pretence of private devotion apparently hindereth public devotion, which is more honourable to God, so as they come under this censure of Christ, 'Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition,' Mat. xv. 6, 7.

(5.) By solitariness men make themselves more subject to the devil. Then did the devil most fiercely set upon Christ, when he was alone in the wilderness, Mark i. 12, 13.

2. This admonisheth us to get into acquaintance with God, to be well exercised in his word, to accustom ourselves unto divine contemplation and meditation, to be well instructed in the presence and attendance of angels or saints, that if we be ever forced thus to wander, we may have wherein to solace ourselves.

3. Hereby we have a warrant of the lawfulness of saints concealing themselves in time of persecution, Prov. xxii. 3.

Sec. 271. *Of persecutors' cruelty exceeding brute beasts.*

The places whereunto confessors wandered being for the most part such as wild beasts do accustom themselves unto, giveth instance that confessors of the truth have less feared savage beasts than per-

secuting men. It is said of Christ, when he was in the wilderness, that 'he was with the wild beasts,' Mark i. 13.

Cruel men have been resembled to the most cruel beasts, as to a lion, 2 Tim. iv. 17, a wolf, a leopard, a bear, an ape, a cockatrice, Isa. xi. 6-8; yea, to such beasts as never were: such as are described, Dan. vii. 4, &c., because they exceed all beasts in savageness and cruelty.

1. Brute beasts make no difference betwixt professors and others; they discern not the image of God in man, nor the light of God's word, which do much incense adversaries of the truth.

2. Brute beasts have not that wit to search after such as are out of their sight, as reasonable men have, nor can they so use the help one of another to find out such as they hate, as men can.

3. Reason abused and perverted proves the more violent. *Optimi corruptio pessima.* As ordinary men are more violent than beasts to such as they hate, so false Christians, Dan. vi. 22, Luke xvi. 21. Antichristians have proved more cruel than pagans.

4. Satan puts on men to mischief more than he puts on brute beasts.

1. Herein we may see the power that Satan takes over men, when he is permitted. We may also see the depth of the corruption of man's heart, when man is left to himself and not restrained. In such cases men are worse than brute beasts. Man's filthy delight in sin is worse than any beast's delight in anything.

2. Hereupon we see great cause to pray, both on our own and others' behalf, to have our natural corruption suppressed and altered.

Sec. 272. *Of the resolution of Heb. xi. 33-38.*

Ver. 33. *Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,*

34. *Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

35. *Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection:*

36. *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:*

37. *They were stoned, they were sawed asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented:*

38. *Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

The sum of these six verses is an enumeration of sundry effects of faith, all which may be brought to two heads—



1. Great acts, vers. 33-35.

2. Great sufferings, vers. 35-38.

Great acts are in number, ten. Of them nine concern men, and one concerneth women.

The nine concerning men are these in order—

1. They *subdued kingdoms*.

2. They *wrought righteousness*.

3. *Obtained promises*.

4. *Stopped the mouths of lions*.

5. *Quenched the violence of fire*.

6. *Escaped the edge of the sword*.

In these six there is a distinct mention both of the several acts, and also of the subject whereon the distinct acts were exercised.

7. *Out of weakness were made strong*. Here one thing is presupposed, namely, that believers were *weak*. Another expressed, that they *were made strong*.

8. They *were valiant in fight*. Here we have an especial property of a believer, *valiant*; and the extent thereof, *in fight*.

9. *Turned to flight the armies of the aliens*. Here we have,

(1.) The act, *put to flight*.

(2.) The subject whereupon it was exercised, *armies*.

(3.) The kind of persons whose armies they were, *aliens*.

10. That effect of faith which concerned women is thus expressed, *women received their dead raised to life again*. Here observe,

(1.) The persons whose act it was, *women*.

(2.) The act itself, *received*.

(3.) The subject or thing which they received, *their dead*.

(4.) The great alteration of that subject, which was, *to life again*.

The other head of fruits of faith are great sufferings, which are ten in number. Those may be reduced to three heads.

1. The sufferings of professors.

2. The sufferings of martyrs.

3. The sufferings of confessors, Sec. 259.

Of the sufferings of professors, five distinct heads are set down.

Of the sufferings of martyrs, four heads.

Of the sufferings of confessors, one general one.

The five effects of professors' sufferings were these:

1. They were *tortured*. This is amplified,

(1.) By their willing undergoing their tortures, thus, *not accepting deliverance*.

(2.) By the end of their enduring, *that they might obtain a better resurrection*.

2. They had *trial of cruel mockings*. Here observe,

(1.) The reality of the thing, *they had trial*.

(2.) The kind of suffering, *mockings*.

(3.) The extent of that kind, in this epithet, *cruel*.

3. They were *scourged*.

4. They were cast into *bonds*.

5. They were *imprisoned*.

Three effects of martyrs were these:

1. They were *stoned*.

2. They were *sawn asunder*.

3. They were *slain with the sword*.

4. Before this last, this which was as dangerous as the other three, is inserted, thus, *were tempted*.

The effect of confessors is expressed, in this phrase, *wandered about*; and it is aggravated,

1. By the places whither they wandered.

2. By the reason of their wandering.

The places whither they wandered were of two sorts.

1. Habitable by men.

2. Habitable by beasts for the most part.

The former sort of places is implied under other men's neglect of them. This is set down four ways.

(1.) By their mean apparel, *sheep-skins and goat-skins*.

(2.) By their want, *being destitute*.

(3.) By their affliction, *afflicted*.

(4.) By men's evil entreating them, in this word, *tortured*.

The reason of the wandering of confessors is taken from the world's unworthiness of them, thus expressed, *of whom the world was not worthy*.

The places not inhabited by men, are expressed in these four kinds.

1. Deserts.

2. Mountains.

3. Dens.

4. Caves of the earth.

Sec. 273. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xi. 33-38.*

I. *Faith doth things above human power*. Such were many effects of faith here set down. See Sec. 227.

II. *War is lawful*. This act of faith, *subdued*, was by wars. See Sec. 227.

III. *Nations may be subdued by war*. So much is implied under this word *kingdoms*. See Sec. 227.

IV. *Faith is operative*. It is here said *to work*. See Sec. 228.

V. *The proper work of faith is righteousness*. Believers are here said *to work righteousness*. See Sec. 228.

VI. *Divine promises are the ground of faith*. Those are they on which faith hath an eye. See Sec. 229.

VII. *Promises are received by faith*. They are here expressly said *to be obtained* thereby. See Sec. 228.

VIII. *Faith can vanquish the fierceness of unreasonableness*. Lions are the fiercest of all, yet their mouths stopped by faith. See Sec. 230.

IX. *Faith freeth from the most violent, senseless creatures*. Fire is that creature, yet by faith quenched. See Sec. 231.

X. *Faith preserveth from the deadliest instrument; that is, the sword*. See Sec. 232.

XI. *Saints may be weak.* This is here taken for granted, in this phrase, *out of weakness.* See Sec. 233.

XII. *By faith such as are weak may be made strong.* This is here plainly expressed. See Sec. 234.

XIII. *Valour is commendable.* Believers are here commended for it, in this word, *waxed valiant.* See Sec. 236.

XIV. *Faith makes valiant.* This is an effect here attributed to faith. See Sec. 237.

XV. *Faith makes valiant in greatest danger; namely, in fight.* See Sec. 235.

XVI. *Faith makes victorious.* This phrase, *turned to flight*, intends as much. See Sec. 238.

XVII. *War is especially to be against aliens.* Their armies are here said to be *turned to flight.* See Sec. 239.

XVIII. *Women may have a strong faith.* The express mention of *women* proves as much. See Secs. 240, 241.

XIX. *By faith the dead have been raised.* See Sec. 241.

XX. *Faith receives benefit from others' acts.* Those believing women received their dead children raised by the prophets. See Sec. 242.

XXI. *Believers are enabled to endure sore trials.* Such were they which follow. See Sec. 243.

XXII. *Matters of faith may be quoted out of human authors.* Such were the authors out of whom the apostle quotes many of these acts of faith. See Sec. 244.

XXIII. *Professors of truth may be brought to exquisite torments for the truth's sake.* Such were many of the torments here set down. See Sec. 245.

XXIV. *True professors willingly endure their torments.* They would not be delivered. See Sec. 246.

XXV. *Persecutors can offer favour upon yielding.* So much is here intended. See Sec. 247.

XXVI. *Faith in the resurrection makes professors endure what they do.* This end is here expressly set down. See Sec. 248.

XXVII. *The last resurrection is the best.* It is here styled the *better*, in comparison of all other resurrections. See Sec. 248.

XXVIII. *Believers suffer advantage.* The end which they propound to themselves demonstrateth as much, in this word, *that.* See Sec. 249.

XXIX. *Believers suffer for their advantage.* This phrase, *that they might obtain*, intends as much. See Sec. 250.

XXX. *Mockings are a kind of persecution.* It is [as] an instance of persecution they are here mentioned. See Sec. 251.

XXXI. *Mockings pierce deep.* Therefore this epithet, *cruel*, is added to them. See Sec. 251.

XXXII. *Professors are basely handled.* For they are *scourged.* See Sec. 252.

XXXIII. *Professors of the truth are used as male-*

*factors.* Witness their bonds and imprisonments. See Sec. 253.

XXXIV. *The things which professors endure are real.* They have *tried* or experience thereof. See Sec. 254.

XXXV. *Stoning was an ancient kind of death.* Express mention is here made of it. See Sec. 254.

XXXVI. *Multitudes may have their hands in persecuting saints.* For, in stoning, a multitude of people were used. See Sec. 255.

XXXVII. *Professors have been saved asunder.* This is expressly set down. See Sec. 255.

XXXVIII. *The death of martyrs hath been with much cruelty.* The distinct kinds of death here specified demonstrate as much. See Sec. 256.

XXXIX. *Professors may prove martyrs.* This word, *slain*, imports as much. See Sec. 257.

XL. *Persecutors make many martyrs.* This instrument, *sword*, implies as much. See Sec. 258.

XLI. *Temptations on the right hand are as dangerous as cruel martyrdom.* This word, *were tempted*, joined with sundry kinds of death, intendeth as much. See Sec. 256.

XLII. *Such as suffer not as martyrs may prove confessors.* For it is said that *they wandered*, &c. See Sec. 259.

XLIII. *Believers may be wanderers.* So much is here expressed of them. See Sec. 260.

XLIV. *Confessors may fly from persecution.* The word *wandering*, as here used, imports as much. See Sec. 259.

XLV. *Saints may be brought to wear leathern pilches.* Sheep-skins and goat-skins, here mentioned, imply as much. See Sec. 262.

XLVI. *Confessors may be brought to extreme want.* They may be *destitute.* See Sec. 262.

XLVII. *Confessors may be brought to much perplexity.* The word, *afflicted*, implieth as much. See Sec. 263.

XLVIII. *Confessors are subject to ill usage.* The word translated *tormented*, implieth as much. See Sec. 264.

XLIX. *Saints are precious and prizable.* This is the reason why God suffers them to wander from the world. See Sec. 266.

L. *The world hath a vile esteem of saints.* Therefore it forceth them to wander. See Sec. 267.

LI. *The world is unworthy of saints' society.* This is here plainly expressed. See Sec. 268.

LII. *The world's unworthiness of the society of saints, is a cause of their wandering.* This is here expressed as a reason of their wandering. See Sec. 268.

LIII. *Confessors have lived in such times as they durst not be known where they were.* The places not inhabited by men here mentioned, do prove as much. See Sec. 270.

LIV. *Confessors have feared persecutors more than*

*wild beasts.* For they have wandered in places where wild beasts were, rather than among persecutors. See Sec. 271.

Sec. 274. *Of all praiseworthy having their due.*

Ver. 30. *And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise.*

The apostle, having distinctly and largely set out the vigour of faith by the admirable effects thereof, both in doing and enduring, in these two last verses he giveth the general sum of all; so as here is *ἀναξιστάσις*, a recapitulation, or a brief recollection of the sum of all.

The first word, *xai*, being a copulative, sheweth that all here meant did in general agree in one and the same faith, which made them all praiseworthy.

This is made more clear by these general words of reference, *οὗτοι πάντες*, *these all*. They have reference to all that were before named, and to all that are implied under any of the acts of faith before mentioned, and all others that were, at any time before Christ was exhibited, of the true faith.

This general particle, *all*, is a word of extent, and implieth all sorts of believers before Christ's time.

This relative, *these*, is a word of restraint, and excludeth all that are not of the faith before mentioned.

That for which they are here commended is, *obtaining a good report*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, *μαρτυρησάντες*; whereof see Ver. 2, Sec. 6.

The ground of that good report is here said to be *faith*, *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*, even such a faith as is described, ver. 1, 'for by it the elders obtained a good report,' Ver. 2, Sec. 6.

This confirmeth that which hath been noted before, that faith especially makes men praiseworthy, and also that the worth of men hath had due testimony. See Ver. 2, Sec. 6.

To shew that all that are praiseworthy have their due, he premiseth this general particle, *all*. He that saith *all*, excepteth none at all. Take a view of the before-mentioned catalogue, and you will find this general exemplified in all sorts of particulars: as in kings, instance David; and in other governors, instance Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and others. In women, also, Sarah, Rahab, and others; in old men, as Noah; young men, as Isaac, when he suffered himself to be bound and laid on the altar; honourable men, as Joseph, the next in dignity to king Pharaoh; mean men, basely esteemed, as they that wandered up and down; rich men, as Isaac, Gen. xvi. 13, 19; poor men, as they who were 'destitute.' There can hardly be named any sort of believers that have not obtained good report.

There is no respect of persons with God, Rom. x. 12, Eph. vi. 9.

This is a good inducement to all of all sorts to do what they can to get faith. Let none suffer any ex-

ternal condition to be an impediment thereunto. This incitation is so much the more needful, because men are too prone to pervert that external condition and state wherein they are, so as to hinder their spiritual good, and that by putting it off from one to another. Great men think it concerns mean men most, because they are well enough with their outward condition; but wretched is that outward estate that is destitute of faith, though never so great. Mean men put it off to great ones, as having more leisure thereunto; but a man were better find leisure to get faith, than food for his body. It is usual in other different estates to put off all care of getting faith from one to another, which argueth egregious folly.

Surely such plainly shew that they are not of the society of true saints. They are none of those, nor like those that are mentioned in this catalogue of praiseworthy persons, that obtained a good report through faith. They are not simply *all*, but, as is here expressed, *all these*; those that are named, and others like unto them. Praiseworthy men are a choice sort. Many more than these lived before Christ exhibited, yea, lived in the time and place that some of these did, yet received no good report. Cain lived and offered a sacrifice with Abel, yet was none of those. Ham was in the ark with Shem; Ishmael in Abraham's family with Isaac; Esau in the same womb with Jacob; Dathan and Abiram came through the Red Sea with Caleb and Joshua: many other wicked unbelievers were mixed with believers, yet they obtained not such good report as believers did.

Though their outward condition were alike, yet their inward disposition was much different. Unbelievers had not the same matter of good report in them, as believers had. No marvel then that they had not such good report.

*Quest.* May not hypocrites carry themselves as the upright, and so gain such report?

*Ans.* 1. Before men they may; but not in their own conscience, nor before good angels, much less before God.

2. Hypocrites may appear for a time to be such and such; but when, as corn that wants rooting, they wither, when the veil of their hypocrisy falls off, and they are discovered, then that report withereth.

3. Though their hypocrisy should not be discovered in this world, yet in the world to come it shall be. Then they shall have shame and horror, instead of good report.

Much are they deceived who conceive that they may partake of the privileges of believers, though they be no believers. At Christ's coming to judgment, two shall be in one bed, two grinding together, two in the field together, yet one taken, the other left, Luke xvii. 34, 35. An apostle giveth three famous instances hereof: one, of the angels that stood, and fell; another, of them that entered into the ark,

and that refused: the third, of the Sodomites, and Lot, 2 Pet. ii. 4-7.

Therefore it stands every one in hand thoroughly to try himself, that if he find true faith in himself, he may have the more sound comfort, and expect this good report: if he have it not, then to labour for it.

Sec. 275. *Of Christ, the prime promise.*

The forementioned vigour of faith is much amplified, in these words, *received not the promise*. As the words lie, they are a simple proposition, and a plain denial of a privilege; but by the inference of the next verse, it appears that they are made a ground of a comparison betwixt believers that lived before Christ was exhibited, and believers that lived after. *They received not the promise, but we have received it.* Bring the foresaid simple proposition into a disjunctive, and the amplification will more clearly appear, thus, though they received not the promise, yet through faith they obtained a good report.

Promise is here metonymically taken for the thing promised, as oft in this epistle.

For the notation of the word, *ἐπαγγελία*, *promise*, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 6.

Of the word, *ἐκλάβετε*, which we translate *received*, see Ver. 19, Sec. 100.

Of receiving, and not receiving promises, see Ver. 33, Sec. 229.

Here the word *promise*, being of the singular number, implieth some eminent, excellent thing promised, and this is Christ Jesus himself, who is elsewhere set forth under this word *promise*, as Acts ii. 39, and xxvi. 6. Christ is said to be given according to the promise, Acts xiii. 23; and God's promise is said to be fulfilled in raising up Jesus, Acts xiii. 32.

Christ must needs be the prime promise, in that he is the first promise since Adam's fall, Gen. ii. 15, and in that he is the complement, or accomplishment of all other promises, 2 Cor. i. 20.

This might be exemplified by sundry promises made in the Old Testament, and manifested to be accomplished in the New, by this and such like phrases, 'All this was done that it might be fulfilled,' &c., Mat. i. 22.

1. This giveth evidence of the free grace, and rich mercy of God, in making and accomplishing such a promise. It must needs be free, in that there could be nothing in man to deserve such a promise. Glorious angels, glorified saints, man in his innocency, were not worthy of such a promise, much less may sinners be thought worthy. If Jacob were 'less than the least of God's mercies,' much more less is he than this, the greatest of all.

2. The greatness of the promise doth manifest and magnify the rich mercy of God. Mention is made of 'great and precious promises,' 2 Pet. i. 4, but in reference hereunto. Of all promises, this is the greatest

and most precious. This is that treasure and pearl whereof Christ speaketh, Mat. xiii. 44, 46.

3. This promise should make us faithfully promise and vow ourselves, all that we have, and all that we can do, unto God.

4. This promise gives us good ground in all doubts, when through weakness of the flesh we are brought to stagger, and to question the truth of any promise, to meditate thereon, and to reason with ourselves from the greater to the less—thus, God having made good this great promise, will not fail of others; all depend on this, Rom. viii. 32.

Sec. 276. *Of Christ, the prime promise, not received by true believers.*

Of the believers before mentioned, and of others that lived before Christ was exhibited, it is said that they received not the promise—that is, saints under the Old Testament had not an actual exhibition of Christ. This was one of the promises, concerning which it was said of the patriarchs, 'they received not the promises,' ver. 13. In this respect it is said that 'many prophets and righteous men desired to see those things,' Mat. xiii. 17, namely, Jesus Christ incarnate, living, preaching, working miracles, &c., and that 'the prophets inquired and searched diligently about those things,' 1 Pet. i. 10. Therefore they did not enjoy them.

God was herein pleased to manifest his wisdom in reserving such a promise to a fulness of time, Gal. iv. 4, and that—

1. That his goodness might by degrees increase, as the sun doth, and so be the better discerned; for by degrees it was more clearly revealed.

2. That so great a blessing might be the more expected, inquired after, and longed for.

3. That the patience and other graces of saints might be the better exercised.

4. That Christ himself might be the more honoured, in that he was reserved to the latter age of the world, as being a blessing which surpassed all other blessings before it.

1. Hereby we have instruction in the nature of faith, which is to rest upon promises for things future, as if they were actually accomplished.

2. This doth much amplify the faith of former believers, in that they did and endured so great things for Christ before they enjoyed him.

3. It checks our backwardness and dulness in believing, who live in the times wherein the promise may be and is received.

4. This should stir us up to seek to excel them, in that we have received the promise, which they received not.

Sec. 277. *Of God's providence in ordering men's different privilege.*

Ver. 40. *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

In this last verse is laid down the privilege of believing Christians above believing Jews. The author of that privilege is expressly said to be *Θεός, God*. God maketh the estates of men to differ. That which Eve said of a third son, 'God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel,' gives proof hereof, Gen. iv. 25. So also doth that which is said to Noah finding grace in the eyes of the Lord, Gen. vi. 8. And the promise which God made to Abraham, Gen. xii. 1, 2; and renewed, Gen. xvii. 20, 21. This is most lively exemplified in Isaac's two sons, even when they were in their mother's womb, Gen. xxv. 23, Mat. i. 2, 3. The apostle plainly expresseth the point, 1 Cor. iv. 7. Hence it is that they who are called out of the world are styled 'God's elect,' or 'the elect of God,' Rom. viii. 33, Titus i. 1, Col. iii. 12.

The truest and highest reason that can be given hereof is here set down by this word, *προβλεψάμενος, having provided*. The Greek word is a compound, and signifieth, according to the true notation of it, to *foresee*. Our last English translators have noted as much in the margin. Now God's foresight is operative; what he foreseeth to be good and meet he effecteth, and therefore his foreseeing of this and that is justly styled a providing it. Thus also the Hebrew word, *נָתַן*, which signifieth *to see*, being applied to God, implieth his providing this or that, and so is translated, Gen. xx. 8, 1 Sam. xvi. 1.

Foresight cannot properly be attributed to God, because all things past and future are present to him. But for teaching's sake in relation to us, unto whom times are distinct, is it applied to God. Thus God is said to foresee such things as he doth determine and decree. For distinction's sake to our better understanding, God determining and decreeing such things, doth thereupon foresee that answerably they will fall out: yea, thereupon he provideth that in their season they do infallibly come and so fall out.

Thus this word is here fitly used, to shew the reason and cause why the better things were reserved to the later times. Even because God having determined them so to be, foresaid<sup>1</sup> it to be the fittest so to be; for 'God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,' Eph. i. 11. There can be nothing of 'God to move him to do what he doth,' Ps. cxv. 3.

And in man there can be nothing: for in man's best estate he had what he had of God. God gave him his being, and God endued him with all that excellency which then he had, comprised under this phrase, 'image of God,' Gen. i. 26, 27.

But since man's fall, all are under sin: 'there is none righteous, no, not one,' Rom. iii. 10. Well therefore might the apostle say, 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,' Rom. ix. 16.

1. This directeth such as desire any excellency to

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'Foresaw' ?—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> Qu. 'Out of' ?—Ed.

be distinguished from other common natural men, as excellency of knowledge, excellency of faith, or excellency of any other grace, yea, or excellency of means of grace, to look to the author and fountain whence that excellency cometh, and to consider the ground that moveth God to do what he doth. 'If any hath [not] wisdom, let him seek it of God,' &c., James i. 5.

2. This may be a caveat to such as have obtained any excellency above others, to take heed that they boast not therein, 1 Cor. iv. 7. That excellency arose not from a man's self, neither was there anything in him to move God to confer what he hath done upon him, Deut. ix. 4-7, Rom. xi. 18. All Christians, who in the light of the gospel excel Jews, Turks, and all infidels, may apply this. So all Protestants to whom the errors of antichristianism are revealed; so they who have the power of godliness in them above ordinary formal professors. 'God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another,' Ps. lxxv. 7.

3. We hereby learn to return the glory of all that excellency which God hath provided for us above others, unto the author thereof, who maketh thee so differ, Rom. xi. 35, 36; yea, also to use all to the glory of his name, 1 Cor. x. 31. Thus will the Lord never repent his conferring any excellency upon such grateful persons. Ingratitude is it which moves him to withdraw blessings bestowed; but gratitude moves him to increase them.

#### Sec. 278. Of God's providing the better things for the Christian church.

That which God is said to have provided for Christians is thus expressed, *some better thing*, that is, a better estate, or better means for the church's good; or rather, Christ himself exhibited. He is that better thing that excels all other better things whatsoever.

Of the various acceptions of this word *better*, see Chap. i. 4, Sec. 39.

Of better things reserved to the time of the gospel, see Chap. ii. 3, Sec. 21.

This in general sheweth that God's providence is still to the better. Hereof see more in *The Progress of God's Providence*, on Ezek. xxxvi. 11. Hence is it that it is said of believers that they 'desire a better country,' Ver. 16, Sec. 75; and that their hope is 'a better hope,' see Chap. vii. 19, Sec. 87; and the covenant made to them a 'better covenant,' see Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 53.

1. Due notice is to be taken of God's wisdom, in causing his goodness so to increase for the better; that so our hearts may be the more enlarged to admire and magnify the same. This is the end that God aimeth at herein. We must not suffer God to fail of his end.

2. Herein we ought to shew ourselves children of God, we must still grow and increase in all goodness.

Thus shall we shew ourselves to be of the kingdom of God, in whom the Spirit of God is. For the kingdom of God, and things appertaining thereunto, are like mustard-seed, which, being of the least kind of seeds, groweth up to be as a tree, Mat. xiii. 31.

The forementioned better thing, is expressly said to be provided for us. Under this phrase he compriseth himself, that lived after Christ was exhibited, and all others that lived and believed from Christ's first coming in the flesh, and shall live and believe to his second coming: so as the best things have been provided for the Christian church; even that church which hath been, and shall be under the New Testament. Most of the great and glorious things that were prophesied of by the prophets of old, were concerning these times, which are styled 'the last days,' Isa. ii. 2, Acts ii. 17, Heb. i. 2. Hereupon an apostle saith of the better things here understood, that 'it was revealed unto the prophets, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported,' 1 Peter i. 12. Hereof see more in *The Progress of God's Providence*, on Ezek. xxxvi. 11.

Sec. 279. *Of the meaning of these words, 'That they without us should not be made perfect.'*

An especial end why God made so great a difference betwixt former and later times is thus expressed, *that they without us should not be made perfect.*

By this relative, *they*, are meant such believers as lived and died before Christ was exhibited. Indeed this relative, *they*, is not expressed in the Greek; but yet necessarily understood, for the verb *made perfect* hath reference to the relative, *οὗτοι*, *these*, in the beginning of the former verse.

By this other relative, *ἡμῶν*, *us* (*without us*), are meant believing Christians.

Of the word, *τελειωθῶσα*, translated *made perfect*, see Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 97.

There the derivation and diverse acception of the word is set down.

Great question is here made about the meaning of the phrase.

Because the perfection of a thing consisteth in the well finishing thereof, and a full accomplishment of all things appertaining thereto, this word, whose derivation is taken from *τελος*, the *end* of a thing, is here and in sundry other places translated, to *make perfect* in the active, and to *be made perfect* in the passive.

This, therefore, some apply to the glory of saints in heaven, wherein their perfection consisteth. Thus is this word used, chap. xii. 23.

It may not be denied but that the eternal glory of saints in heaven is comprised under their perfection: for till then they are not fully perfected.

But in regard of the degrees whereby that perfection is attained, and the means of attaining thereunto,

those means and degrees are not to be excluded. These are:

1. The taking away of sin, which maketh man most imperfect; and the putting on of righteousness, which makes us appear perfect before God. This is done by the obedience of Christ, both active and passive, whereby we are justified in God's sight, Rom. v. 19.

2. The subduing of the power of sin in us, and enabling us to walk in holiness and righteousness. This is done by the Spirit of Christ conveyed into us; whereby we are sanctified, Rom. viii. 11.

3. The Spirit enableth such as are united to Christ to stand against all assaults, and to persevere in a spiritual growth till they come to be perfect men in Christ, Eph. iv. 13.

4. The receiving of the soul to glory when it leaves the body. In assured confidence hereof, not only Christ, Luke xxiii. 46, but Stephen also, Acts vii. 59, commended his soul to God.

5. The resurrection of the body to eternal life, John v. 28, 29.

6. The uniting of body and soul together again; and settling them in glory eternally, Mat. xxii. 32. Christ's argument, as it holdeth for the resurrection of the body, so for the union of them with their souls. For God is not the God of our bodies alone, but of our persons, consisting of body and soul.

All these are the degrees of man's perfection. None of them may be left out. In all these were believing Jews made perfect; and in all these are, and shall be, all believing Christians made perfect. And without every one of them can none of them be made perfect.

*Quest. 1.* How then is perfection denied to them, as it seemeth to be denied in this phrase, that they should not be made perfect?

*Ans.* It is not simply denied; but restrictively in relation to us. Therefore it is added *without us*.

*Quest. 2.* How doth their perfection depend on us, or on our perfection?

*Ans. 1.* In that the resurrection of the bodies of all believers shall be at once, and so their perfect consummation in body and soul, John v. 28, 29. Abel, the first believer that died, and all others after him, must rest in their graves till the last of God's elect be perfected.

2. In that the means of perfecting believing Jews were reserved to our times; which were Christ's incarnation, subjection to the law and accomplishment thereof, oblation of himself a sacrifice, resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven. All these were in the last days; in the time of the Jewish church they were not actually done. If in our days they had not been done, those ancient believers had not been perfected. But being all actually done in our days, we thereby are perfected, and they also are perfected with us. For they believed that in the latter days they should be accomplished, as indeed they were; and by

that faith they were justified and sanctified in this life, died a blessed death, had their souls received to heaven, shall have their bodies raised and united to their souls to enjoy eternal rest and glory: as we also who believe in Christ exhibited.

This I take to be the clear meaning of the text.

Hereby sundry errors raised from thence are plainly refuted.

1. None of the souls of the faithful shall be in heaven till the last day.

This was the opinion of many ancients—as of Tertullian, Vigilantius, and others. Among other arguments they press this text. But they err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God, Mat. xxii. 29. For they apply that to the soul separated from the body, which belongeth to the last union of body and soul together.

I deny not but that by Christ's entrance into heaven, there was a great access of joy and glory to such saints as were dead, in their souls glorified before. But that then their souls should first enter into heaven may and must be denied.

Besides, they take that to be spoken of the effect, which is meant of the actual exhibition of the means. Whereas the means of making men perfect, which was Christ, was not actually exhibited before the last days, they deny the effects thereof, which is the perfecting of saints thereby.

*Quest.* Could the effect be before the cause?

*Ans.* 1. The highest procuring cause was before the effect; which was God's decree and purpose.

2. So also was a primary efficient cause, God's promise, Gen. iii. 15.

3. So likewise the virtue and efficacy of the working cause, Rev. xiii. 4.

4. The instrumental or applicatory cause, which is faith, Heb. xi. 1.

As they who maintain the foresaid errors mistake the main ground thereof, which is this text, so they go against the current of other scriptures, which are these and other like, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, &c., Luke xxiii. 43, Phil. i. 23.

A second error is this: The souls of the faithful were in a place in the uppermost part of hell, called *Limbos Patrum*. Of this see Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 50.

A third error is this: The souls of the faithful before Christ were in a place of beatifical vision, but not in heaven.

This is the error of some Protestants, who cut but a thread betwixt themselves and papists. Hereof see more Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 50.

*Sec. 279. Of the insufficiency of eternal means in case of perfection.*

The denial of perfection to the Jews before Christ exhibited, is in regard of the means which they had. Those means were not sufficient to make them perfect. All the means which they had may be com-

prised under this word, *law*; but 'the law made nothing perfect,' Chap. vii. 19, Sec. 86, which in this case must be the moral or ceremonial law.

The moral law cannot make perfect by reason of our impotency, Rom. viii. 3. In reference to that law the apostle saith, 'No man is justified by the law in the sight of God,' Gal. iii. 11.

Of the ceremonial law it is expressly said that the offerings thereof 'could not make him, that did the service, perfect,' Chap. ix. 9, Sec. 49, and Chap. x. 1, Sec. 3.

In this respect it is called a 'carnal commandment,' Chap. vii. 16, Sec. 21. And the ordinances thereof are styled 'weak and beggarly elements,' Gal. iv. 9.

*Quest.* 1. Why was that law then ordained?

*Ans.* 1. To shew we stood in need of means to perfect us.

2. To point out those means. Therefore they are called 'a shadow of good things to come.'

*Quest.* 2. Were not then believing Jews made perfect?

*Ans.* Yes. But by the means which were typified under their rites.

This gives a demonstration of their blindness and folly, who expected perfection from the observation of that law. Against such the prophets much inveighed, Isa. i. 11, Micah vi. 6, 7; and Christ in his time, Luke xvi. 15; and the apostles in their time, Gal. iv. 9. Great also is their folly, who wish the continuance of that external law, yet still; and also of them who think to be perfected by human inventions. If external divine ordinances could not make perfect, much less can human.

*Sec. 280. Of perfecting all believers in all ages by the same means.*

To shew that God did not leave his people utterly destitute of all means of perfection, this phrase of limitation, *without us*, is inserted. Whereby we are given to understand that they had means to be made perfect; but such as belong to us Christians, and are expressly manifested in our days. Hereof see more, Chap. vii. 19, Sec. 87.

The foresaid limitation, *without us*, is the rather added to give evidence that God would have all believers in all ages perfected by the same means. In this respect, it is said that the ark and baptism are 'like figures,' 1 Pet. iii. 21, setting out one and the same thing; yet the ark was in the first age of the world, and baptism in the last. The like is noted of other sacraments in the ages betwixt these, 1 Cor. x. 2-4. In this respect the gospel is said to be preached to the Jews, Chap. iv. 2, Sec. 17. And we who live under the gospel are said to be saved, 'even as they,' Acts xv. 11. But most pertinent to this point is the end which the apostle hath noted of God's making known unto us the mystery of his will, in these words, 'that in the dispensation of the fulness of time he

might gather together in one, all things in Christ,' &c., Eph. i. 10, Col. i. 20. This God hath so ordered—

1. To shew the all-sufficiency of that one only means, which is Christ Jesus, who is able to save to the uttermost, Heb. vii. 25, and that in regard of—

(1.) His sufficiency. He of himself, without any assistance from any other, can save.

(2.) The manifold miseries whereunto men are subject. He is able to save from all sins, and from all miseries that arise from their sins.

(3.) The several persons that stand in need of salvation. He is able to save all of all sorts, such as lived before him or with him, or shall live after him, Heb. xiii. 8.

2. To shew his impartial respect to all, Acts xv. 9, Gal. iii. 28. Though in wisdom God saw it meet that some should live in one age of the world and others in another, yet he prepared but one heaven for all, and one way for all to attain thereunto.

3. To give evidence of the union of all believers in one mystical body. Had believers that lived before Christ been perfected without us, or by any other means than we are, they had been another body, and that body had been so perfected that no more members should have been added thereto; but as there is but one head, so there is but one body, Eph. iv. 4. This is that catholic church which hath been from the beginning of the world, and shall continue to the end thereof.

This is a forcible motive to incite us to imitate them, and to walk in that way to perfection, which they did. If they walked in that way which was but obscurely revealed to them, yet is clearly and fully made known to us, what a shame then would it be for us to come short of them! They are gone, we yet live; let us shew that their spirit lives in us. See more hereof, Chap. vi. 12, Sec. 83, and Chap. xiii. 7, Sec. 100, &c.

Sec. 282. *Of the resolution of, and observations* *from*, Heb. xi. 39, 40.

The sum of these two verses is, a commendation of ancient saints. The parts are two—

1. A general proposition.

2. A particular amplification thereof.

In the proposition there is—

1. An intimation of the persons commended, *these all*.

2. A manifestation of the matter for which they are commended.

This is set out—

(1.) By the cause, *faith*.

(2.) By the effect, *a good report*.

The amplification is set down comparatively. Of the comparison there are two parts.

The first concerneth such as lived before Christ was exhibited.

The other concerneth such as lived after.

That which concerneth the former is a privation of a privilege, in setting down whereof we have—

1. The privilege itself, which was the *promise*.

2. Their privation of it, *received not*.

That part of the comparison which concerneth believers since Christ was exhibited, is a fruition of the foresaid privilege. Hereof are two parts—

1. The kind of privilege, *some better thing*.

2. The end thereof, *that they without us, &c.*

The kind of privilege is set out—

1. By the author, *God*.

2. By the procuring cause, *having provided*.

3. By the subject-matter, *some better thing*.

4. By the persons for whom, *for us*.

The end is a universal perfection, *that they, &c.*

In setting down this end we may observe,

1. The manner of propounding it, negatively in reference to ancient Jews, *should not be made perfect*.

2. Affirmatively, to Jews and Christians together, in this phrase, *without us*.

#### *Doctrines.*

I. *Worth of men hath always had its due testimony.* This ariseth from this phrase, *obtained good report*. See Sec. 271.

II. *Faith especially makes men praiseworthy.* Good report is here said to be *through faith*. See Sec. 274.

III. *All that are praiseworthy have their due.* Thus much doth the apostle here expressly affirm, *these all*. See Sec. 274.

IV. *Praiseworthy men are a choice sort.* This particle of reference, *these*, imports as much.

V. *Christ is the prime promise.* See Sec. 275.

VI. *God's promise is the ground of believers' hope.* This is here taken for granted, in the word, *promise*. See Sec. 275.

VII. *It is a great privilege to receive a promise.* Herein Christians are preferred before Jews. See Sec. 275.

VIII. *Saints under the law had not the fruition of Christ.* This is it that is here denied unto them, in this phrase, *they received not*. See Sec. 275.

IX. *God is the author of the difference betwixt men.* So he is here expressed to be. See Sec. 276.

X. *God's own providence moveth him to order matters as he doth.* See Sec. 276.

XI. *God's provision is to the better.* This phrase, *provided some better thing*, intends as much. See Sec. 276.

XII. *The better things are reserved for the Christian church.* The Christian church is intended, under this phrase, *for us*. See Sec. 277.

XIII. *Saints, before Christ exhibited, had not then actually sufficient means to perfect them.* This is implied, under this phrase, *not made perfect*. See Sec. 278.

XIV. *The perfection of those who died before Christ exhibited, depended on the means which we enjoy.* See Sec. 280.

XV. *God would have all, in all ages, to be perfected by the same means.* See Sec. 280.



## CHAPTER XII.

See. 1. *Of the resolution of Heb. xii.*

There being two main ends of the apostle's setting out Christ in his excellency—namely, perseverance in the faith, and worthy walking thereof—in this chapter he finisheth the former, and setteth upon the latter, of these two ends. See Chap. i. 1, Sec. 10, in the end.

To enforce the former, of perseverance, he produceth many motives to encourage them against the many trials whereunto they had been brought, and might further be brought, for their profession's sake. Then he raiseth an exhortation unto courage, vers. 12, 13.

The apostle's motives are these :

1. The pattern of former believers, to whom he hath reference, ver. 1.

2. The example of Christ, concerning whom,

(1.) He distinctly setteth out his sufferings, ver. 2.

(2.) He calleth Christians to a review, or to a more serious consideration, of him, ver. 3.

(3.) He removeth an objection, which might be this : *Obj.* We have already suffered much.

*Ans.* Yet there remaineth more, in that 'ye have not resisted unto blood,' ver. 4.

3. The author of Christians' sufferings ; this is,

1. Propounded, ver. 5. It is 'the chastening of the Lord.'

2. Amplified, in the six verses following.

In the amplification is declared,

1. The motive that puts on God to correct, *love*, ver. 6.

2. The evidence that he so doth. About this he,

(1.) Propoundeth the evidence itself, ver. 6.

(2.) He maketh an inference thereupon, ver. 9.

The evidence is propounded two ways :

[1.] Affirmatively, under a paternal affection, by the mention of *sons*, vers. 5-7.

[2.] Negatively, by denying them to be sons, if they be without correction, ver. 8.

The inference is, that we patiently submit ourselves.

This is set down comparatively. The comparison is betwixt unequals ; which are the 'Father of spirits' and 'fathers of our flesh,' ver. 9 ; so as the argument is from the less to the greater. In it,

1. There is one thing taken for granted, that children are subject to the correction of the fathers of their flesh.

2. Another thing is inferred thereupon.

The inference is set down,

(1.) With an interrogation ; thus, 'Shall we not,' &c.

(2.) It is confirmed two ways :

[1.] By the different ends that the Father of spirits and fathers of the flesh aim at in correcting their children, ver. 9.

[2.] By removing an objection. The objection is this : afflictions are grievous.

This is answered by making known the effect that

follows from thence ; which is the 'peaceable fruits of righteousness,' ver. 11.

The exhortation raised as a conclusion from the former motives, importeth two duties.

One, to redress what has been amiss, ver. 12 ; the other, to endeavour after a better progress, ver. 13.

Hitherto of the main duty of professors of the true faith. Hereunto are added other duties, which much grace a Christian profession.

The particular duties mentioned by the apostle are these :

1. Peace with men.

2. Holiness towards God. This is pressed by the benefit thence arising, implied under a negative : without it no man shall see the Lord ; but with it they may, ver. 14.

3. Circumspection against apostasy, ver. 15.

4. Avoiding such sins as disgrace a professor. Hereof two sorts are mentioned.

(1.) Uncleaness. Under this particular, *fornicator*.

(2.) Profaneness. This latter is exemplified in *Esau*, concerning whom two points are noted.

[1.] His sins : he sold his birthright, ver. 16.

[2.] The punishment : he was rejected.

To enforce the foresaid and other gospel duties, the apostle falleth into a digression about the excellency of the gospel above the law. Therein he declareth two points :

1. The kind of excellency, ver. 18, &c.

2. The use to be made thereof, ver. 25, &c.

The kind of excellency is set down comparatively. The comparison is betwixt the law and the gospel. It consisteth of two parts :

1. The terror of the law.

2. The sweetness of the gospel.

The terror of the law is manifested by ten signs :

(1.) A mount that could not be<sup>1</sup> touched.

(2.) A burning fire.

(3.) Blackness.

(4.) Darkness.

(5.) Tempest, ver. 18.

(6.) The sound of a trumpet.

(7.) The voice of words, which the people could not endure, ver. 19.

(8.) Beast not daring to touch the mountain.

(9.) Striking such through as should touch it, ver. 20.

(10.) Moses's fear, ver. 21.

The sweetness of the gospel is set forth by the society whereunto it bringeth us. Hereof are eleven particular instances :

(1.) Mount Sion.

(2.) The city of the living God.

(3.) The heavenly Jerusalem.

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'could be?'—Ed.

- (4.) An innumerable company of angels, ver. 22.
- (5.) The general assembly.
- (6.) The church of the firstborn.
- (7.) They who are written in heaven.
- (8.) God the judge of all.
- (9.) Spirits of just men, ver. 23.
- (10.) Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.
- (11.) The blood of sprinkling, &c.

The use of the foresaid difference is twofold.

One is set down negatively; and it is,

1. Generally propounded, 'See that ye refuse not,' &c.

2. Enforced by the damage which will follow upon neglect thereof.

The damage is set down comparatively, and that by an argument from the less. Hereof are two parts:

1. God's judgment on despisers of the law.

2. His judgment on despisers of the gospel, ver. 15.

Both these are amplified by the different manner of delivering the one and the other. The earth was shaken at delivering the law; earth and heaven at delivering the gospel. The point is propounded, ver. 26; and expounded, ver. 27.

The other use is set down affirmatively; wherein we have,

1. The ground of the duty, *a kingdom which cannot be moved.*

2. The kind of duty, *to serve God acceptably,* ver. 28.

3. The motive to enforce it, *God is a consuming fire,* ver. 29.

### Sec. 2. Of God's witnesses.

Ver. 1. *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

The first word of this verse, *τοῦτοι*, translated *wherefore*, sheweth that this verse, and others following, depend upon the former chapter as a just and necessary consequence. In the Greek word there are three several particles compounded together, which add emphasis. That word is once more used in the New Testament—namely, 1 Thes. iv. 8. It sheweth that that which followeth is inferred as a duty on our part, to endeavour to be like unto those excellent ones, whose examples have been set before us. And hereby he giveth us to understand that inferences and uses raised from general and indefinite points are lawful and useful, and that such general points are in Scripture recorded of others, may and must be in particular applied to ourselves, so far as any way they concern us. See more hereof, Chap. x. 19, Sec. 52.

This phrase, *καὶ οὗτοι*, *we also*, hath a special reference to this clause, *without us* (chap. xi. 40), and it confirmeth that which was there noted con-

cerning God's perfecting all of all sorts by the same means. See Chap. xi. 40, Sec. 280. Withal it sheweth that the good example of the Jews are required as well for us Christians as for the posterity of the Jews. The apostle teacheth, as Christians, to apply that to ourselves which is registered of Joshua and David. See chap. xiii. 5, 8.<sup>1</sup>

This phrase, *seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud, &c.*, is thus in the Greek, *we having so great a cloud compassing us*. This manner of expressing the point further confirmeth that right, which Christian Gentiles have to those things which are registered of believing Jews, *we have them* (*ἔχουμεν*) as witnesses for us. In this respect we ought the more carefully to heed them, and to be followers of them. Of imitating such saints as have lived before us, see Chap. xiii. 7, Sec. 100.

Those ancient worthies are the rather to be imitated, because they were *witnesses* to that faith which they professed.

The Greek word, *μαρτυρίαι*, translated *witnesses*, is that which we in English sometimes translate *martyr*, as Acts xxii. 20, Rev. ii. 13, and xvii. 6.

The word is ordinarily put for a bare witness, even such a one as giveth testimony to a thing, chap. x. 28. See Chap. iii. 5, Sec. 53. When any so far standeth to the maintenance of the true faith as he loseth his life rather than renounce the truth, he is by a kind of excellency called a martyr. And such witnesses were many of these that are here pointed at.

Though all believers be not brought to that extent of witness-bearing as to confirm their testimony with their blood, and so prove martyrs, yet are all saints God's witnesses; as,

1. They who faithfully profess the truth.

2. They who conform their lives according to the truth which they profess.

3. They who declare and preach it unto others.

4. They who maintain it against gainsayers. See more hereof, Chap. iii. 5, Sec. 53.

This should stir us up to do what lieth in our power for bearing witness to God's truth, that we may be in the number of God's witnesses to our posterity.

### Sec. 3. Of the multitude of God's witnesses.

The apostle styled these *a cloud of witnesses*. The Greek word, *νέφος*, translated *cloud*, is here only used throughout the New Testament; but there is another word, *σύνεσις*, derived from it, which signifieth the same thing, and is frequently used, Mat. xvii. 6.

A cloud is the gathering together of many vapours out of the earth and waters, which vapours do sometimes wax dry and thin, and are driven away by winds; sometimes they wax moist and thick, and melt out into rain.

<sup>1</sup> This reference seems to be inaccurate.—Ed.

The apostle here useth this metaphor in reference to God's ancient witnesses, to shew,

1. Their penalty.<sup>1</sup> They are high, and heavenly, as clouds are above in the heavens, and contain those waters which are said to be above the firmament, Gen. i. 7.

2. Their effects. Clouds, by the rain which they distil, make the earth fruitful; they also cool it. Thus do the forementioned witnesses make the church fruitful, and comfort it.

3. Their end. We read of a cloud that guided the Israelites in their way, Num. ix. 15, &c. Thus those witnesses guide the church in the right way to the heavenly Canaan.

4. Their number. For a cloud containeth much water in it, even an innumerable company of drops.

I suppose that this last respect is most especially implied by the apostle. Thereupon he addeth this epithet, *σπασσάτωρ, compassed about*. This implieth a thick cloud that covereth the whole face of the sky, so as wheresoever we look this cloud appeareth.

The Greek word translated *compassed about*, is the same that is used, Chap. v. 2, Sec. 12. There is shewed in what respect it is used. Thus it appeareth that we need not seek far for examples, they are everywhere before our eyes; we cannot know them from this cloud.

To amplify this point the more, he premiseth this pronoun of an admirable number, *ποσούτοις, so great*, whereof see Chap. i. 4, Sec. 39. Well might he here insert the word; because the like catalogue and number of witnesses is not to be found together in any other place of Scripture; yet here and there many more like examples are registered. For since the beginning of the world the multitude of believers hath been very great. See Ver. 32, Sec. 192.

Of the aforesaid great compassing cloud it is expressed to be *ὑμῶν, for us*, that is, for our use and benefit, for our learning, that we should follow them; so as the lives of former saints are for our imitation. See more hereof, Chap. xiii. 7, Sec. 100, &c.

#### Sec. 4. Of removing impediments.

Upon the forementioned number of witnesses the apostle inferreth a duty on us Christians about running our race, for the better effecting whereof he premiseth certain means to help us in our Christian race, which are in general the removing of such things as might hinder us in our Christian course. This in general is implied under this word, *lay aside*. In the Greek it is set down with a participle, thus, *ἀποθένας, laying aside*, implying thereby a necessity of using this course, in that we cannot well run our race except we lay aside such things as will otherwise hinder us in our Christian course. This phrase, *lay aside*, is the interpretation of one Greek compound word, which properly signifieth to *put from one*. It

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'dignity'!—Ev.

is used of those who put off their clothes, and lay them down, Acts vii. 58; but most frequently it is metaphorically applied to the putting off, and casting away of the old man, and the several corrupt lusts thereof. Thus I find it five times used, besides this place, as Eph. iv. 22, 25, Col. iii. 8, James i. 21, 1 Pet. ii. 1.

That which is here intended under this removal of impediments, is the constant doctrine of the prophets, Isa. i. 16, Jer. iv. 4, of Christ himself, Mat. v. 29, 30, and of his apostles, 2 Cor. vii. 1, 1 Pet. ii. 1.

All skilful artists take this course, for the better effecting of that good which they intend. Physicians use to give preparatives; chirurgeons will first draw out the festering matter from a wound; husbandmen will root out briars, thorns, broom, and such like hindrances of good seed.

Else all labour is lost. Thus much Christ implieth, by his double repetition of this phrase, 'It is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body should be cast into hell,' Mat. v. 29, 30.

1. This manifesteth a reason that men do make no better progress in their Christian course. Impediments are not removed.

2. This teacheth us diligently to search, and wisely to observe what stumbling-blocks lie in our way, that they prove not like the wounded body of Amasa in the midst of the highway, which made all the people stand still till he was removed, 2 Sam. xx. 12.

When impediments are found out, they must be utterly abandoned. They must, according to the notation of the Greek word, be *put from us*, for it is compounded of a verb, *ἄρξαι*, that signifieth to *put*, and a preposition, *ἀπό*, that signifieth *from*. As this word is applied to the old man, and the several lusts thereof, it signifieth a thorough casting them off. Christ sets this forth under these phrases of 'plucking out,' 'cutting off,' and 'casting from' one.

It is an egregious point of folly to dally with temptations. Such are like the fly that is soon burnt with the candle.

#### Sec. 5. Of burdens to be cast off.

The first impediment here mentioned is called, *ἔγχο, a weight*. The Greek word is not elsewhere in the New Testament used. It signifieth anything that lieth heavy on a man. So long as such a burden lieth on him, he cannot be free to go, or run, as otherwise he might be.

Herein the apostle alludeth to the metaphor following, of a race. If a man be to run a race, he will be sure to suffer no burden to lie upon his back, but he will cast it off from him. He will not run in a long side coat, which may dangle about his feet, and hinder him.

Because there are many things which may prove burdensome, and so hinder us in our Christian course,

the apostle addeth this general or indefinite participle, *πάρα, every*. For there are very many burdens, both inward and outward. Particulars are these—

1. Actual sins, especially if they be gross ones, Ps. xxxviii. 4.

2. Cares of this life, Luke xxi. 34.

3. The world, James iv. 4. Under it are comprised,

(1.) Riches, Mark xi. 25, 2 Tim. iv. 10.

(2.) Honours, John v. 44, 3 John 9.

(3.) Pleasures, 2 Tim. iii. 4.

These an apostle doth thus set out, 'All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,' 1 John ii. 16.

(4.) Company. Many of an ingenuous disposition are clean drawn out of their Christian course hereby. Instance Rehoboam, 2 Chron. ii. 8, and Joash, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17.

(5.) Fashions. These steal away men's hearts, Isa. iii. 16.

(6.) Sundry kinds of callings, especially such as are questionable.

(7.) Multitude of businesses. This makes many find no leisure for piety.

(8.) A man's self, namely, all his own corrupt desires. A man must deny himself, Mat. xvi. 24.

#### Sec. 6. Of original corruption besetting us.

To that word, *weight*, which compriseth under it all outward burdens, the apostle addeth another, which intendeth inward hindrance, translated the *sin* which doth so easily beset us. This phrase, *so easily beset us*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἐπιπαρασιν*, which is a double compound. The simple verb, *ίσταμι*, signifieth to *set, settle, or establish*, Mat. iv. 5. The first compound, *περίσταν*, signifieth to *compass about*, Acts xxv. 7. The double compound, *ἐπιπαρασιν*, is here only in the New Testament used. It signifieth to be ready and forward to compass one about.

The *sin, ἀμαρτία*, wherewith this is here added as an epithet, is our original corruption, that inward natural pollution wherein we are conceived and born, and which we carry in us and about us as long as we live. This sin is ever ready on all sides to assault and hinder us in every good course. This is it that moved the apostle thus to complain, 'I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin;' and 'when I would do good, evil is present with me,' Rom. vii. 21, 23. This sin lives in us, flows forth out of us, and polluteth everything that passeth from us. In all our good purposes and endeavours it is ever at hand, and ready to molest us, so as it becometh us to be very diligent in suppressing and keeping it down. 'Every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things,' 1 Cor. ix. 25. He observeth a strict diet, to keep down corrupt humours within, which otherwise might make him unwieldy, and unfit to accomplish his task.

This taketh it for granted that original corruption is truly and properly a sin. It is here expressly so called, and in sundry other places, as Ps. li. 5, Rom. v. 12, and vii. 17.

It is against the law, 1 John iii. 4.

It is against the whole law, which is spiritual, and requireth such integrity in man as God in his creation endued him withal; but original corruption is not only a want or deprivation of the same, but also an averseness or depravation of the whole man: for by reason thereof, 'there is none righteous, no not one,' for 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' Rom. iii. 10, 23. Yea, 'every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually,' Gen. vi. 5.

In particular, original corruption is a special sin against the first commandment, which requireth an entire disposition towards God, and against the last, which requireth an entire disposition towards man.

1. Whereby the position of Pelagians is refuted, who taught that man's nature was like a paper whereon nothing was written, but anything, good or evil, might be written thereon. They meant thereby that man's nature was neither endued with virtue nor infected with vice, and that Adam no further hurt his posterity than by example, and that all the evil which the posterity of Adam drew from him was by imitation. These gross errors have, by ancient fathers and later divines, been sufficiently refuted.

2. Papists themselves<sup>1</sup> do too much mince man's natural corruption.

(1.) Some hold that original corruption hath not the true nature of sin in it, and that infants have no sin in themselves, but only bear the punishment of Adam's sin.

(2.) Others say that it is less than any venial sin, which, according to their position, deserveth not damnation. Hereupon they have forged a *Limbus Infantum* for such infants as die in original sin. See Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 50.

(3.) Others hold that by baptism original sin is clean washed away; and that in the regenerate, such as they account all baptized to be, there is nothing that God hates; but that they are pure, and free from all sin, till by actual sins they defile themselves.

None of these positions can stand with this text, which manifesteth this sin to compass them about who were baptized and believed.

3. There be that dream of a perfection of sanctification in saints; but so long as this besetting sin remains in man, which will be so long as he here lives, there cannot be any such perfection in him.

1. This besetting sin doth much aggravate the vileness of man's natural disposition. The disposition of unreasonable creatures, no, not of the worst of them, is so vile. Sin is the vilest thing that can be; it is contrary to the purity and perfection of God.

<sup>1</sup> Pigh. in controvers. de orig. pec.

2. What cause have we then to be humbled for the same! If John had cause to weep for man's impotency in reference to divine matters, Rev. v. 4, what cause have we to weep and howl for man's natural perversity! Many can mourn for particular gross sins, but very few take notice of this besetting sin.

If men well weighed what kind of sin this besetting sin is, they would cry out with the apostle, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Rom. vii. 24; for,

(1.) It contains in it the seed of all sin. All particular sins are counted works of the flesh, Gal. v. 19.

(2.) It defiles the whole man, Gen. vi. 5.

(3.) It is ever soliciting man to go on further and further in sin, Rom. vii. 23.

In this respect it is set to lust against the Spirit; that is, readily, eagerly, sorely to assault and fight against the new man, Gal. v. 17.

3. The power of the divine Spirit is much magnified by restraining, suppressing, and renewing the corrupt nature of man.

#### Sec. 7. Of suppressing inward corruption.

The foresaid besetting sin is here set down as an inward impediment of a Christian in his race, and joined with the former outward weight by this copulative, *καὶ*, and, so as it dependeth upon the participle, *ἀποβύβαινα*, *laying aside*. Man's endeavour must be for suppressing of his inward, inbred corruption, as well as for laying aside external weights. We must, as much as in us lieth, lay aside this besetting sin.

This title, *ἀμαρτία*, sin, in the singular number, is frequently put for our natural corruption: five times in Rom. vi., six times in Rom. vii., three times in Rom. viii. It is also called 'a body of sin,' 'a body of death,' 'flesh,' 'old man.' Exhortations about this sin are, that we suffer it not to reign, Rom. vi. 12; that we destroy it, Rom. vi. 6; that we crucify it, Gal. v. 24; that we cast it off, Eph. iv. 24.

1. The condition of this enemy should the rather incite us to subdue and destroy it. It is an enemy within us. More danger ariseth from traitors that are within a nation or city, than from foreign enemies without. David was never in such danger by reason of any, or of all the nations without, as of those that rose against him in his own kingdom.

As for this inbred enemy, no enemy without, nor world, nor devil, nor all the power of hell, can hurt our souls, unless they get this traitor within to take part with them.

2. This enemy is tumultuous and troublesome, never at rest. As it can easily, so it will wilfully on every side set upon us. We cannot do, speak, or think anything, but it will infest us, and that at all times, in all places, in company, when we are alone, at church, and at home, in duties of piety, charity, and justice, in duties of our calling, waking and sleeping.

Great is their folly who let this enemy do what he please, who care not to hold him in, much less to cast him off.

This is the cause of the many outward abominable enormities that men fall into, that they suffer this enemy within them to plot and practise what he lists.

For suppressing of this besetting sin, observe these few rules:

1. 'Keep thine heart with all diligence,' Prov. iv. 23. The heart is as a spring, Mat. xii. 34, 35.

2. Keep the doors of thy soul, by which good or evil is let into it. These are thy senses, Job xxxi. 1.

3. Use such means as in God's word are sanctified for subduing corruption; they will be as water cast upon fire. Such are temperance, sobriety, diligence in calling, duties of piety, fasting, and other ways beating down thy body, 1 Cor. ix. 27.

4. Set the bias of thy thoughts aright. Acquaint thyself with the divine art of meditation, especially when thou art alone, or awake in thy bed. Men's thoughts will be working, and that on evil, if they be not set on good matter. If good seed be not sown in the ground, it will send forth noisome weeds.

5. Get the stronger man into thy house, Mat. xii. 29. This is the Spirit, Gal. v. 17. For this pray, Luke xi. 13. Thus thou shalt be safe.

Sec. 8. Of a Christian's course resembled to a race. The main duty which the apostle intendeth, by setting before us the example of such as well finished their course, is in these words, *Let us run with patience the race that is set before us*.

He doth here set out a Christian's course of life by a race; and answerably the manner of carrying themselves, to their behaviour, who, in running a race, look to get the prize; for they will make all the speed they can, with as much patience as they may, till they come to the end of that race which they are appointed to run, and where the prize is to be had.

In setting out the point, he appropriateth not the duty to himself, saying, *I will run*, nor putteth it off to others thus, *do ye run*, but by a word of the first person, and plural number, includes others with himself, and incites both others and himself by this phrase, *let us run*. Hereof see Chap. ii. 1, Sec. 1.

In the foresaid exhortation every word hath an emphasis, and are all pertinent to the metaphor of a race, wherunto he doth resemble a Christian's course, which is somewhat more fully set out, 1 Cor. ix. 24.

Particulars wherein they may be resembled are these:

1. There is a distance betwixt the goal where they begin and the goal where they end. On earth we begin our race, at death it is finished, and in heaven is the prize. We may not think to be in heaven so soon as we enter into this race.

2. There is a prize at the end of the race, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

3. An endeavour must be used to attain the prize, Luke xiii. 24.

4. There are many runners, Luke xiii. 24.

5. All that run do not obtain the prize.

6. Runners fit themselves to the race, so do true Christians, 1 Cor. ix. 24.

7. There are like duties to be observed by Christians which runners in a race observe, 2 Tim. ii. 5.

God hath thus ordered our Christian course;—

1. To give proof of those graces which he conferreth upon children of men.

As of faith, hope, obedience, patience, courage, and other like. Our faith in God, our hope of heaven, our obedience to God's word, our subjection to his will, our patience in holding out, our courage against opposition, are hereby manifested, proved, and exercised.

2. To wean us from this world. Had we not a race to run, and a prize set before us, we should be like Peter, and think it is good to be here still, Mat. xvii. 4.

3. To make us long for heaven, and to make death the more welcome.

In these and other like respects our Christian course is also resembled to a journey, to a pilgrimage, to a battle, to a labour, and to other like things. Answerably, Christians are styled travellers, pilgrims, soldiers, labourers.

#### Sec. 9. *Of running our Christian race with patience.*

Of the Greek word, *τρεχων*, translated *run*, see Chap. vi. 20, Sec. 158. It is an act that importeth the best speed that a man can make. Man hath not wings like fowls to flee; it is by running that he doth most put forth himself to the speedy attaining of a thing; and in a race especially doth he most manifest his speed by running; a little laziness may lose the prize. The apostle then doth here by this metaphor imply, that we may not be slothful in our Christian course; but diligent, earnest, and zealous therein; striving to outstrip others, as runners in a race do. See more hereof, Chap. iv. 11, Sec. 64, and Chap. vi. 11, Sec. 79.

Every one in his Christian course is like to meet with many crosses, which may prove as sharp stones or stumps in the way, or as briars and thorns, or as stumbling-blocks, which may hinder him, and slacken his speed; the apostle therefore prescribeth the best remedy that can be, to pass them over the more lightly, which is, *υπομονη, patience*. Hereof see Chap. vi. 12, Sec. 86, and Chap. x. 36, Sec. 135.

This phrase, *τρεχων τον αγωνα*, *let us run the race*, implieth a holding out in our Christian course till it be finished. A man may run in a race, and leave off before he come to the goal; but he that runs the race, holds out till he come to the end thereof. So as to diligence, patience and perseverance must be added.

#### Sec. 10. *Of a race set before us.*

To shew that diligence, patience, and perseverance must be in a right course, the apostle addeth this clause, *that is set before us*. Of the meaning of the Greek word, *προκειμενον*, translated *set before*, see Chap. vi. 18, Sec. 149.

The word may be taken two ways.

1. Passively, for that which by God is set before us.

2. Actively, for that which a man sets before himself, and hath an eye upon, for his encouragement. Thus it is especially taken in the next verse, where it is said that Christ, 'for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross;' that is, having his eye fixed upon that joy, endured.

In this verse I take the former sense to be especially intended, namely, for that which God doth prescribe unto us: after which we ought to endeavour: so as prudence must be added to diligence, patience, and perseverance.

All must be in a right course. This doth the church promise, where she sayeth to Christ, 'I will run after thee,' Cant. i. 3; and David thus, 'I will run the way of thy commandments,' Ps. cxix. 32. The way of God's commandments is the race set before us. The phrase of 'turning neither to the right hand or to the left,' Deut. v. 32, importeth thus much, 1 Sam. xii. 6, 2 Kings xxii. 2. The right way is opposed both to the right and to the left hand, Isa. xxx. 21.

1. The prize is only at the end of that course which is set before us.

2. Whatsoever is done in a wrong course, is not only fruitless but damageable: and the more diligence, patience, and continuance is used in a wrong course, the worse it is. Thus it falls out with travellers out of their way. Paul's eagerness much increased his sin, Acts xxvi. 9, Phil. iii. 6; so the eagerness of Pharisees in a wrong course, Mat. xxiii. 15.

1. This limitation of running in a course set before us, demonstrates the grossness of this error, that a man may be saved in any religion.

2. This discovereth the folly and vanity of all that zeal, patience, courage, and constancy, which papists pretend in their superstitious and idolatrous courses. The like may be said of all others that run in a race not set before them.

3. This teacheth us to seek and search after the right way. God hath set the right way before us in his word. This is the main end why the Scriptures were written, 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Out of God's word, we may know what race God hath set before us, these six ways:

1. By precept. This is the surest rule of all; for that which is commanded us is without contradiction set before us.

2. By counsels, Rev. iii. 18. Under this I com-

prise all advices, admonitions, exhortations, persuasions, and incitations.

3. By promise. That whereunto, if we do it, God promiseth a reward, is set before us to be done. *Promise* therefore is one of those ten words whereby the law of God is set out.

4. By prayer. What God's faithful servants have prayed to be enabled thereto, is a duty set before us.

5. By inhibiting the contrary. Where the apostle forbiddeth vainglory, he requirerh humility, Gal. v. 26.

6. By example and practice: and that of God, God-man, and good men, Eph. v. 1. 1 Cor. xi. 1.

Because a general warrant is not sufficient, unless it belong to us in particular, the apostle addeth this relative pronoun, *zab, us*, 'set before us'; for every one must consider what in special belongeth unto himself. Hereof see more, Chap. vii. 13, Sec. 73.

#### Sec. 11. *Of the concatenation of all needful graces.*

The concatenation, or chaining, and knitting of the foresaid graces together, sheweth that Christian graces depend one upon another; they neither can be, nor will be, singly alone. They are all as several links of one chain, and depend one upon another: the want of any one of them, makes all the rest fruitless. If one link of a chain drawing up somewhat by it break, the whole chain is broken: and that which was held up thereby will fall down. Of what use can diligence be, if patience be wanting? Crosses will soon cool the zeal and fervour of the most forward. What good will patience do, if we do not persevere? The man that falleth from that whereunto he hath attained, loseth all the benefit thereof. What good will perseverance do, if it be in an unwarrantable course, but aggravate his folly the more? what good will a general warrant do, if it concern not us in particular?

To shew that the latter duties depend upon the former, as well as the former upon the latter, go backward, and consider whether pretence of a matter belonging to our place, if in general it be not warrantable, be a sufficient pretence. Again, what benefit is it to do that which is lawful, if it be done only for a time, and not finished? And canst thou finish any weighty and commendable matter without patience? And will patience stand a luskish, lazy, slothful Christian in any stead?

It is observable that blessedness is attributed to every needful grace, Mat. v. 3, &c., which could not be, unless he that hath one needful grace, had every needful grace; for where one grace is that is requisite to blessedness, there are all graces that make up and consummate blessedness.

God hath thus linked all sorts of graces together, and made them all in their kind necessary, in regard of himself, and of us also.

1. In regard of himself; to manifest his manifold

wisdom, which lively appeareth by different graces, all tending to the same end.

2. In regard of us; to produce the better trial of our obedience.

Hereupon it becomes us,

1. To be well instructed in all those graces that are requisite for finishing our Christian course.

2. To use all good means, and do our best endeavour for attaining them.

We may not be idle and slothful; we must *run*: we may not be weary or discouraged; we must *run* with *patience*: we may not think it enough with diligence and patience to enter upon the race; we must *run the race*.

We may not be fervent, patient, and constant in an unwarrantable course; we must run with patience the race that is *set before us*.

We may not think every warrant sufficient, but that which is proper, and pertinent to ourselves and to our own calling.

#### Sec. 12. *Of Jesus, a help in our Christian race.*

Ver. 2. *Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

The manner of inferring this verse upon the former by a participle, thus, *looking unto Jesus*, sheweth that it dependeth thereon, as a further means to help us on in our Christian course. *Run, looking unto Jesus*.

The Greek word, ἀρεσβουτες, translated *looking*, is a compound. Of the simple verb, ἔβην, see Chap. ii. 8, Sec. 68. That properly signifieth to *see*. This compound carrieth emphasis, and properly signifieth to *look back*, or see again: and joined with the preposition, *eis*, which signifieth *unto* (as here it is joined), intimateth a withdrawing of the eyes from all other objects, and fastening them on that which they behold.

That the word, *seeing* or *looking*, is taken sometimes literally, sometimes metaphorically, hath been shewed, Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 72.

Here it is taken metaphorically, and applied to the eyes of the mind, and settling them on Jesus.

The eye of the soul is faith, wherewith things invisible to the bodily eye may be seen, Heb. xi. 27. Thus Abraham saw Christ before he was actually incarnate, John viii. 56. So may we that live since his ascension look on him. Thus have, thus shall, all true believers look on Christ, from the beginning of the world to the end thereof.

Of this title *Jesus*, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 73. It setteth forth the main end of Christ's assuming our nature, which is, to be our *Saviour*: and that to save from our sins, Mat. i. 21. It is here fitly used, in that thereby we are put in mind of that help we may expect from Jesus: for this title sheweth that Christ hath undertaken to be our Saviour, and to free us

from all dangers, and from all things that may hinder us in our race to heaven.

This direction of looking unto Jesus giveth us to understand that the ability which we have to run our Christian race is from Jesus. This is demonstrated,

1. Affirmatively, thus, 'I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me,' Phil. iv. 13. In this respect is Christ resembled to a vine, John xv. 1; and to a head, Eph. iv. 14.

2. Negatively; 'Without me,' saith Christ, 'ye can do nothing,' John xv. 5.

By Christ, that disability which man at first by his sin brought upon himself to good, is taken away. His nature is altered, he is made a new creature, 2 Cor. v. 17.

1. Much doth this commend the goodness of God, who, though he hath set a hard race before us, yet he hath provided sufficient help. He deals not with his people as Pharaoh with the Israelites, who imposed a heavy task upon them, and yet denied ordinary means for the accomplishing the same, Exod. v. 7.

2. This goodness of the Lord should encourage us against our own weakness, and encumbrances inward or outward. Jesus can do more for our help, than the devil and all his instruments for our hindrance. He is ready at hand to put out his hand to save us, as he did Peter, when we are ready to sink, Mark xiv. 31.

This metaphor, *looking*, setting forth the act of faith, gives evidence that faith is the means of obtaining help from Jesus. This was lively represented by the Israelites looking upon the brazen serpent, Num. xxi. 8, John iii. 14, 15.

Christ is the fountain, faith the pipe whereby grace is conveyed to us. See *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 11, Sec. 43.

#### Sec. 13. *Of Christ, the author of faith.*

To enforce the foresaid duty of looking unto Jesus, he is here set forth to be the *author* and *finisher* of faith.

Of this word, ἀρχηγός, translated *author*, see Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 95. There it is translated 'a captain,' but such a one, as is also the beginner and first author of a thing. It being here premised before the other title, *finisher*, it implieth such an author as is the primary beginner, as hath the absolute ordering of that which he beginneth: so as he can and will finish it according to his mind. Thus is Christ the author of our faith. This is evident by these and such like general proofs: faith is 'the gift of God,' Eph. ii. 8. 'It is given to you to believe,' Phil. i. 29. But more particularly in that the apostle prayeth for faith 'from the Lord Jesus Christ,' Eph. vi. 23. On this ground this gift is styled 'the faith of Jesus Christ,' Rom. iii. 22, Gal. ii. 16, 20. For as Christ is the revealer of faith, and the object of faith, and the matter of faith, so also the author of it.

The means whereby this grace is wrought are of

Christ, as the principal outward means, which is, the preaching of the gospel, styled 'the word of faith,' Rom. x. 8. And the sacraments, which are 'seals of the righteousness of faith,' Rom. iv. 11. Yea, also the Spirit, which is styled 'the Spirit of faith,' 2 Cor. iv. 13. And faith is said to be given by the Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 9. All these means, outward and inward, are of Christ; therefore the grace wrought by them must also be of him.

It is not of man by nature, neither doth the law reveal or work it: but it is by Jesus.

1. This clearly demonstrateth that without Christ, no faith, at least, no such faith as should bring men to salvation. For this author of faith is also styled, the captain or author of salvation, Chap. ii. 10, and Chap. v. 9, Sec. 50.

2. It informeth us in the kind of this gift, that it is supernatural.

The Son of God came from the bosom of his Father to reveal it, and to work it in us.

3. It is our duty to use such means as Christ hath sanctified for attaining this gift. He that is the author of it will work it in his own way and course.

#### Sec. 14. *Of Christ, the finisher of faith.*

To shew that Christ goeth on in that good work of faith which he hath begun, the apostle addeth this other work of Christ, τελειωτής, *finisher*.

Of the Greek verb, τελειώω, whence the noun here translated *finisher* is derived, see Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 97.

According to the notation of the word, it signifieth one that perfecteth what he taketh in hand: and so, as nothing needs be added thereto. So as faith is perfected by Christ. With much confidence doth the apostle thus confirm this point, 'I am confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus,' Phil. i. 6. But more expressly speaking of Christ, he thus saith, 'Who shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless,' 1 Cor. i. 8. In this respect, saith Christ himself, 'Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out,' John vi. 37.

Thus he giveth his sheep eternal life, John v. 28.

Christ doth finish what he undertakes, because,

1. It is his Father's will that he should so do, John vi. 39, 40.

2. To manifest his power, wisdom, faithfulness, and other like excellencies. He is far from a foolish builder, Luke xiv. 28, &c.

3. To move men to depend on him, in that he will in no wise fail such as believe on him, 1 Pet. ii. 6.

1. Here we have the true ground of a believer's confidence, and of persevering unto the end. Hereof see more, Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 133.

2. This cannot but much encourage us against our own weakness, and manifold temptations whereunto we are subject, that he who is the author of our faith, is also the finisher thereof.



3. This giveth proof of that sufficient help which we may have from Christ to finish our course aright. For he that is the author of our faith, and sets us in the way, is also the finisher thereof; so as he will uphold us till he brings us to the end thereof. What can more be desired than to be brought into the right way, and to be enabled to hold out unto the end? Christ is not only as other saints, a companion in our way with us, nor yet only as a guide to go before us, and shew us the right way, but a helper and supporter, enabling us to run and finish our race.

Sec. 15. *Of Christ's setting joy before him.*

The more to encourage us in our Christian race, to look unto Jesus, the apostle further setteth him forth in those things which he did, as a pattern for our imitation, in these words, *he endured*, &c.

Of imitating Christ, see Chap. xiii. 13, Sec. 132.

For our greater encouragement and better direction for following Christ, the apostle premiseth that which Christ aimed at in his sufferings, and whereby he was encouraged the more cheerfully to endure them, in these words, *for the joy that was set before him*.

The preposition, *ἀντὶ*, translated *for*, is of a different signification.

1. It signifieth, *instar, rice, loco, instead*, or in the place or room; as, where it is said, 'Archelaus reigned *instead* of Herod,' Mat. ii. 22; and thus, 'will he *for* a fish give him a serpent!—that is, *instead* of a fish—' Luke xi. 11. Thus do many take this phrase, 'grace *for* grace,' John i. 16—one grace instead of another.<sup>1</sup> They who thus take it here, give this interpretation of it, Christ, instead of that glory which he had in heaven, voluntarily humbled himself to earth, and there endured the cross, and despised the shame.

In the general, this collection is a truth; and the phrase, simply considered in itself, may well bear it. It is expressly set down, Phil. ii. 6–8.

2. It implieth a final cause, and here setteth down the prize which Christ aimed at in enduring the cross, and despising the shame.

That here it is so taken, is evident by these reasons:

(1.) This preposition is frequently so used, as Eph. v. 31, Mat. xx. 28; and so it may be taken in the fifteenth verse of this chapter.

(2.) The participle here used, *προκειμένης*, *set before*, is the same that was used, Ver. 1, Sec. 10.

(3.) The correspondence of this pattern of Christ with that former pattern of saints, doth further confirm the point.

(4.) The great encouragement that we may hence have in running our race; for by this joy set before Christ, we may know that we also have a joy set before us.

Thus this shews that Christ, by having his eye set upon the joy which should follow upon his sufferings,

<sup>1</sup> Pro legis gratia, gratiam evangelii.—Aug., epist. 11.

was thereby encouraged to endure what he did; for, with the nature of our infirmities he assumed the infirmities of our nature. In this respect it is said, that 'he trusted in God,' Chap. ii. 13, Sec. 119. On this ground it is said that an angel appeared to him in his agony, 'strengthening him,' Luke xxii. 43.

This is a good warrant unto us to have an eye upon that recompense which will follow upon all our undertakings and sufferings in that course whereunto God calls us. See hereof, Chap. vi. 18, Sec. 149, and Chap. xi. 26, Sec. 146.

Sec. 16. *Of that joy which Christ set before him.*

That end which Christ especially aimed at, is here styled, *ζαῖα, joy*, and is derived from a verb, *ζαίω*, that signifieth to *rejoice*, or be glad, John xi. 15.

This grace of joy, or rejoicing, is set down under another Greek word, *χαίρεσις*, Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 63. There is distinctly shewed what rejoicing is, and what joy is.

Here joy is taken in a very high and transcendent degree; as—

1. For all that glory which Christ left when he descended into the lower parts of the earth, Eph. iv. 9; therefore, a little before his ascension thereunto, he thus prayeth, 'O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was,' John xvii. 5.

2. All that was added by the work of redemption; as—

(1.) A clearer manifestation of God's divine properties.

(2.) The exaltation of his human nature.

(3.) Man's redemption and salvation, following thereupon.

(4.) The praises that through all ages should be given to him.

(5.) The preaching the gospel through the whole world.

These, and other particulars like to these, are expressed under this title *joy*, in four respects:

(1.) In opposition to the cross and shame, which were very bitter and grievous.

(2.) In regard of that true and great joy which that glory did give in itself; for he was to be ever before his Father, in his presence, at his right hand, Ps. xvi. 11.

(3.) In regard of that joy and delight which Christ took therein: the very expectation thereof was very joyous, Ps. xvi. 9, much more the fruition.

(4.) In regard of the joy which it bringeth to all that are given him of his Father, Heb. iii. 16.

By this we see that Christ's cross and shame had joy appertaining to it, even while he was on earth.

The place and time of his suffering and shame, 'Jesus rejoiced in spirit,' Luke x. 21. This was foretold, Ps. xvi. 9, 10. Christ cheerfully enduring the one and the other, giveth further proof hereunto.

By this we are informed in sundry remarkable points : such as these—

1. The kind of saints' sufferings : they are herein like to Christ ; therefore Christ biddeth them to rejoice, Mat. v. 12 ; so his apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 13. On this ground they have rejoiced, Acts v. 41, 1 Pet. i. 6.

2. The difference betwixt saints' and others' sufferings. Saints suffer as members of Christ, with him and for him ; and in that respect have joy accompanying them : others' sufferings are not so.

3. The difference betwixt faith and sense. What is grievous to sense, is joyous to faith.

4. God's tender care over his Son, and all that belong unto him. Though in wisdom he see it meet to make them fulsome potions, and to swallow bitter pills, yet he so sweetens them, as they willingly and joyfully take them.

5. The reason why so many shrink from the cross, or faint under the burden of it, and why they are troubled at shame. Surely it is want of a due apprehension of this joy. They are either ignorant of it, or believe it not, or regard it not, or do not well poise the one with the other ; the cross and shame with the joy. They walk by sense, and not by faith.

#### Sec. 17. *Of Christ's crosses.*

The things which moved Christ to set the foresaid joy before him, were two—*cross* and *shame*.

A *cross* (*σταυρῶς*), properly taken, signifieth a frame of wood, wherein one piece is fastened across unto the other, fitted for malefactors to be stretched thereon. As we use to hang malefactors upon a galows or gibbet, so the Romans were wont to nail them to a cross : so was Christ, being delivered by the Jews to the Romans. So as here the instrument of Christ's death is metonymically put for the kind of his death, which was a most painful and shameful death, yea, and a cursed death too, Gal. iii. 13.

Here also, under this word *cross*, synecdochically, all Christ's sufferings, from his conception to his ascension, may be comprised ; for this word *cross*, both in sacred Scripture and also in other authors, is put for all manner of afflictions. In this respect, Christ's whole life was a cross,<sup>1</sup>—that is, full of afflictions.

Christ's crosses were either connatural or accidental.

Connatural were such degrees of his humiliation as made him like unto man. Hereof see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 169.

Accidental crosses were such as arose from external causes. Hereof see Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 96.

His heaviest crosses were at the time of his death ; for that was the hour of his adversaries, and the power of darkness, Luke xxii. 53.

Those crosses may be drawn to four heads.

1. His apprehension.

<sup>1</sup> Tota Christi vita crux fuit.—Bern. de Pass. Dom. C. 5.

2. His examination.

3. His condemnation.

4. His execution.

1. To apprehend him, one of those whom he had chosen to be his disciples, and an apostle, came as a guide. This was foretold as an aggravation of the point, Ps. lv. 12–14. Others, that followed that traitor, came with swords and staves, as to a thief, Luke xxii. 52 ; and they bound him as a notorious malefactor, John xviii. 12.

2. To examine him, they hurry him from one judge to another five several times. In all which places he is egregiously abused ; and kept waking all night, and the next day to his death.

(1.) He is brought to Annas, John xviii. 13. There they smote him with a staff, or wand.

(2.) From Annas to Caiaphas, John xviii. 28. There they spit in his face and buffet him, Mat. xxvi. 67.

(3.) From Caiaphas they send him to Pilate, Luke xxiii. 1.

(4.) From Pilate to Herod, Luke xxiii. 7. There he was ill-treated by Herod and his guard.

(5.) From Herod to Pilate again, Luke xxiii. 11. There they scourged him and platted a crown of thorns on his head, John xix. 1, 2, and smote him with their staves on the head so crowned, Mat. xxvii. 30.

3. He is condemned,

(1.) By the senate of the Jews, who adjudged him worthy of death, Mat. xxvi. 66.

(2.) By the suffrage of the common people, a murderer and raiser of sedition is acquitted, rather than he.

(3.) By the like suffrage, it is required that he should be crucified.

(4.) By Pilate the judge he is condemned to the cross, merely upon the importunity of the Jews ; for the judge professed that he found no fault in him, Mat. xxvii. 24.

4. About his execution.

(1.) They force him to carry his own cross, under which, by reason of his former ill usage, he even fainted : so as a stranger was forced to help him to bear it. Compare John xix. 17 with Luke xxiii. 26.

(2.) They bring him to a most noisome place, Mat. xxvii. 33.

(3.) They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall. So they did again whilst he was hanging on the cross, Mat. xxvii. 34, 48.

(4.) They disrobe him and strip him naked to all kind of weather, Mat. xxvii. 35.

(5.) They nail to the cross his hands and feet, the most sensible parts of his body, where store of sinews and nerves meet together, John xx. 25.

(6.) They caused him so nailed to hang on the cross till he died.

By the aforesaid particulars we may observe how they offended all his senses.

1. His hearing, by crying, 'Crucify him, crucify him.'

2. His sight, with scoffing and scornful gestures.

3. His smell, with the noisome place of Golgotha.

4. His taste, with vinegar, gall, and myrrh.

5. His feeling, with thorns on his head; boxes and blows on his cheeks; filthy spittle on his face; piercing his hands and feet with nails; cruel lashes on all his body. So torn was his flesh with whipping, as Pilate thought it might have satisfied the Jews. Thereupon bringing him out in that case, he said, 'Behold the man,' John xix. 1, 5. Thus from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, there was no part not vexed, not tortured.

Great and heavy were these crosses; but his inward anguish of soul was infinitely more. Hereof see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 76, and Chap. v. 7, Sec. 38.

An internal curse accompanied the kind of Christ's death, which was upon a cross. By the law this kind of death was accursed, Deut. xxi. 23.

*Quest.* Why this kind of death rather than any other?

*Ans.* To be a type of that curse which Christ took upon him, as our surety, Gal. iii. 13.

The heavy weight of Christ's cross doth,

1. Much commend the transcendent love of God and of Christ to man.

2. It doth aggravate the horrible nature of sin.

3. It doth amplify the invaluable price of man's redemption.

#### Sec. 18. Of Christ's enduring the cross.

Of the aforesaid cross, collectively comprehending all Christ's sufferings, it is said that Christ, *passus, endured it*. Of this verb, see Chap. x. 32, Sec. 121. The word is sometimes used to set out a courageous standing against a hostile power. Here it implieth a so bearing the cross as not to be discouraged or hindered thereby in his course.

Among other virtues, it intendeth two especially, namely, patience and constancy. The verb is translated to 'take patiently,' 1 Pet. ii. 20, and the noun, 'patience,' Luke xxi. 19.

It is also put for perseverance, Mat. x. 22, Acts xvii. 14, Rom. ii. 7.

Thus Christ most patiently endured his cross; and constantly abode under it.

Christ's patience had respect to God himself, and his enemies, the instruments of his troubles.

1. In relation to God, Christ did,

(1.) Obediently submit himself to God's will. This was the ground of all, Phil. ii. 8. In nothing did he thwart the same; nor failed in fulfilling any part thereof, Heb. v. 8.

(2.) Contentedly he endured what was the good pleasure of his Father to lay upon him; though otherwise, through the great extremity of agony, he could have wished that it might have passed over, Mat. xxvi. 39.

(3.) He willingly endured all.

(4.) With much humility he submitted himself. 'He humbled himself,' Phil. ii. 8.

(5.) Confidently he depended on God in his greatest extremity. This title, 'My father,' and the ingeneration of this phrase, 'My God, my God,' shew as much, Mat. xxvi. 39, and xxvii. 46. He neither doubted of his Father's favour, nor despaired of his succour.

2. In relation to himself, Christ most meekly and mildly endured the cross, without any inward fretting and vexing his spirit. Indeed, his soul was troubled and very heavy; but that was by some unexpressible burthen that pressed upon his soul, not by perplexing his soul through outward afflictions. They who deny that he suffered in soul, and apply all his inward agonies to external causes, come too near an undue charging of Christ with overmuch discontent. His not opening of his mouth, and the resemblance of him to a sheep, Isa. liii. 7, give evidence of his meek and quiet spirit.

3. In relation to his enemies, Christ's patience was manifested, by his continuing to do all the good he could to them, notwithstanding their continual seeking to do all the evil they could to him; for,

(1.) He continued to instruct them.

(2.) He miraculously helped them according to their needs.

(3.) He forbade his disciples to strike them.

(4.) He healed the wound that was rashly made by one of his disciples, Luke xxii. 49, 51.

(5.) He prayed for them.

(6.) He excused them by their ignorance, Luke xxiii. 34.

Christ's constancy under his sufferings was manifested,

1. By his invincible resolution to endure the utmost. He so set himself thereto, as he would not be kept from it, Luke ix. 51, and xii. 50, Mat. xvi. 22, 23.

2. By his continuing to do the things which occasioned his sufferings; and that was to discover the superstition, hypocrisy, pride, ambition, and other corruptions of priests, scribes, Pharisees, and others among the Jews. This he did, not long before his death, Mat. xxiii. 3, &c.

3. By resisting unto blood; that is, as long as he could suffer in this world.

4. By finishing, and accomplishing all that was to be endured, as is evident by this phrase, 'It is finished,' John xix. 30.

1. Christ's enduring the cross is a motive to us to endure that cross which God shall lay upon us; for shall not we be willing to do what Christ did?

2. Christ's manner of enduring the cross affordeth a good direction for well bearing our crosses. Therefore we ought duly to observe the several circumstances of his enduring.

Sec. 19. *Of the shame whereunto Christ was put.*

One thing which moved Christ to set joy before him, was the *cross* which he endured; the other was *shame*.

Of the notation of the Greek word, *αἰσχύνω*, translated *shame*, see Chap. ii. 11, Sec. 108.

Shame properly taken, is a disturbed passion upon conceit of disgrace.

But here it is metonymically taken for that which causeth shame—namely, reproach or disgrace: the effect being put for the cause. So it is used, Phil. iii. 19, 'their glory is their shame'—that is, in that which should make them ashamed, they glory. Thus here Christ with a kind of scorn passed by those reproaches which ordinarily cause shame.

This, joined with the cross, sheweth that the cross useth to be accompanied with shame; that is, with such reproaches, and disgraces, as are enough to work shame. This might be exemplified in sundry sufferings of saints; but we will exemplify it only in the examples of Christ, who was put to as great shame as ever any.

Shame was laid on him by words and deeds.

By words, in these particulars:

1. By upbraiding to him his country, John vii. 52, and his kindred, and his education, Mark vi. 3.

2. By casting his company into his teeth, and there-with slandering him, Mat. ix. 11, and xi. 19.

3. By cavilling at his doctrine, John vii. 12, Mat. v. 17.

4. By blaspheming his miracles, Mat. xii. 24.

5. By slandering his whole life, John ix. 24.

At his death, the flood-gates of shame were opened against him.

1. Judas in scorn saith to him, 'Hail, master,' Mat. xxvi. 49.

2. False witnesses charge him with false crimes, Mat. xvi. 60, Luke xxiii. 2.

3. They accuse him of blasphemy, Mat. xxvi. 65.

4. They blindfolded him, and bid him prophesy who smote him, Luke xxii. 64.

5. In scorn they say, 'Hail, king of the Jews,' Mat. xxvii. 29.

6. One of the thieves that were crucified with him reviled him, Luke xxiii. 39.

7. When he was on the cross, they bid him in derision come down, Mat. xxvii. 41.

8. Passers-by reproach him, Mat. xxvii. 39.

9. When in the bitterness of his agony, he cried, 'Eli, Eli,' mockingly they replied, 'He calleth for Elias; let Elias come and save him,' Mat. xxvii. 46, &c.

By deeds they put him to shame, in these particulars:

1. They lay hold on him as if he had been beside himself, Mark iii. 21.

2. They send officers, as a malefactor, to apprehend him, John vii. 32.

3. They bind him as a thief, when they had taken him, John xviii. 12.

4. The priests' men blindfold him, spit in his face, and buffet him, Luke xxii. 64, Mat. xxvi. 67.

5. They preferred Barrabas, a murderer, before him, Mat. xxvii. 21.

6. Herod, with his men, in scorn array him with white, Luke xxiii. 11.

7. Pilate's soldiers strip him, array him in purple, plat a crown of thorns on his head, put a reed as a sceptre into his hand, bow their knees to him as to a king, but all in derision, Mat. xxvii. 28.

8. For the greater disgrace, they made him bear his own cross, John xix. 17.

9. They put him to a shameful death, in a disgraceful place, betwixt two thieves, at a solemn time, when all sorts assembled to Jerusalem, Mat. xxvii. 33, &c.

10. They nod their heads in mockage of him, when he was on the cross, Mat. xxvii. 39.

11. They give him in derision vinegar and gall to drink, Mat. xxvii. 34, 48.

12. They cause his sepulchre to be sealed and watched, as if he had been a seducer, Mat. xxvii. 63.

13. To conceal the power of his resurrection, they give it out that his disciples stole him away, Mat. xxviii. 13.

Never was such shame laid on any, and that by all of all sorts,—great, mean, young, old, priest, people, rulers, subjects, countrymen, strangers.

Sec. 20. *Of the aggravation of Christ's shame.*

There are three circumstances which much aggravate the shame whereunto Christ was put.

1. The eminency of his person.

2. The integrity of his life.

3. The goodness of his disposition.

1. To lay shame upon a noble man, an honourable person, a great officer, is counted *scandalum magnatum*, and maketh one liable to a heavy censure. To lay it on a king is little less than treason. Who in eminency of place or calling, to be compared to Christ? Did ever any in nobility, in high and excellent offices, or in any other kind of greatness, excel him?

2. To lay shame on an innocent person, who hath no way deserved any blame, is a monstrous defamation. David doth oft aggravate the wrong which in this case was done unto him, Ps. lxi. 4, and cix. 3.

But who is to be compared unto Christ in innocency and integrity? He was 'holy, harmless, and undefiled.'

3. To lay shame upon a good man, such a one that might win all of all sorts to speak well of him, is an exceeding shameful thing. More than barbarous inhumanity. David doth also much aggravate the undue shame that was laid on him by this circumstance, Ps. xxxviii. 20, and cix. 4, 5.

In goodness Christ exceeded all. Never did any more good. Never did any more freely and readily

do the good which he did. He never put any back that came to him for any good; but freely offered much good to many that sought it not.

Shame is further aggravated by the persons that lay this shame on another, as, if they be of the same profession; if familiars; if such as have been made partakers of the goodness of those whom they seek to disgrace. By this circumstance was the shame laid on Christ much aggravated, as is evident by these typical complaints, which are most properly applicable to Christ, 'Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me,' Ps. xli. 9. 'It was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance; we took sweet counsel,' &c., Ps. lv. 13. Thus I suppose, that the shame of Christ appears to be the greatest that ever was unduly laid upon any.

#### Sec. 21. *Of Christ's despising shame.*

Of the foresaid shame, it is said that Christ despised it. The Greek word, *καταφρονέας*, is a compound. The simple verb, *φρονέω*, signifieth to *mind* a thing. The preposition, *κατά*, against; thus this compound verb, to *have one's mind set against* a thing. So as it importeth a light esteem of a thing; so light, as not to be moved at all therewith, but rather to pass it by, as a thing not to be regarded.

It is taken in a bad, and in a good sense.

1. When things worthy of high esteem are vilified and despised, the word is used in a bad sense, as to 'despise government,' 2 Pet. ii. 10.

That is a fault, and a sin. The more excellent the thing is, the greater is the sin in despising it.

2. When things not to be regarded are despised, that kind of despising is good. The shame which Christ is said here to despise was despicable and contemptible, and in that respect well despised.

Two things do clearly demonstrate that Christ despised the shame cast upon him:

1. They did no whit distemper his mind.
2. They did no way hinder his good course.

His undistempred mind was manifested two ways.

1. By his silence, in that he gave no answer at all to many disgraces.

2. By the meekness of those answers that he gave. He was silent,

1. Before the priests, when many false witnesses were suborned against him, Mat. xxvi. 62, 63.

2. Before Herod and his courtiers, though he were accused vehemently, Luke xxiii. 9, 10.

3. Before Pilate, so as the governor admired his patience, Mat. xxvii. 14.

4. Before all sorts that gathered about him, as soldiers, common people, and strangers, notwithstanding the reproaches were laid on him.

This silence was expressly foretold, Isa. liii. 7.

The meekness of his answers may be exemplified in these particulars;—

1. Against their upbraiding to him his country and kindred, he only useth this proverbial speech, 'A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house,' Mat. xiii. 57.

2. To their exprobration of his company, he answereth, 'I came to call sinners to repentance,' Mat. ix. 13.

3. To their cavils at his doctrine, he thus replieth, 'My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me,' John vii. 16.

4. Their blaspheming of his miracles, he refuteth with sound arguments, Mat. xii. 23, &c.

5. To all their reproaches on the cross, his answer is prayer for them, Luke xxiii. 34.

Not to insist on more particulars, it is said, 'when he was reviled, he reviled not again,' &c., 1 Pet. ii. 22.

The second evidence of his despising shame was, that he was not hindered thereby from doing any good.

1. The upbraiding of his country, and kindred, kept him not from them; but on all occasions he had recourse to them, and did good unto them.

2. Their blaming his company, restrained him not from taking opportunity of calling sinners.

3. Their slandering his doctrine and miracles, moved him not to forbear the one or the other.

4. Their accusing him of breaking the Sabbath, hindered him not from doing works of mercy on the Sabbath-day.

The like is verified of every good thing for which he was slandered.

As the shame which Christ despised ministereth much comfort to the members of Christ, who for the profession of his truth are put to much shame, for therein they are made conformable to their head; so it affordeth an excellent direction for their carriage in that ease of shame. In which respect that which hath been noted of Christ is the more thoroughly to be considered. See Chap. xiii. 13, Sec. 137.

#### Sec. 22. *Of Christ's sitting at the right hand of the throne of God.*

As Christ had an eye in his sufferings on the joy that was set before him; so after he had suffered, he was made partaker of that joy, which is expressed in this high transcendent phrase, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. This containeth the recompense which followed upon his sufferings; and, in general, it setteth out an advancement above all creatures, next unto God himself. It is to be taken of Christ in that relation wherein he suffered—namely, in reference to his human nature; but so as united to his divine nature, even that person which was God-man, as hath been shewed, Chap. i. 3, Sec. 34.

Every word in this reward carrieth an especial emphasis.

1. The particle of connexion being copulative, *καί*, and, sheweth that it followeth upon his cross and shame.

2. The verb, *καθίστα*, translated *is set down*, is of the active voice, and is translated 'sat,' in reference to Christ himself, chap. i. 3, and x. 12. It implieth a joint act with his Father. His Father said unto him, *καθίστα*, sit, and he sat. It intendeth a settled continuance in that honour. See Chap. i. 3, Sec. 31.

3. *Right hand*, *δεξιά*, is here metaphorically taken, and setteth forth the high degree of Christ's dignity, which was next unto God himself, above all creatures. See Chap. i. 3, Sec. 33.

4. *The throne*, *θρόνος*, is a royal seat, as hath been declared, Chap. i. 8, Sec. 106.

5. This title, *τοῦ Θεοῦ*, of God, much amplifieth all the forenamed degrees of Christ's advancement. He was set by God; he was set at the right hand of God; he was set on the throne of God. To manifest that this, of God, is an amplification of Christ's advancement, it is thus expressed, 'of the Majesty,' chap. i. 3; 'of the throne of the Majesty,' chap. viii. 1. Hereof see Chap. i. 3, Sec. 32.

This recompense far exceeded all his sufferings. And by a due consideration of this, which Christ knew would follow upon his sufferings, was he encouraged to endure what he did.

It affordeth unto us sundry weighty considerations.

1. Christ was advanced as high as ever he was brought low.

2. He hath a supreme power.

3. There is no more suffering for Christ. He is 'set down on a throne.'

4. Sufferings shall not lose their reward.

5. The reward shall exceed all sufferings.

These, and other like recompenses, which were conferred upon the head, may be expected by the several members of the mystical body, according to that degree that they are capable of, and is fit for them.

Sec. 23. *Of considering weighty matters.*

Ver. 3. *For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied, and faint in your minds.*

This causal particle, *γάρ*, for, sheweth that this verse is inferred upon the former as a reason thereof. The reason may be taken from the dignity of the person that was put to shame, implied in this emphatical particle, *τὸν*, him, and in the kind of contradiction against him in this relative, *τοιαύτην*, such; and it thus lieth. We ought the more thoroughly to consider the shame wheremto Christ was put, because he was so excellent a person, and yet the shame so great.

The word, *ἀναλογισάσθαι*, translated *consider*, is a compound. The simple verb, *λογίζομαι*, signifieth to think

(1 Cor. xiii. 5), to reason (Mark xi. 31), to conclude (Rom. iii. 28). The preposition, *ἀνά*, with which this word is compounded, in composition signifieth again; so as this compound, *ἀναλογίζομαι*, signifieth to review, or to think again and again upon a thing, to ponder upon it; this is to *consider*. It is in other authors attributed to men's casting up, and to their reviewing of their accounts.

Of considering weighty matters, and of Christ above all to be considered, see Chap. iii. 1, Secs. 21-23.

The word here used, which importeth a thinking on a thing again and again, declareth that it is not sufficient advisedly to heed a weighty matter at the first hearing or reading thereof, but that it must be pondered on again and again.

For this end two especial duties are requisite.

1. Meditation with ourselves thereupon. Of meditation, see Chap. xi. 19, Sec. 96.

2. Conference with others thereabouts.

Meditation is an especial part of consideration, whereby men call to mind what they have learned, and so come to conceive the same; for that which is not thoroughly conceived at first, will be by meditation more thoroughly understood. Meditation, to man's mind, is as chewing the cud to beasts: that meat which is not at the first eating well digested by the beast, through chewing the cud is thoroughly concocted. It will therefore be useful to meditate on such weighty points as men hear and read; yea, and if they have time, to write down their meditations.

Conference about what we have heard may be more useful than meditation, in that thereby we have not only our own help, but also the help of others; yea, we may also thereby bring much help to others.

Sec. 24. *Of the contradiction of sinners which Christ endured against himself.*

The person whom we ought especially to consider is here described by his great patience. Before it is premised an emphatical particle, *τὸν*, which implieth such a one as none like unto him.

We translate it *him*. Some, the more fully to express the emphasis, translate it with a paraphrase, thus, *quis ille sit—who he was*, or what manner of person he was. He was such a one as never the like was, will be, or can be in the world again. Yet he endured.

The word, *ὑπομεινῆς*, translated *endured*, is the same that was used, Sec. 18, and it implieth patience and constancy.

To amplify Christ's patience, the proof thereof is set out in this word, *ἀντιλογία*, contradiction. It is the same word that was used, Chap. vi. 16, Sec. 121, and translated 'strife;' but Chap. vii. 5, Sec. 46, it is translated as here, 'contradiction.' It implieth an opposition against Christ's doctrine and works.

They opposed against Christ's doctrine in saying that he deceived the people, John vii. 12. They accused him before Pilate for perverting the people, Luke xxiii. 14; and for speaking against Cæsar, John xix. 12; whereas he taught them to give to Cæsar that which was Cæsar's, Mat. xxii. 21. When by their importunity he plainly declared who he was, they accused him of blasphemy, Mat. xxvi. 65. The like they did when he pronounced remission of sin to a poor distressed sinner, Mat. ix. 3. When he declared who were of God and who were not, they said that he was a Samaritan, and had a devil, John viii. 48. It is said of the Jews that 'they spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming,' Acts xiii. 45. So they did against Christ.

They also spake against his works, as against works of mercy on the Sabbath-day, Mark iii. 2; against his conversing with sinners, though it were for their conversion, Mat. ix. 11; against his miracles, as done by the prince of devils, Mat. xii. 24.

In these and other like respects, this word, *ῥαῖσιν*, *such*, is fitly added. It carrieth emphasis. It was such contradiction, both in the matter and manner, as never the like offered to any other. It was such as may justly astonish and amaze those that hear it, such as cannot sufficiently be set out. This was part of that shame which is set out, Ver. 2, Sec. 19.

This is much aggravated by the persons who did so contradict him. It is said to be the contradiction, *ἑνὸς τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν, of sinners*.

The word *sinners* is in the New Testament usually put for such as are impudent and obstinate in sin; who live and lie<sup>1</sup> impudently therein; who are so far from Christian contrition and godly sorrow for sins past, or from care to have their sins covered before God by faith in Christ, and before men by true repentance, as they account it nothing to be accounted sinners. In this sense, publicans and sinners are oft joined together, Mat. ix. 10, 11, and xi. 19. This title is given to a notorious strumpet, Luke vii. 37, 39, and to the chief among publicans, Luke xix. 2, 7. The Jews, in detestation of Christ, attribute this epithet, *sinner*, to Christ, John ix. 24.

Sinners are ordinarily opposed to the righteous—that is, to such as, having repented of their sins past, endeavour to live righteously, 1 Tim. i. 9, 1 Pet. iv. 18.

The sinners here intended were,

1. The scribes and Pharisees. Howsoever the Pharisees made a great show of sanctity before men, yet before God they were such sinners as are here intended. They were out of measure proud, covetous, superstitious, and cruel. In these and other like respects, John the Baptist and Christ himself styled them 'a generation of vipers,' Mat. iii. 7, and xii. 34. They were oft taxed for the foresaid vices, and yet

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'die'!—Ed.

they obstinately continued in them; they repented not, Mat. xxi. 31, 32. In their oppositions against Christ, and persecutions of him and his, they were most impudent.

2. Sadducees, who were among the Jews as episcopes among the heathen; for they say 'that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit,' Acts xxiii. 8.

Therefore they gave themselves to all licentiousness.

3. The high priest's men, Luke xxii. 63, 64.

4. Herod and his men, Luke xxiii. 11.

5. Pilate's soldiers, Mat. xxvii. 27.

6. The thief crucified with him, Luke xxiii. 39.

7. The common rabble that followed him to execution, Mat. xxvii. 39.

To be so thwarted by the worst sort of people must needs be a grievous contradiction.

Further, to aggravate this contradiction, it is said to be *ἑῷ αὐτῷ, against himself*; indeed, sometimes they contradicted his disciples to blame him thereby, as in the case of not fasting, Mat. ix. 14, and rubbing corn on the Sabbath-day, Mat. xii. 1, and eating with unwashed hands, Mat. xv. 2. But even against his own self, against that doctrine which he himself preached, and the works which he himself wrought. They regarded not the dignity of his person, the integrity of his life, the benefit of his works, nor any other thing in him which might have restrained them from their violent contradiction, but impudently they contradicted him himself.

By this it appears that the most excellent and innocent persons may have the most virulent oppositions by the vilest among men.

Sec. 25. *Of being weary and fainting in our Christian course.*

That Christ's pattern, in enduring such contradictions as he did, may be the more deeply weighed, the apostle declareth the damage that may follow upon neglect of that means.

The damage is in general hinted in this participle, *λεσ*, which is the interpretation of two Greek words, *ἡα μὴ, that not*: 'that ye faint not.' It is a word of caution and prevention, implying that such a damage of mischief is like to follow upon neglect of the foresaid duty.

The damage consisteth of two branches. The first, *κάμνητε*, is thus translated, *be wearied*.

The metaphor is taken from runners in a race, or from such as labour and toil in any hard work, and with the difficulty thereof, or rather through their own sluggishness and laziness, wax weary, and give over the former course.

I find this word used in two other places, as where it is said, 'the prayer of faith shall save him that is weary,' and ready to faint; we translate it 'sick,' James v. 15, and where Christ saith, 'thou hast laboured, and hast not fainted,' Rev. ii. 3.

Here is added the subject, *ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν, your*

*minds*, wherein such may be wearied or faint. In the Greek it is so placed between two verbs, as it may be referred to either of them; thereupon, some thus translate it, 'lest ye be wearied in your minds, and faint;' others thus, 'lest you be wearied, and faint in your minds.' There is no great difference in referring it to the one or the other: it hath reference to both, and is fitly fixed betwixt them. They who be wearied in their minds, faint in their minds; and they who faint in their minds, are wearied in their minds.

The latter word, *ἐκλυόμενοι*, translated *faint*, signifieth to be loosed; it is used of things fast knit, whereby they remain strong and steady, as a man's joints and limbs; but if they be loosed, they lose their strength, and become feeble and weak. It is used of the fainting of the spirit or soul of man for want of food, Mat. ix. 36, and xv. 32; and to such a fainting under affliction, ver. 5. Here it is taken in a spiritual sense, as appears by joining it with this phrase, *in your minds*; and thus it is taken, Gal. vi. 9.

By the inference of this danger, the apostle giveth us to understand that virulent contradictions and strong oppositions may make men weary of good courses, Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14, Jer. xx. 7-9.

As those crosses are in their kind grievous, so human frailty is much perplexed therewith. And because good courses are occasions of such contradictions, many wax weary of their good courses.

Well, therefore, did the apostle premise this note of caution and prevention—*lest*. We have cause to be circumspect over ourselves herein, and carefully use all means to encourage ourselves against those temptations.

Hereof see more, Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 122.

This last clause, *and faint in your minds*, is added as the reason of their wearisomeness in good courses. Howsoever the bitterness of contradiction may give occasion of being weary, yet the proper cause thereof resteth in ourselves, even in our own faint spirits. Hereupon, saith the wise man, 'If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small,' Prov. xxiv. 10. David acknowledgeth thus much of himself, 'I said, this is my infirmity,' Ps. lxxvii. 10. It was inward fainting that made many of them who believed in Christ to be afraid to confess him, John xii. 42.

That weariness ariseth from fainting in men's minds, is evident by the different disposition of men diversely minded; for where there is the same occasion of weariness in all, there is not the same effect. In the time of the captivity many Levites went away from the Lord, but the sons of Zadok remained faithful, Ezek. xlv. 10, 15; and, in the time of the primitive persecution, many forsook Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 16; yet not all.

'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity,' Prov. xviii. 14. Nothing dismayeth a man of courage; instance Moses, David, Job, the prophets, the apostles,

and martyrs in all ages. It is not simply contradiction, but pusillanimity, which causeth wearisomeness. It is an undue plea to pretend the grievousness of contradiction for excuse of men's wearisomeness in their Christian course. It becometh men rather to take notice of themselves and of their own faintheartedness, that they may be the more humbled and brought to repentance for the same, than so the Lord may be the more merciful unto them. When men duly load themselves, God will be ready to ease them; but if men, by laying the blame elsewhere, think to ease themselves, the Lord will load them the more. Now, whether it be safe for a man to ease himself, and the Lord load him, or to load himself, and the Lord ease him, judge ye.

This further sheweth how needful and useful it is to get an undaunted spirit and an invincible resolution to go on in our Christian course, though all the world should contradict us. Courage and resolution doth much in temporal and earthly matters, yet they may in their bodies, notwithstanding all their courage, wax weary—as in war, in running a race, in travelling, in undertaking any other task; but spiritual courage will so enable us, as we shall not only well begin, and hold out a good while, but go on to the end of our Christian race.

#### Sec. 26. Of resisting unto blood.

Ver. 4. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*

The apostle doth in this verse declare how far the forementioned duty of imitating Christ in suffering is to be extended, even *unto blood*.

The word, *ἀντιτάσσας*, which we translate *resisted*, is a double compound. Of the simple compound *καθίστασι*, see Chap. ii. 7, Sec. 62.

The preposition, *ἀντι*, added in this double compound, signifieth *against*, and is well translated *resisted*. It is a soldierlike word, and importeth a manly standing against an enemy, *pole pes, et cuspidē cuspis*—foot to foot, spear to spear—not yielding a foot, or hairbreadth, as we say, and that *unto blood*—that is, so long as blood or breath remains in our bodies, or so long as we live. Man's life remains in his blood; when that is clean spilt, life is gone.

He setteth down this extent of enduring negatively, thus, *ye have not yet resisted*, to meet with an objection about that which they had already suffered; for the apostle granteth that they had already suffered much, chap. x. 32-34, which he here implieth under this particle, *ἔτι*, yet, as if he had said, ye have already endured much, yet ye may endure more.

The objection may be thus framed: much is negatived, O our apostle, so much pressed as a pattern to us, seeing thou art points considerable: a great fight of affliction.

To this the apostle answereth, *unto blood*.

brought to the end of striving.

11. *yet thereof, against sin.*



so were subject to more trials. Their blood was yet in them, so as they had 'not resisted unto blood.'

Hereby it is evident that professors may be brought to seal their profession with their blood. Hereof see more, Chap. xi. 37, Sec. 257.

It is also as evident that professors cannot promise to themselves immunity from sufferings for their profession so long as they live.

Professors, therefore, have need to take heed of security by reason of some trials that they have passed through. Experience hath shewed how dangerous this hath been in reference to temporal deliverances and victories. Much more dangerous is spiritual security; for Satan, being cast out, will seek to make a re-entry, Mat. xii. 44; and God is by spiritual security much provoked to give men over to their spiritual enemies, so as it is a great point of wisdom, after some trials, to prepare for others.

#### Sec. 27. *Of striving against sin.*

To avoid another extreme opposite to security, which is an unnecessary casting one's self into danger, the apostle adds a limitation about saints' sufferings, in this phrase, *striving against sin*.

The word, ἀγῶνίζεσθαι, translated *striving*, is a compound. It is derived from a root, ἀγών, that signifieth *strife*. It is the word that was used, Ver. 1, Sec. 8.

The preposition, ἀντί, with which it is compounded, signifieth *against*. It is fitly translated *strive against*. It is, as the former verb, a soldierlike word, which implieth an opposing or fighting, as an enemy, to whom a man will not yield.

The opposed enemy is here styled, ἀμαρτία, *sin*.

Some here take sin metonymically for sinners, who commit sin, as heretics, idolaters, or other impious persons that would draw us from the profession of the truth. This is a good sense; but there is no need of using a trope here, for the sufferings<sup>1</sup> of saints are for the most part not against the persons of men, but against vices themselves, as idolatry, heresy, error, or it may be impious and licentious liberty. Sufferings of saints are because they will not yield to those and suchlike sins of their adversaries.

Others apply the sins here meant to saints' own corruptions, which they say are by afflictions subdued. This also is a truth in itself, but not pertinent to this place.

The sins of the adversaries of professors of the truth are questionless here meant, and so they set out the use of saints' sufferings, which is sin. We must before *strive against sin*, either by fast holding the truth, tended. They, from it, we sin not, or by not yield-superstitious, and sin in itself.

respects, John the Baptist and justified sufferings of them 'a generation of vipers' had find this verified. They were oft taxed for the sin he would not cease

from calling upon his God, Dan. vi. 12; the apostles strove against sin when they would not forbear to preach the gospel, Acts iv. 2, 3, 19, and v. 29; believers in the apostles' time strove against sin when they would not renounce their profession of Christ, Acts ix. 2; so the martyrs that suffered in heathenish Rome, and in antichristian Rome.

On the other side, Joseph strove against sin when he would not yield to commit folly with his mistress, Gen. xxxix. 12; and Daniel's three companions, when they would not bow to Nebuchadnezzar's image, Dan. iii. 16.

It is the cause, and not the suffering, which makes a martyr—*causa, non poena, facit martyrem*; therefore, to incitations to suffer, and remunerations of sufferings, the cause useth to be added expressly or implicitly.

Great is their folly who run a contrary course; who strive for sin, and suffer in their striving, as heretics, idolaters, traitors, murderers, thieves, adulterers, and all such gross sinners; yea, and busybodies also, 1 Pet. iv. 15; so did Achan suffer, Josh. vii; and Ahab and Zedekiah, Jer. xxix. 21; so Servetus, Legat, Campion, and other popish traitors. They strove to uphold the man of sin and mischievous plots against the land of their nativity.

It is a special point of wisdom, in all our strivings and sufferings, thoroughly to examine the cause thereof. He that shall fail in his cause, his sufferings will be so far from bringing comfort, as, without sound repentance, they will be the beginning of hell torments, and a means of aggravating the same. To suffer for sin, so as suffering draws him not from sin, importeth impudent obstinacy; but if our cause be good that we strive against sin, then may we have much comfort in our sufferings. Thus striving against sin, let us resist unto blood.

#### Sec. 28. *Of the resolution of the four first verses of Heb. xii.*

Ver. 1. *Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

2. *Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

3. *For consider him not that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.*

4. *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*

In these four verses are declared helps for well finishing our Christian course. Herein we may observe,

1. The inference, *wherefore*.

2. The substance; which setteth down the kinds of helps.

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'die' t—Ed.

They are of two sorts :

1. Examples of former saints, ver. 1.
2. The pattern of Christ himself, vers. 2-4.

The former setteth down,

1. The motive to follow them.
2. The matter wherein we should follow them.

This latter is,

1. Propounded, in the end why the pattern of former saints is registered, implied in this word, *witnesses*.

2. Amplified, and that two ways :

- (1.) By the multitude of them.
- (2.) By the right we have to use them.

Their multitude is implied under this metaphor of *a cloud*, and amplified by this note of comparison, *so great*.

Our right to them is intended in this phrase, *we are compassed about*, or, word for word, *having compassing us*.

The matter sets out two duties :

1. To cast off impediments.
2. To use fit helps.

Two sorts of impediments are here expressed.

One outward, in this word *weight*; amplified by the extent thereof, in this word, *every*.

The other, inward, styled *the sin*, and described by this effect, *which doth easily beset us*.

In setting down the latter, about use of helps, we may note,

1. The manner of propounding it, in the first person and plural number, *let us*.

2. The matter whereof it consisteth, which is set down in a metaphor of running a race, whereby is intended a right finishing of our Christian course, and it pointeth at four virtues.

- (1.) Diligence and speed, in this metaphor, *run*.
- (2.) Patience, which is plainly expressed.
- (3.) Perseverance, in this phrase, *run the race*.
- (4.) Prudence, in these words, *set before us*.

This noteth out two points :

1. The warrant we have for what we do, in this phrase, *set before*.

2. The special right which concerneth us, in this word, *us*.

The former sheweth a direction.

The latter a limitation.

The pattern of Christ himself is,

1. Propounded, ver. 2.
2. Amplified, vers. 3, 4.

In setting down this help, the apostle noteth,

1. A duty, which sheweth what we must do.
2. A reason why we must do that duty.

In setting down the duty, observe,

1. The action required, in this word, *looking unto*.
2. The object of that act, *Jesus*.

The reason here alleged for *looking unto Jesus* is taken from that which Christ did; which is of two sorts :

1. What he works in us, *faith*.

This is amplified by two kinds of working :

- (1.) It is beginning it, *the author*.
- (2.) It is perfecting it, *the finisher*.

2. What he wrought, or rather endured, for us.

This is,

1. Propounded.
2. Amplified.

The proposition consisteth of two branches, in both which is set down the object and the action thereabout.

The first object is, *cross*; the action appertaining thereunto, *endured*.

The other object is, *shame*; and the action thereabout, *despised*.

That which Christ endured for us is amplified two ways :

1. By that which Christ set before him, which is here styled *joy*.

2. By that which followed upon his suffering. Here note,

1. The method or order, in this copulative, *and*. He first suffered, and then was exalted.

2. The matter, which was a high exaltation.

This is described,

1. By the stability of it, *is set down*.
2. By the eminency of it, *at the right hand*.
3. By the dignity or royalty of it, *of the throne*.

All these are amplified by the person whose right hand and whose throne it was, namely, God's.

The amplification of the foresaid pattern of Christ is set down two ways :

1. By a review thereof, ver. 3.
2. By the extent of following Christ, ver. 4.

In the review we may observe,

1. A duty enjoined.
2. A reason to enforce the same.

About the duty, observe,

1. The act required, *consider*.
2. The object thereof; which is described,

(1.) By the dignity of the person, *him*.

(2.) By the kind of opposition against him, *contradiction*, amplified by the greatness thereof, *such*.

(3.) By the special person opposed, *himself*.

(4.) By the condition of the persons who opposed him, *sinner*.

(5.) By his manner of bearing it, *endured*.

The reason is drawn from prevention of a great damage, wherein is set down,

1. The kind of damage, *lest ye be wearied*.
2. The cause thereof, *and faint in your minds*.

In the extent of following Christ we are to observe, 1. The manner of propounding it—which is negatively, *ye have not*.

2. The matter, wherein are four points considerable :

- (1.) The act to be done, *resist*.
- (2.) The continuance thereof, *unto blood*.
- (3.) Another act, *striving*.
- (4.) The object thereof, *against sin*.

Sec. 29. *Of observations raised from Heb. xii. 1-4.*

I. *Examples of saints before us are to be followed.* The inference of this verse upon the former chapter, implied in this word, *wherefore*, intendeth as much. See Sec. 2.

II. *Former examples of Jews are registered for us Christians.* Thus much is implied in this phrase, *we also*. See Sec. 2.

III. *Suffering saints are God's witnesses.* They are here so expressly called. See Sec. 2.

IV. *God hath a multitude of witnesses.* This metaphor, *a cloud*, and these two epithets, *compassing*, and *so great*, do fully demonstrate this point. See Sec. 3.

V. *Impediments must be removed.* This is the first kind of helps here prescribed. See Sec. 4.

VI. *Impediments must be clean abandoned.* This word, *lay aside*, intendeth as much. See Sec. 4.

VII. *Things burthensome hinder Christians in their race.* This is implied under this word, *weight*. See Sec. 5.

VIII. *Every burthen is to be laid aside.* The universal note, *every*, is here expressly set down. See Sec. 5.

IX. *Original corruption is properly a sin.* That is the sin which is here intended. See Sec. 6.

X. *Original corruption is ready to stir us up to actual sins.* This is the meaning of this phrase, *doth so easily beset us*. See Sec. 6.

XI. *Inward and inveterate corruption is to be subdued.* The sin here spoken of must be laid aside. See Sec. 7.

XII. *General directions are to be applied to ourselves.* The manner of expressing the duty in the first person, *us*, declares as much. See Sec. 8.

XIII. *Christians must draw on others to the duties which they perform themselves.* The manner of expressing the duty in the plural number, which hath reference to others, proves this point. See Sec. 8.

XIV. *A Christian's course is a race.* The metaphor of running a race here used, proveth as much. See Sec. 8.

XV. *Diligence is requisite for the finishing of our Christian course.* This metaphor, *run*, intendeth as much. See Sec. 9.

XVI. *Patience must be added to diligence.* Thus much is plainly expressed. See Sec. 9.

XVII. *Perseverance is requisite for finishing our Christian course.* This phrase, *run the race*, implieth perseverance till we come to the end of our race. See Sec. 9.

XVIII. *Prudence is requisite for well ordering our Christian course.* It is an especial point of prudence to observe what is set before us, that is, what is warranted in God's word. See Sec. 9.

XIX. *That is most warrantable which is prescribed to us in particular.* This is that which is set before us. See Sec. 9.

XX. *Ability to run our Christian race is from Jesus.* For this end is he here brought in, and described unto us. See Sec. 12.

XXI. *An especial means of receiving grace from Christ is to know and believe on him.* This is intended under this word, *looking unto*. See Sec. 12.

XXII. *Jesus first worketh faith in us.* In this respect he is the author of our faith. See Sec. 13.

XXIII. *Jesus perfecteth the good work of faith which he hath begun.* In this respect he is styled the finisher of our faith. See Sec. 14.

XXIV. *Christ is a pattern to Christians.* For this end, that which he did and endured is set before us. See Sec. 15.

XXV. *Christ had joy set before him.* This is here expressed. See Sec. 15.

XXVI. *By the joy that was set before Christ, he was encouraged to endure what he did.* This proposition, *for*, intendeth so much. See Secs. 15, 16.

XXVII. *Christ had his cross.* This is implied under this word, *cross*. See Sec. 17.

XXVIII. *Christ endured his cross to the full.* The word *endured* intends as much. See Sec. 18.

XXIX. *Christ was put to shame.* This is here taken for granted. See Secs. 19, 20.

XXX. *Christ despised the shame that was laid upon him.* This is here plainly expressed. See Sec. 21.

XXXI. *After Christ's sufferings followed glory.* This copulative and implieth as much. See Sec. 22.

XXXII. *Christ's glory is an established glory.* Therefore it is here said, he is *set down*. See Sec. 22.

XXXIII. *Christ's glory is an eminent glory.* It is at the right hand of God: above all creatures, next to God himself. See Sec. 22.

XXXIV. *Christ's glory is a royal dignity.* He sits on a throne; even the throne of God. See Sec. 22.

XXXV. *Matters of weight are to be well weighed.* The word *consider* imports as much. See Sec. 23.

XXXVI. *Christ's deeds and sufferings are especially to be weighed.* This is gathered from this relative, *him*. See Sec. 23.

XXXVII. *Professors of the truth must look for contradictions.* As the head was dealt withal, so shall his members. See Sec. 24.

XXXVIII. *The vilest of men are subject to contradict the best.* Sinners contradicted Christ. See Sec. 24.

XXXIX. *Christ was so contradicted as never any more.* This particle of admiration, *such*, intendeth as much. See Sec. 24.

XL. *Christ himself was not spared.* There were contradictions, not only against his disciples, but also against himself. See Sec. 24.

XLI. *Christ endured the contradictions that were against himself.* Thus much is plainly expressed. See Sec. 24.

XLII. *Dangers are to be prevented.* This particle, *lest*, intends as much. See Sec. 25.

XLIII. *Contradictions may make Christians weary of their good courses.* This inference, lest you be wearied, imports as much. See Sec. 25.

XLIV. *Weariness of good ariseth from men's own inward remissness.* This clause, and faint in your minds, intends as much. See Sec. 25.

XLV. *A due consideration of Christ's enduring will move us to endure.* This I gather from the inference of this verse upon the former, by this causal particle, *for*. See Sec. 23.

XLVI. *Professors may be brought to seal their profession with their blood.* This is here taken for granted. See Sec. 26.

XLVII. *Christians must stand to their cause so long as they have any blood in them.* This phrase, *ye have not yet resisted unto blood*, implieth as much. See Sec. 26.

XLVIII. *Sin is the only true cause of saints' sufferings.* They must strive against sin. See Sec. 27.

Sec. 30. *Of remembering encouragements to hold out.* Ver. 5. *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you, as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.*

A third motive to stir us up to persevere in the faith, notwithstanding our suffering for the same, is taken from the author of our sufferings, which is God himself.

The first motive was taken from the example of former saints, ver. 1.

The second from Christ's pattern, vers. 2-4.

Thus this is the third.

The first particle, *καί*, *and*, being a copulative, sheweth that that which followeth is in general of the same kind that that which went before was.

The word, *ἐλλήγησθε*, which we thus translate, *ye have forgotten*, is a compound, and here only used in the New Testament. But the same simple verb, compounded with another preposition (*ἐπιλανθάνομαι*), which intendeth the same thing, is frequently used, and translated, as this word, to *forget*. It is used thrice in this epistle, chap. vi. 10, xiii. 2, 16.

To forget is at least an infirmity, and so it is here taxed.

Some, to aggravate the reprehension, set it down interrogatively, thus, *Have ye forgot?* But this phrase, *ye have forgotten*, is the more pertinent, because the apostle here setteth himself with all mildness to manifest their weakness.

Which way soever we read it, it is apparent that to forget the encouragements which God affords, is a fault. It is taxed in the ancient Jews, Ps. lxxviii. 11, and cvi. 13, 21. It is expressly forbidden, Dent. vi. 12.

It is a branch of that corruption, which seized on man by his fall; for thereby, as other powers of a man's soul, and parts of his body were depraved, so

his memory, which was placed in man as a useful treasury, to lay up and fast hold the directions and consolations of God's word.

1. People are to take heed of this fault; for hereby the use of good directions and consolations is lost.

2. Ministers, as they see occasion, must lovingly put their people in mind hereof.

3. Means must be used for strengthening memory.

The inference of this taxation upon ver. 3, where he giveth a hint of their wearisomeness, and fainting in their minds, sheweth, that forgetting grounds of encouragements is an occasion of fainting.

This was it that made the disciples afraid, Mat. viii. 25. Man by nature hath a fainting spirit in himself; he is like a lamp that will fail to give light if there be not a continual supply of oil. So a fire, without supply of fuel, will go out.

This may be a motive well to heed the encouragements of God's word. While men well consider the same, they think all the power and terror of hell cannot make them shrink. But if those encouragements be forgotten, every little blast makes them shake like an ashen<sup>1</sup> leaf.

Sec. 31. *Of exhortations spoken to all of all sorts.*

That which the apostle taxeth them for forgetting is here styled the *exhortation*. Of the verb, *παράκαλεω*, whence this noun, *exhortation*, is derived, see Chap. iii. 13, Sec. 143.

Some translate the noun, *παράκλησις*, here, *consolation*, and so it is oft used, as Luke ii. 28, 2 Cor. i. 3. So it doth also signify *exhortations*, as Acts xiii. 15, Rom. xii. 8.

Here this word hath reference to the text of Scripture that followeth; which, in regard of this sweet compellation, *My son*, is a great consolation, and in reference to the manner of expressing the point, thus, *despise not, nor faint*, it is an exhortation. So as either signification may be used in this place. It is a consolatory exhortation, and an exhortatory consolation. To the metaphor of *running* here used by the apostle, the latter word, *exhortation*, is the more proper: for runners in a race, by exhortations and acclamations, are much quickened.<sup>2</sup> Whereby it appeareth how useful exhortations are. See more hereof, Chap. iii. 13, Sec. 143.

This relative, *ἧτις*, *which*, hath reference to that exhortation which is quoted in this verse. It is an elegant figure: for a voice, or faculty of speaking, is attributed to the exhortation recorded in Scripture. So as the word written is as a sermon preached, it hath a kind of voice whereby it speaketh to us: as Chap. iii. 7, Sec. 74, in the end.

The word, *διαλεγεται*, translated *speakeeth*, is a compound, and signifieth more than a simple speaking, namely a reasoning, or disputing, or convincing a man

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'aspen' ?—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Plausumque volat tremittaque secundo.—F'irg.

of the equity of what he speaketh, Mark ix. 34, Acts xvii. 17, and xix. 8, 9. The title of the art of reasoning, *διαλεκτική*, is set down under a word derived from the same root.

The persons to whom this was spoken are comprised under this relative, *ὑμῖν*, unto you. He means hereby those to whom he wrote; which were, both these Hebrews, and all other Christians, that should read or hear this epistle; for God, in his word, speaketh to all of all sorts, to all of all degrees, to all of all places, to all of all ages, to all of any other distinction whatsoever. This Christ thus plainly expresseth, 'What I say unto you, I say unto all,' Mark xiii. 37; and Moses thus, 'Neither with you only do I make this covenant; but with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and also with him that is not here,' Deut. xxix. 14, 15. Thus may, thus ought, every one to apply the word of God, wherein it concerneth him, to himself, though at first it were spoken to others. See Chap. xiii. 5, Sec. 68.

Sec. 32. *Of God's speaking to saints as to children.*

This phrase, *ὡς υἱός*, as unto children, hath reference to that sweet compellation, *υἱὸς μου*, My son, in the following exhortation.

This giveth an evident instance that God respecteth saints, as a father his children, Ps. ciii. 13, Jer. iii. 19, and xxxix. 9.

1. This ariseth from his mere mercy and free grace. Princes when they grant favours use to render this reason, out of our own special grace and mere motion we grant this; yet may they have many inducements from their subjects; but God can have nothing out of himself to move him to do what he doth. These therefore be frequent phrases in Scripture: 'For my own sake,' 'for my name's sake,' Isa. xlviii. 9, 11; 'grace,' Eph. ii. 5; 'free gift,' Rom. v. 15; 'rich mercy,' 'great love,' Eph. ii. 6.

2. This relation of children to God, is by virtue of our union with Christ. Christ is his true proper Son; but saints are one with Christ, members of his body, and in that respect his children.

1. This is the ground of saints' confidence. If God speak to them as to children, they have good ground to fly to God as to a father, and in all time of need to ask and seek of him all needful blessings, Mat. vii. 11, yea, and in faith to depend on him for the same, Mat. vi. 31, 32. What useful thing shall such want? what hurtful thing need such to fear? If God deal with them as with children, he will provide for them every good thing, he will protect them from every hurtful thing, he will hear their prayers, he will accept their services, he will bear with their infirmities, he will support them under all their burthens, and assist them against all their assaults; though through their own weakness, or the violence of some tempta-

tion, they should be drawn from him, yet will he be ready to meet them in the midway, turning to him. Instance the mind of the father of the prodigal towards him. See more hereof in *The Guide to go to God*, or *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, Sec. 8.

2. This is a forcible motive to stir us up to bear a childlike respect to God. The rule of relation requireth as much, as is shewed in the place before quoted.

Sec. 33. *Of the paternal and childlike relation betwixt pastor and people.*

To make the foresaid exhortation to be the more heeded, the apostle addeth the express words of Scripture wherewith it was first set down, but quoteth neither book, chapter, nor verse. Hereof see Chap. ii. 6, Sec. 50.

The text is taken out of Prov. iii. 11, 12. In quoting it the apostle holdeth close to the interpretation of the ancient LXX; of whom see Chap. i. 6, Sec. 72. Only there is one little difference: for the LXX do not express this relative pronoun, *my*, but yet by speaking to one in the vocative case do understand that pronoun. In the Hebrew it is expressly set down, *בני*.

This title, *my son*, as here used, and as used by the wise man, seemeth to have reference to the minister that utters it: because he hath herein reference to the Lord as to a third person: thus, 'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord.'

I will not deny but that this compellation, *my son*, may be taken in reference to God: because ministers, both extraordinary and ordinary, stand in God's room; and in God's room speak to God's people: yea, God in the mouth of his ministers speaketh to his people. Thus it confirms God's fatherly respect to his people, wherof see Sec. 32.

If it be taken in reference to the prophet, it sheweth that God's ministers are as fathers to God's people: and God's people as children to them. Frequently is this relation mentioned betwixt God's ministers and people.

1. Ministers are means of their people's regeneration, 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15, Philem. 10.

2. Ministers provide for the souls of people, as parents do for their children's bodies. Their care is to nourish and build them up in grace, 2 Cor. xii. 14.

3. Ministers bear a fatherly affection and respect to God's people, 2 Cor. vi. 11, 13, Phil. iv. 1.

This relation directeth both ministers and people how to be affected, and how to carry themselves one towards another.

Sec. 34. *Of general doctrines intended to particular persons.*

The particular application of the former point, of well bearing afflictions, unto one particular person in the singular number and vocative case, thus, *my son*,

giveth evidence that general doctrines are intended to every one in particular.

We heard before, Sec. 31, that what was spoken to people of one age was intended to all ages. Here it is further shewed, that that which is common to many is intended to every one; as if it had been in special directed to every one. Thus Christ by name enjoins that duty to Peter, which belongeth to all ministers, John xxi. 15. These indefinite phrases, 'if any man thirst,' John vii. 37; 'all ye that labour,' Mat. xi. 28; 'whosoever will,' Rev. xii. 17, do intend as much. For this end sacraments are applied to particular persons.

1. This manifesteth the impartial respect of God to all.

2. It giveth proof of God's wisdom, in leaving every one that receiveth not the word, without excuse. God speaks to every one in particular; why then shall any put away from him that salvation, which in and by the word is offered unto him?

This shews what good ground of faith every one hath.

It is in this respect an incitation to every one to apply to himself what he heareth out of God's word. The power, the life of preaching consisteth herein.

The premising of this title, *my son*, before the following dissuasion, giveth instance that dissuasions, and other kind of instructions, are to be sweetened with mild insinuations. See Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 121.

Sec. 35. *Of reconciling* Prov. iii. 11, 12, with Heb. xii. 5, 6.

There is some difference in words and phrases, betwixt the testimony following, as it is in the Hebrew, and as it is in the Greek, yet in sense they both fully agree.

Some differences are more in the translation of the Hebrew than in the text itself.

1. This negative, *neither be weary*, is thus translated, *neither faint*. Both the Hebrew קָרַח, and the Greek, *δυναστεύω*, import one and the same thing. For wearisomeness causeth fainting, and fainting implieth wearisomeness.

2. Where Solomon saith, *neither be weary of his correction*; the apostle thus, nor *faint* (ἐκλάβω) *when thou art rebuked of him*. Correction is a real rebuke, and rebuke is a verbal correction; so as one may well be put for the other.

To put the verb for the noun, thus, *being rebuked or corrected of God*, for the *correction of God*, is but the different dialect of different tongues.

In the next verse the first clause thereof in Hebrew and Greek do fully agree. In the latter clause there is some difference in words and phrases. For where Solomon saith, וְכִנְיָהּ, *even as a father the son in whom he delighteth*; the apostle thus (μαστρού), *he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*. The expression of son, implieth God's fatherly respect: so as in

sense it is all one, as if he had said, *even as a father*; and to receive a child, importeth a delighting in him.

The apostle agreeth with the Greek LXX, word for word.

Of this LXX, and of varying from the letter where the sense is kept, see Chap. i. 6, Sec. 72.

Sec. 36. *Of God the author of saints' afflictions.*

In directing us well to bear afflictions, the apostle laboureth to remove two contrary impediments.

One is in the excess, *despise not*.

The other in the defect, *faint not*.

The Hebrew word נָסָה, signifieth *to reject*, or *detest* a thing.

It is used of those builders which (נִסָּה) refused the head stone of the corner, which was Christ himself, Ps. cxviii. 22.

The Greek word, *δυναστεύω*, also carrieth emphasis with it: for according to the notation of it,<sup>1</sup> it signifieth, *to have little care of a thing*, to neglect it, or to contemn it. A fit word. It is used to express the fault of a child, or servant, in too light an esteem of his parent or master; which is a plain contempt of them, opposed to that honour which is required in the fifth commandment.

That which is here forbidden to be despised is styled, *ταπεινία*, *chastening*.

The Greek word is derived from a root, *ταίω*, that signifieth a *child*: and in general it implieth a father's dealing with his child. It is used sometimes for instruction, as 2 Tim. iii. 16; sometimes for correction, as here; and they who correct, *ταπεινῶσαι*, have their notation from this word, ver. 9. And the act itself of correcting, is expressed under a verb, *ταπεινῶν*, sprouting out from the same root, Luke xxiii. 16, 22. A father's correction is for instruction.

The notation of the Hebrew word נִסָּה, intendeth as much as the Greek. It implieth such a correction as fathers give to their children, whereby they may be the better instructed. It is also oft used for instruction, Prov. i. 2, 3.

The Latin have a fit word, *disciplina*, to express both these senses, which we in English translate *discipline*. For men are disciplined both by instruction and correction.

The chastening here spoken of, is said to be of the Lord. God is the author and orderer thereof, Isa. x. 5, 2 Sam. xvi. 11.

Obj. Satan, men, other instruments, do much afflict saints.

Ans. Yet God hath the ordering and disposing of them, that he may restrain them as he seeth cause, that he may turn all that they do to his own glory and his children's good. God's glory is the supreme end of all, John ix. 3; subordinate thereunto is his

<sup>1</sup> δὲ δυναστεύω ὅταν ἐχέω, parvam curam habere, negligere, contemnere.

children's good, Rom. viii. 18. See more hereof in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. Chap. vi. 11, Sec. 2, and Ver. 11, Sec. 13.

By this we are taught in all crosses to look up unto God, to search after the end which God aims at, and to call on him.

This is a point much pressed by the prophets, Isa. xlv. 7, and xlv. 22, Micah vii. 7.

This also giveth us a ground of patient bearing all crosses, because the Lord is author of them.

### Sec. 37. *Of saints' afflictions being chastisements.*

The word whereby the afflictions of saints are here set down is styled, *παιδεία*, *chastening*, and according to the notation thereof, signifieth such correction as a parent giveth to his child, and that for his amendment, Rev. iii. 19, Ps. lxxxix. 30, 31, 2 Sam. vii. 14.

That they are such, is evident by the ends which God aimeth at therein.

One general end is their good, Prov. viii. 28; therefore some of them have acknowledged it to be good for them, Ps. cxix. 71, Lam. iii. 27.

Particular grounds have reference either to this life or the life to come.

In this life, the grounds are either privative or positive.

Privative in regard of sin, and that,

1. To prevent sin, 2 Cor. xii. 7.

2. To redress it, Ps. cxix. 69.

The positive grounds have respect to grace; namely, to prove it, 1 Pet. i. 7, or to exercise it, Job i. 12.

The good of afflictions hath respect to the world to come two ways.

1. To prevent damnation, 1 Cor. xi. 31.

2. To increase heavenly glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

This maketh an apparent difference betwixt the afflictions of saints and others. They may be all in their external appearance alike, for 'all things fall out alike to all,' Eccles. ix. 2, but yet there is a great difference betwixt the afflictions of the one and the other; as,

1. In the moving cause. Love putteth God on to chastise his children, ver. 6, but wrath puts him on to judge the wicked, Deut. xxix. 23, &c.

*Obj.* God was angry and wroth with Moses, Deut. i. 37, and iii. 26.

*Ans.* That anger and wrath was not vindictive, but paternal.

The words *anger* and *wrath* are used,

(1.) To give evidence that God neither approveth nor justifieth sin in any, not in his beloved ones, 2 Sam. xii. 14.

(2.) To prevent the like for the future.

(3.) To be a warning to others, 1 Kings xiii. 23.

(4.) To revenge others' sins in the chastisements of his children, 2 Kings xxii. 20.

2. In the ends, whereof we heard before. For God

aimeth not at those ends in judging the wicked, at which he aimeth in chastising his children.

3. In the effects; for,

(1.) Saints, by afflictions, have some sins prevented, and some redressed, Luke xv. 17; but others have thereby sins occasioned, Exod. xvi. 2, and increased, 2 Kings xxviii. 22.

(2.) Afflictions draw saints to God, Hosea v. 15, but they drive others from God, 2 Kings vi. 33.

(3.) Saints, by afflictions, are the more humbled under God, and brought to acknowledge his divine justice, yea, and mercy, Dan. ix. 7, Lam. iii. 22. Others have their mouths opened against God, Rev. xvi. 9.

This is a further invitation patiently to bear the afflictions which God is pleased to lay upon us, even because they are chastisements: they are for our instruction. Though they be grievous to the flesh, yet they are needful and useful to the soul.

On these grounds we willingly take bitter pills and fulsome potions, and patiently endure corrosives, lancings, searings, and cutting off of members. Let judgment and faith help us in God's dealing with us. 'Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee,' Prov. ix. 8: 'Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it,' Micah vi. 9.

### Sec. 38. *Of avoiding extremes in reference to crosses.*

The expression of two extremes, namely, excess, by despising, and defect, by fainting, giveth us to understand that both the extremes are conscionably to be avoided. 'It is good that thou shouldest take hold of this: yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand,' Eccles. vii. 18. This is implied under this phrase, 'You shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left,' Deut. v. 32.

Both extremes fail of that end which God aimeth at in chastising his children; which is, to better them by afflictions, to raise up their heart to him, and to draw them unto him. Both the one and the other extreme draweth men from God, and depriveth them of the true comfort and profit of afflictions.

We ought hereupon to be well instructed in that golden mean that lieth betwixt these extremes, that we may not, like fools, avoid one extreme so far as we fall into the other.<sup>1</sup> Virtue is placed in the midst, betwixt two extremes, as the temperate zones which are habitable betwixt the extreme cold and extreme hot zones, both which are uninhabitable. The philosopher discerned by the light of nature the aberrations of both the extremes, the excess and the defect, and thereupon defined virtue to be the middle of two evils.<sup>2</sup> God's word doth plainly set out that middle way which lieth betwixt two extremes, wherein and whereby we may be brought to eternal life.

The first extreme is in the excess: it is to *despise*

<sup>1</sup> Stulti dum fugiunt vitia, in contraria currunt.—*Horat.*

<sup>2</sup> Μεσότης δὲο καλῶν.—*Arist. Ethic.*, lib. ii. 6.

God's fatherly dealing with us. Of the notation of the Greek and Hebrew word, see Sec. 36.

This is a great fault. God by his prophets much complaineth against it, Jer. ii. 30, and v. 3. Ahaz is set out as a fearful instance hereof, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. Hereupon he is branded with this black mark, 'this is that king Ahaz.'

1. Great dishonour is hereby done to God. His authority and sovereignty is herein trampled upon.

Great wrong is hereby done to man himself. It doth not only deprive him of the benefit of afflictions, but also turns mercy into wrath, Lev. xxvi. 18; Amos iv. 5.

The other extreme is in the defect, here translated *faint*. Of the notation hereof, see Sec. 35.

Hereby it appears that it is a fault to faint under crosses.

I confess it is not so blameworthy as the excess in despising affliction. The worse and the wicked sort of people fall into the former; the weaker, and many times the better sort, yea, God's dear saints, oft fall into this latter: yet a fault and blameworthy it is.

Of these two extremes, of directions to keep men from them, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 15, Treat. 2, Part 5, Secs. 18, 19, &c.

#### Sec. 39. Of afflictions convincing men of sin.

The affliction of the Lord is set out in this word, ἐλεγχόμενος, *rebuked*, and that the rather to aggravate the latter extreme, which may seem to be the lighter. The word is used of convincing one of a sin.

Thus the very word is translated 'convicted,' John viii. 9; and a noun, ἐλεγχος, coming from thence, is translated 'evidence,' Heb. xi. 1, Sec. 4.

The Hebrew word in the derivation thereof signifieth as much.

This word is here used in two respects.

1. In regard of the order which the Lord useth in rebuking. He first convinceth, and then rebuketh them.

2. In regard of the effect that followeth. By God's rebuke men are convinced of sin. And because by afflictions men use to be rebuked and convinced, *rebuke* is put for afflictions, Rev. iii. 19. Afflictions, then, convince men of somewhat that God would have them to take notice of. This may be well exemplified in Joseph's brethren, Gen. xlii. 21. The case of Israel about Achan may also be an instance thereof; and about the fiery serpents, Num. xxi. 7; and in their undertakings against the Benjamites, Judges xx. 26.

Prosperity, as dust, flieth in the eyes of men's understandings, so as they cannot well see and discern their disposition. It is like a fawning flatterer, who speaketh nothing but well, according to the mind of him with whom he speaketh; as Ahab's false prophets, 1 Kings xxii. 13.

1. Hereby we have an instance of the necessity of afflictions; we should be exceedingly bewitched if it were not for them.

They are rebukers in the gate, Amos v. 10. And we have great need of such rebukers.

2. This also sheweth the utility and benefit of afflictions. It is very useful to be convinced and rebuked, Prov. ix. 8, 9.

3. This is a good ground of patience. Things so needful and useful ought to be patiently borne.

4. This teacheth us well to observe in all afflictions, what it is for which the Lord rebuketh, Lam. iii. 40, 41, Josh. vii. 13. Want of this search makes many crosses to fail of their kindly work.

Men have two helps about searching out their sins.

One is God's word, which is a declaration of God's mind, and sheweth why he doth so and so afflict men.

The other is their own conscience, whereby they may know how to apply such generals as are revealed in God's word, to themselves in particular.

Of searching out sins, see *A Plaster for a Plague*, on Num. xvi. 44, Secs. 4, 5, &c., and *Dearth's Death*, on 2 Sam. xxi. 1, Sec. 18.

#### Sec. 40. Of the meaning of Heb. xii. 6.

Ver. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

The more to keep us from the forementioned extremes of despising afflictions, or fainting under them, the apostle produceth the procuring cause whereby God is moved to afflict his children, and this is his own love towards them. The first particle being causal, γὰρ, *for*, giveth proof hereof.

Of this affection of love in general, see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 1, Sec. 4.

God, by assuming to himself this affection of love (ἀγαπᾷ), in reference to saints, sheweth that his heart is knit to them; and that they may be made the fitter for him, he chasteneth them.

Of the word *chastening*, as it setteth out a parent's correcting of his child, see Sec. 36.

To this he addeth another verb, which implieth a severe kind of correction. For to *scourge* importeth more than to *chastise*. A child is ordinarily chastised with a rod, but scourged with a whip, and they are so dealt withal when they prove stubborn.

The root, μάστιξ, from whence this Greek word, *μαστιγᾶν*, cometh, signifieth a *scourge*, or a *whip*. Of this word, *scourging*, see more, Chap. xi. 36, Sec. 252.

See an exemplification of the difference betwixt Christ's chastening and scourging, 2 Sam. vii. 14, Ps. lxxxix. 32.

Though the latter of these two do intend more severity than the former, yet both of them being here applied to a father, are opposed to the usual practice of a judge, which is to take away the life of a malefactor, and is set out by these instruments of punishment, sword, halter, fire, &c.

This last phrase, *whom he receiveth*, is added as another motive whereby God is induced to scourge his



children. The Greek word, *παράδοξαι*, is a compound. The simple verb, *δέχομαι*, signifieth to receive. This compound addeth emphasis, and implieth so to receive one, as to acknowledge him to be his, and thereupon to take special care of him. Thus it is an amplification of the former motive concerning God's love. It is an evidence thereof.

In Hebrew it is thus expressed: 'In whom he delighteth,' Prov. iii. 12. There is expression again made of a son, thus, 'The son in whom he delighteth,' or, 'whom he accepteth.' For the Hebrew word, *רצה*, signifieth to accept. So it is oft translated by our English: as Eccles. ix. 7, Dent. xxxiii. 11, and in sundry other places.

As the former word expresseth the love of God, so this latter setteth forth his care of them. He receiveth them for his sons, he calleth them into the communion of saints, which is his church, even his house, 1 Tim. iii. 15, and answerably dealeth with them.

Concerning this general phrase, *πάντα υἱοι*, every son, two doubts are raised.

1. Whether none but sons are scourged.
2. Whether every child without exception is scourged.

*Ans.* To the first, correcting children, doth not necessarily imply others' impunity. A father that correcteth his child, may also punish a slave. Yet take correction in the proper ends and fruits thereof, and it will be found proper to children.

*Ans.* To the second, never was there, never shall there be, a child of God in this world without correction, vers. 7, 8.

Sec. 41. *Of God's love in receiving those whom he doth correct.*

It is here taken for granted that God loves his children. God himself professeth as much, Mal. i. 2, Jer. xxxi. 3; and saints acknowledge as much, Dent. vii. 8, Eph. ii. 4.

No ground of this can anywhere be found but in God himself. It is therefore said of him, that he set his love upon the Israelites, 'because he loved them,' Dent. vii. 8.

Of Christ's love to his church, the order, the truth, the cause, the quality, the quantity, and the continuance thereof, see *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 4, Secs. 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 72.

Of love, the cause of God's chastening his children, see *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 2, on Eph. vi. 15, Part 5, Sec. 25.

It is said of those whom God loveth, that he receiveth them also, he taketh them into his house, he taketh the especial care of them. The many invitations which the Lord maketh to such as come unto him, sheweth how ready he is to receive them, Isa. lv. 1, John vi. 37. The example of the father of the prodigal is an evidence hereof, Luke xv. 20. Christ

is said to 'receive sinners,' Luke xv. 2: namely, penitent sinners, who thereby had evidence that they were loved of God.

The Lord received them, to assure them of his special care for their good. Men use to take care of such as they do receive, as of wives, children, servants, friends, and others; much more will God. This is one special reason of all those relations which God vouchsafeth to pass betwixt himself and children of men.

This is a forcible motive unto such as are received of God, to cast their care on him, Ps. lv. 22, 1 Pet. v. 7. Children on this ground can depend on their parents. Christ doth much press this point, Mat. vii. 11.

Sec. 42. *Of God's scourging his children.*

To the former word of *chastening*, he addeth this other, *scourging*. Of the difference betwixt these two words, see Secs. 37, 40. It here implieth sore afflictions wherewith God afflicteth his children. He oft useth a whip instead of a rod, 2 Sam. vii. 14. David was a man after God's own heart, yet severely scourged. His manifold complaints give proof hereof, as Ps. vi. 6, and xxxi. 9, 10, and xxxii. 4. But more grievous are Job's complaints. The histories of them both do shew what cause they had to complain as they did.

1. Sometimes God scourgeth his for the more evident proof of that true and great grace that is in them. This was Job's case.

2. For manifestation of his detestation of their enormous and scandalous sins. This was David's case.

1. This gives us just cause, when we are scourged of the Lord, to examine our carriage towards him, and to search after such sins as have provoked God to scourge us. Hereof see Sec. 45.

2. It admonisheth us to take heed of offending our loving Father too much, lest we so far grieve his Spirit as to scourge us. Though he do not clean withdraw his love from us, yet in love he may so scourge us, as to force us to repent again and again of our foolish carriage towards him. He can tame us, though he do not damn us.

3. It teacheth us to carry ourselves, under scourging, answerably to God's dealing with us; that will be by a deeper degree of humiliation, Josh. vii. 6, Judges xx. 23, 1 Sam. vii. 6. A father expecteth as much. To the truth of humiliation must be added a greater measure of watchfulness against sin for the future, Num. xii. 14, Mat. iii. 8. An ingenious and prudent child will so do, both for fear of smart (a burnt child dreads the fire), and also to prevent his father's grief.

4. This manifesteth the undue censures of many concerning God's children, that they are no children of God because they are scourged of God. This was

the censure of Job's wife and friends, and of many that beheld David in his troubles.

5. It directeth us to be prepared, not for chastening only, but for scourging also. Consider what hath been registered of God's ancient worthies, chap. xi. 35, &c.

6. This may comfort us in our sore afflictions whereunto we are subject, that God may receive us and take us for his children, though he scourge us.

It is not want of love, but great wisdom, that moveth him to deal with us as he doth.

Sec. 43. *Of conditions accompanying God's grants.*

Ver. 7. *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

In this and some verses following, the apostle commenteth upon that text of Scripture which he had before quoted.

From thence he inferreth the main point, which is, that God, in chastening men, dealeth with them as with sons: but upon this condition, that they *endure his chastening*.

The manner of bringing in this evidence of God's love by way of condition, for something to be performed on our part, thus, *if ye endure chastening*, sheweth that there is a condition to be observed on man's part for obtaining the benefit of God's gracious dealing with him. In all covenants betwixt himself and man, it was so. In the first covenant, the condition was, 'do this,' Gal. iii. 12. Hereby was intended perfect obedience, which then man was enabled to perform.

In the other covenant, of grace, the condition is, 'believe and repent,' Mark i. 15. Faith hath respect to our justification, and compriseth under it all things tending thereto. Under repentance, all sanctifying graces are comprised, whether they respect mortification or vivification, the two parts of repentance.

Quest. How can free grace stand with a condition?

Ans. 1. With a condition of works to be done by ourselves, it cannot stand.

2. The condition of the gospel, which is faith and repentance, are the work and gift of God, Eph. ii. 8, Jer. x. 23, 2 Cor. iii. 5, Jer. xxxi. 18, 33. In this respect, they are so far from impeaching the grace of God, as they do much magnify the same. God, of his own free grace, works in us that which he requireth of us for attaining life.

3. Faith is not to be considered, in this case, as a work of man, but as a hand, or instrument, whereby we lay hold on Christ.

4. Repentance is but a mere qualification for fitting us to enjoy that which Christ hath purchased for us.

5. Both faith and repentance are evidences of our right to Christ Jesus, and therefore are enjoined, that we might have some sensible assurance of our eternal salvation.

On this ground we are to inquire after the condition which God requireth for the partaking of that which he freely granteth us, as we do desire the benefit of the grant.

Sec. 44. *Of the benefit of afflictions arising from enduring.*

The particular condition here required, on our part, is to *endure chastening*. Under *chastening*, all manner of affliction that God layeth upon his children are comprised. They are called *chastening*, by reason of the end that God aimeth at in afflicting them, which is their good, as hath been shewed, Secs. 36, 37.

Of the meaning of the word *enduring*, and of Christ's excellent pattern in enduring the cross, see Sec. 18. That is a worthy pattern for us; and it is the more to be heeded by reason of that inference which the apostle here maketh, that afflictions are made profitable by enduring them, Mat. x. 22, 2 Tim. ii. 12, James i. 12, and v. 11. This, therefore, did the apostle glory in, on the behalf of the Thessalonians, 2 Thes. i. 4. See more hereof in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 15, Secs. 16, 17.

1. By this we may discern an especial reason of that little good which many gain by crosses—they fail of observing this main condition. They may bear the cross because they cannot cast it off, but they do not endure it contentedly, willingly, in obedience to God. What they do is perforce, with much inward grudging and outward muttering.

2. Thou mayest learn hereby how to gain good by afflictions, even by enduring them; which, that thou mayest the rather do, observe well these few directions:

(1.) Look to God that smiteth, and duly weigh his supreme sovereignty, his almighty power, his unsearchable wisdom, his free grace, his rich mercy, his great forbearance, and other like excellencies.

(2.) Be circumspect over thine inward disposition, to keep thyself from fretting, vexing, and perplexing thy spirit.

(3.) Be watchful over thine outward behaviour, that thou manifest no discontent therein.

(4.) Be well informed in the manifold trials whereunto the best are subject in this world.

(5.) Take to thyself an invincible courage and resolution to hold out, and still prepare thyself for more when some are past.

Sec. 45. *Of the need and benefits of afflictions.*

Upon observing the foresaid condition of enduring chastisement, it is added, that *God dealeth with them as with sons*.

The verb, *παρομοιάζει*, translated *dealeth with*, properly signifieth to *offer to*, see Chap. v. 1.

Here it hath a reciprocal reference to God himself, as if it had been said, he offereth himself, or he is offered to you as to sons.

Of God's respecting saints as children, see Ver. 5, Sec. 32.

The inference of God's fatherly respect to sons of men upon their enduring chastisement, gives further proof that afflictions are fruits of God's fatherly care over his children, as hath been proved, Ver. 5, Sec. 37.

It is further manifested by the need we have of correction, and by the good which cometh to saints thereby.

1. The need ariseth from without us, and from within us.

Without us, the world, and the things thereof, as plenty, peace, pleasure, preferment, and such like allurements, do ordinarily make men secure, wanton, and loose; but afflictions take away the sweet of all those alluring baits, and experimentally discover the vanity of them. Witness the mind of men in pain of body, in sickness, in restraint of liberty, and other crosses, Isa. xxx. 22.

Within us are proud thoughts, ambitious imaginations, covetous desires, noisome lusts, and many other abominable corruptions, which as festering matter lie in the soul, eating up the life thereof; but afflictions are as a razor to lance the sores of the soul, and to let out the putrefying infecting matter: they are as purging pills and potions to purge out noisome humours, and in that respect needful.

2. The good that cometh to saints by afflictions, is an effecting of those ends which their wise Father aimeth at, even such as these—

(1.) Examination of men's selves, to find out that corruption which is to be purged out, Lam. iii. 40.

(2.) Humiliation under God's hand, Josh. vii. 6, &c.

(3.) Deprecation, not only of the judgment, but of the cause thereof, Ps. xxxii. 5.

(4.) Conversion unto God, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12.

(5.) Circumspection, that they offend not in the like again, Ps. cxix. 67.

Of the good fruits of afflictions, see more, Ver. 5, Sec. 37.

The principal duty hence arising is that which the apostle himself hath noted in the beginning of this verse, that we *endure afflictions*. See Sec. 44.

Sec. 46. *Of all of all sorts subject to trials.*

To commend God's dealing with his children, so as hath been set forth, by afflicting them, the extent thereof is thus set out, *for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?* The manner of bringing in this extent with this causal particle, *for*, sheweth that it is a proof of the point. The proof is taken from the constant course thereof. That which is done to every child, none excepted, must needs be needful and useful. Experience of the good it doth where it is used, moves a wise father impartially to use it towards every child.

The phrase may either be comparatively used in reference to earthly parents, or simply to our heavenly Father.

In the former reference, thus: as earthly parents correct their children, so doth God all his.

In the latter reference, thus: God doth impartially deal with all his children. There is none at all whom he suffereth to pass through this world without chastisements.

Yet, to add the more force to this assertion, he sets it down interrogatively, thus, *what son*, &c. Hereby the apostle doth challenge all to give an instance of the contrary, as if he had said, Shew me the child of God who hath been freed from all manner of afflictions—nay, tell me if you have read of any such in the records of truth?

It is therefore most evident that afflictions are the common condition of all God's children.

See more hereof in *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 2, Part 5, on Eph. vi. 15, Sec. 12.

Hereupon it becomes every child of God to prepare for trials, and to treasure up consolations and encouragements tending thereunto.

Sec. 47. *Of bastards being without correction.*

Ver. 8. *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

It appears that this point of enduring chastisement is of great concernment, in that the apostle so long insisteth upon it, and returneth unto it again and again.

The former interrogative, *what son*, &c., carried great emphasis, yet behold here a more emphatical expression under the denial of the said point, *if ye be without chastisements, then are ye bastards*, &c. This followeth as a necessary consequence from the former general point, and that by the rule of contraries. If all sons are chastised, then they who are not chastised are no sons.

This particle of opposition, *ô*, *but*, implieth the contrary consequence.

Of the word, *παῖδες*, *chastisement*, see Ver. 5, Sec. 36. It implieth such correction as is for instruction, to prevent or redress evil: so as if God let loose the reins to a professor, and suffer him to run riot, and to follow his own carnal lust and worldly delights, and restrain him not by some afflictions, he is assuredly no child of God, but a bastard.

The Greek word, *νόθος*, *spurious*, is here only in the New Testament used. It implieth one that is not born in lawful wedlock. He here meaneth one that is supposed to be a child, being in the house in appearance as a child, but not begotten of the father of the house; thereupon not nurtured as a son, nor estranged of any unlawful liberty, but suffered to run into all looseness and licentiousness.

The Greek word is by other authors put, not only for one born in adultery, but also for a strange child, a child

that is not a man's own, and thereupon the less care taken of it.

By some it is here taken for a changeling, *suppositivus*. They profess themselves, and answerably are taken, to be God's children, but never were put in by God.

This is here brought in to meet with an objection, thus, There are in the church who are without chastisement.

*Ans.* It may be so, but then they are not of the church, they are bastards or changelings.

To make this argument more full and clear, the apostle inserteth the general point as in a parenthesis, thus, *ἡς μετοχὴν ἡμεῖς πάντες*, *whereof all are partakers*.

By way of explanation, he addeth, *not sons*, as if he had said, Though they may be thought, by reason of some outward profession, to be sons, yet indeed they are none.

The main point here intended, is to shew that immunity from crosses is a bastard's prerogative. If it be a prerogative, it is of such a one as may be in the church, partake of divine ordinances, profess himself to be a saint, and be so supposed by others, but not so accounted by God himself. Dives may be supposed to be such a one, Luke xvi. 25; so the rich fool, Luke xii. 19.

Not correcting when there is need—and who is he that liveth in the flesh and needeth not correction?—implieth a neglect of him, as if he were not cared for. 'A child left to himself brings his mother to shame,' Prov. xxix. 15. Thereupon father and mother are accounted careless of their duty. If two children be committing evil together, a wise father will take his own child and correct him, but will let the other alone. Who more wise, who more righteous, who more merciful than God?

1. By just consequence, that false note of continual peace and prosperity, or temporal felicity, as they call it, of the church, is manifested. Surely, if this text be true, as true it is, that cannot be a true note of a true church. That hath hitherto been the true church which hath suffered for the truth, purity, and power of religion.

2. This sheweth their condition to be in truth a miserable condition, who so boast of all things according to their heart's desire, as they know not what pain is, or sickness, or loss, or restraint of liberty, or any other cross. Such are to the life described, Job xxi. 8, 9, &c. By this apostle's verdict, if they live in the church, they are bastards.

If any state give us just cause to question God's fatherly care over us, it is all manner of external contentment to the flesh, and freedom from all crosses. A heathen man, that had all his lifetime enjoyed much prosperity, being delivered from an accidental calamity with which many others were destroyed, thus cried out, O fortune, to what misfortune hast thou reserved me?

Sec. 48. *Of the apostle's much pressing the benefits of afflictions.*

This clause, *whereof all are partakers*, hath been before, and is hereafter again and again inculcated, and that at least twelve times.

1. By the apostle's intimation of God's mind, ver. 5, *he speaketh unto you as unto children*.

2. By the title which in the name of the Lord is given to the afflicted, thus, *my son*, ver. 5.

3. By making correction a fruit of love, *whom the Lord loveth*, ver. 6.

4. By extending it to *every son*, ver. 6.

5. By making affliction an evidence of God's respect, ver. 7.

6. By inculcating God's usual dealing, interrogatively, *what son is it*, &c., ver. 7.

7. By accounting such as are not so dealt withal to be *bastards*, ver. 8.

8. By returning to the same again, in this phrase, *whereof all are partakers*, ver. 8.

9. By paralleling the like dealing of earthly parents with their children, ver. 9.

10. By noting the different ends of earthly parents and God's, ver. 10.

11. By removing what might be objected against it, ver. 11.

12. By shewing the blessed fruits of afflictions, ver. 12.

We may not think that these are so many tautologies, or vain repetitions of the same things; for the apostle was guided by a divine Spirit, which made him well to poise all his words, and not set down a phrase or word rashly.

There are sundry weighty reasons for repeating and inculcating one and the same thing; whereof see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 16, Sec. 48.

A special point hence to be observed is this, that men are hardly brought to believe that afflictions are fruits of God's love. It is not a novice's lesson; it is not learned at first entrance into Christ's school. Christ's disciples, though they had Christ himself to be their instructor, could not at first apprehend it. This made Christ very frequently inculcate this principle, of taking up the cross and following him. Ignorance of this made many Christians in the apostles' times faint and fall away, 2 Tim. iv. 16; yea, some of God's worthies have in the trial made doubt hereof, Ps. lxxvii. 7-9, Job. xxiii. 14, 15, Lam. ii. 4.

This principle is against common sense and natural reason; yea, against experimental feeling. I may say of them, who are persuaded of the truth thereof, as Christ did of Peter, 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you, but my Father which is in heaven,' Mat. xvi. 17. The rule according to which natural men judge matters is bodily sight, outward sense, such experience as flesh and blood useth to take. No marvel, then, though they be so hardly brought to believe this truth.

This may be a good incitement to labour after faith, that we may walk by it rather than by sense.

Sec. 49. *Of fathers of the flesh correcting their children.*

Ver. 9. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?*

That which the apostle had formerly set down simply in reference to God, he doth further amplify by way of comparison, and that betwixt our earthly fathers and our heavenly Father.

The first particle, *ἔτι*, *furthermore*, sheweth that this is a further proceeding in the same point. The argument which the apostle addeth is taken from the less to the greater; and it is so laid down, as the equity of our duty in enduring God's chastisement is thereby proved; for the apostle here declareth what subjection nature teacheth children to yield to their earthly parents, even in correcting them: much more ought God's word and God's Spirit teach saints how to subject to their heavenly Father's chastisements.

By fathers of the flesh, *τῶν σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας*, he meaneth such as, under God, are the instruments or means of our bodily and earthly being. Our former English hath translated it, *fathers of our bodies*; but the Greek word properly signifieth, *of the flesh*.

*Flesh* is oft used to set out our human nature, as John i. 14; and also our corrupt estate, Rom. vii. 18. In both senses it is used, John iii. 6, and in this place may well be so taken, as is evident by the opposition of this word, *spirit*; for God is both the Father of our souls, Gen. ii. 7, and gives unto us that spiritual estate which we have, even the Spirit, John iii. 6. In regard of our spiritual estate, which is oft called spirit, we are said to be 'born of God,' John i. 13.

The opposition thus taken betwixt our corporal and spiritual estate maketh the argument the more evident; for if means for our temporal good be well taken, much more for our spiritual good.

Our earthly fathers are here said to be, word for word, *παῖδράς*, *correctors*, which is very euphonical: it sheweth that they take that care and burthen upon them, to order it, as seemeth good to themselves, for their children's good.

This description of our parents on earth taketh it for granted that they can give but an earthly being. Hereupon they that come from them are styled 'sons of men,' Ps. viii. 1; 'flesh,' John iii. 6; 'clay,' Isa. xiv. 8; 'dust and ashes,' Gen. xviii. 27; 'worms,' Job xxv. 6.

Nothing can give more than it hath—*nil dat quod non habet*; but man, as a man, hath but an earthly being.

1. This is enough to make men humbly-minded.

2. In particular, this should teach parents to use

all the means they can, that their children may have another being than they have from themselves. Hereof see more in *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Sec. 1.

This office here attributed unto fathers, to be *παῖδράς*, *correctors*, giveth proof that it is a parent's duty well to nurture his child, and that by correction, as occasion requireth. See more hereof in *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Sec. 46, &c.

Sec. 50. *Of children's reverencing the parents that correct them.*

From the forementioned office of fathers about correcting their children, the apostle maketh this inference, *we gave them reverence*. The Greek word, *ὑπέταξαμεθα*, is a compound; the simple verb, *ὑπέταξα*, signifieth to *turn*. This compound being of the middle voice, *ὑπέταξαμεθα*, signifieth to *reverence* one, which is manifested by turning to him. It is negatively used, Luke xviii. 2. It here intendeth that filial respect which dutiful children bear to their parents. It is here brought in as a granted case, which the very light and instinct of nature teacheth children; making them so far from disrespecting their parents, or rebelling against them for correcting them, as they stand the more in awe of them, and are the more fearful to offend them, and careful to please them.

Hereupon he thus bringeth it in as a ruled case, *we gave them reverence*; so as genuine children do not the less respect parents for correcting them. 'Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul,' Prov. xxix. 17. See more hereof in *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 5, Of Children, Secs. 33, 34.

Sec. 51. *Of God the Father of spirits.*

From the forementioned reverence which nature teacheth children to yield to their earthly parents that correct them, the apostle maketh this inference, *Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits?*

It is God who is here styled *the Father of spirits*, and that in opposition to *fathers of our flesh*: so as hereby he intendeth that God is the author of our spiritual being, John i. 14, iii. 6, Num. xxvii. 10. This he is in that,

1. He createth immediately from himself that part of man which is called spirit, Gen. ii. 7, Eccles. xii. 7.

2. He worketh in men the gifts of the Spirit—even that ability which their spirits have to act anything, Exod. xxxv. 31, Num. xi. 27, Judges xiii. 25. In this respect God is said to give a spirit to such and such, Exod. xxxi. 3, Num. xi. 25, Judges xiii. 25, 1 Sam. x. 9.

To be a Father of spirits is a divine work; for it is a new creation, and in that respect proper to God.

On this ground,

1. Use all means which God hath sanctified for obtaining such a spirit as may make us new creatures.

2. In the use of means, call on God for his Spirit; for this he hath promised, Luke xi. 13, 1 Cor. iii. 7.

3. Receive the glory of this work to God, Rom. xi. 35.

4. Use the Spirit and the gifts thereof to the glory of God, 1 Cor. x. 31.

#### Sec. 52. *Of subjection to God's correction.*

That which is required of us by reason of the foregoing prerogative of God, that he is the Father of spirits, is, that we be *in subjection to him*.

Of the emphasis of the Greek word, *be in subjection*, see Chap. ii. 5, Sec. 43, and *Domest. Duties*, on Eph. v. 22, Treat. 1, Sec. 12.

It hath here an especial reference to God's correction, that we should humbly, meekly, patiently, penitently endure the same. This is expressly enjoined, James iv. 7, 9, 1 Pet. v. 6.

The Scripture doth plentifully note out the disposition of God's people in this kind: as of Aaron, Lev. x. 3; of Eli, 1 Sam. iii. 18; of David, 2 Sam. xv. 26, and xvi. 11; and Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 19; and sundry others. Simple and absolute subjection is to be yielded to God.

This is the rather to be done, because all the comfort and fruit that we can expect from God's correction, ariseth from our subjection thereunto. See more hereof, Ver. 7, Sec. 44.

This subjection unto God is much enforced by this comparative interrogative, *ὥς τολμᾷ μάλλον, shall we not much rather?* So as God is more to be respected in his dealing with us, than man in his. In reference hereunto, saith the Lord of Miriam, 'If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?' Num. xii. 14. And Eli to his sons, 'If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?' 1 Sam. ii. 25. So Job xxxiv. 18, 19, Mal. i. 8, Luke xii. 4, 5, Acts iv. 19, and v. 29.

There is an infinite difference betwixt God and man, and that in everything wherein man may seem to have any excellency. The highest sovereignty and supremest power that any earthly monarch hath, is but servitude and villainage to God's. The wisdom of the most prudent is but foolishness to God's. The power of the strongest men is but weakness to God's. So in other things.

How base is their disposition, who, to soothe men, sin against God! as flattering subjects, men-pleasing servants, servile children, and other such like.

Let our care be frequently and seriously to meditate on the difference betwixt God and man, that we may know how to prefer the more excellent.

Let all such as on conscience or in policy testify

respect to superiors on earth, take occasion to raise up their hearts to God, and say, Shall I not much more testify all dutiful respect to my Lord, my Husband, my Father in heaven?

#### Sec. 53. *Of life, the effect of God's correction.*

To enforce the aforesaid subjection to God, the apostle addeth this blessed effect thereof, *καὶ ζήσονται, and live*. If we be in subjection to the Father of spirits, we shall live. Hereby he means such a spiritual life as will bring us to eternal life. In this respect, saith the wise man, 'he is in the way of life that keepeth instruction,' &c., Prov. x. 17. Elihu noteth this to be a means of delivering a man from going down to the pit, Job xxxiii. 24. Yea, it is said of earthly parents' correction, 'thou shalt deliver his soul from hell,' Prov. xxiii. 14.

A due consideration of the distinct kinds of life will clearly demonstrate the equity thereof.

1. By afflictions men are restrained from such distempers as would shorten their days: yea, and from capital crimes, which cause many to be cut off by the magistrate's sword. This is one reason why children's obedience to parents is said to prolong their days, Exod. xx. 12. To this purpose may fitly be applied that which the psalmist saith, Ps. xciv. 12, 13.

2. By afflictions many, who, before they were afflicted, ran on headlong in the ways of death and destruction, are pulled out of those ways, and brought to walk in the ways of life, Ps. cxix. 67, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, Luke xv. 17.

3. By afflictions here, eternal death is in many prevented, 1 Cor. xi. 32, and eternal life assured, 2 Cor. iv. 17.

This discovereth the woeful plight of such as are suffered to spend all their days in ease, liberty, pleasure, wealth, honour, and what else their corrupt hearts can desire, and are not afflicted as other men. They are like those who have mortal and incurable diseases insensibly breeding upon them, and no means to prevent or redress them.

This very fruit of afflictions, *life*, is enough to move us humbly, contentedly, and patiently to subject ourselves to God's visitation. The life here intended will make full satisfaction for all. What will not men endure for life? temporal life makes men willing to take anything prescribed by physicians, or to endure anything done by surgeons, Job ii. 4. But it is a spiritual and eternal life which God aims at in correcting his, and it is the fruit that will follow thereupon.

#### Sec. 54. *Of man's doing good but a few days.*

Ver. 10. *For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*

This verse is added as a reason further to enforce subjection to God's chastisement. The causal particle, *γὰρ, for*, intends as much. The reason is taken from

other differences betwixt earthly fathers and our heavenly Father.

To make it the more heeded, he inserteth this note of observation, *μὴ, verily*, whereof see Chap. i. Sec. 70.

The first difference here set down is in reference to the time, thus expressed, *πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας, for a few days*.

1. This circumstance of time may be referred to the minority of children, or the time of their childhood; or, at the uttermost, to the time of their mortal life on earth. Of expressing that time under the title of *days*, see Chap. iii. Sec. 71.

In the former respect it compriseth but the fourth part of an old man's life, twenty years at the most; and in that respect but a few days. Very few children are kept in awe by their parents' correction so long. Well therefore doth he insert this clause, *for a few days*.

2. The time here may have reference to the parent's life or abode with his children, which oft falleth out to be but a short time. For many parents are taken away in their children's minority; and among these some sooner, some later. Thus they can keep them in awe but a few days.

3. It may also be referred to the whole life of a child. For the life of a man is usually set out by days, by reason of the short continuance of life, Ps. xc. 9. Yea, it is set out by few days, Gen. xlvii. 9. Thus taken, it may have respect to the end, which most parents aim at in correcting their children, which is that, in this life, they may carry themselves civilly and honestly; and that they may restrain them from riot and excess in this world. But God's end is to keep his from everlasting destruction, 1 Cor. xi. 32, and to bring them to eternal glory, 2 Cor. vii. 14.

This in general sheweth that the good which man doth to man, is but for a while. Thus much is implied of an heir, that is 'under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father,' Gal. iv. 2. Manassah had his father to tutor him, but till he was twelve years old: he might have done better if he had enjoyed him longer, 2 Kings xxi. 1. The good which kings do for people is but for a few days, for they may of good prove naught, or else they may their prime be taken away. The like may be said of good ministers, husbands, masters, and others.

Men in this world are subject to many changes.

1. Their mind may soon alter, Jer. xxx. y being.

2. They may lose their ability to do, Jer. xxi. 10.

3. The opportunity which they have; 'worms,' fail, Eccles. iii. 1, Gal. vi. 10.

4. Such as are liable and ready *nū dat quod* upon may prove inflexible, Prov. xxi. an earthly

How should this stir up all who by other men here in this world, obly-minded, while they do enjoy them! for that parents to use

a few days. The shorter the time is for enjoying any good thing, the more careful ought we to be in improving that time. This is the main scope of that prayer, that God would teach us to number our days, Ps. xc. 12.

This is more plainly expressed, Eccles. ix. 10, and exemplified by Christ himself, John ix. 4.

The main intendment of the apostle in limiting the good which a man doth to a few days, is to manifest an especial difference betwixt God's dealing and man's. What God doth, he doth it for ever and ever. God hath power over all, not only for a few days, but all the days of this life, yea, and for ever hereafter, Ps. xxvii. 10. In this respect, therefore, is God's dealing with us to be more regarded than man's, though he be the father of our flesh. Hereof see more, Ver. 9, Sec. 52.

Sec. 55. *Of men's doing things after their own pleasure.*

Another difference betwixt our earthly fathers' and our heavenly Father's correcting, is in the end which the one and the other aimeth at.

The end which the fathers of the flesh aim at, is thus expressed, *after their own pleasure*.

The end which our heavenly Father aimeth at, thus, *for our profit*.

This phrase, *κατὰ τὸ δοκῶν αὐτοῖς, after their own pleasure*, may thus be turned, *as seemeth good to themselves*. This is to make their own will the ground and end of what they do to their children; which, in men who are subject to inordinate and perverse passions, is a corrupt and dangerous rule.

That earthly parents correct their children after their own pleasure, is manifest by the two extremes whereunto they are subject: one in the defect, which is too much lenity; the other in the excess, which is too much severity. Hereof see more in *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 6, Of Parents, Secs. 48, 49.

Of rules for correcting children see *ibid.*, Sec. 47.

This *ὡς αὐτοῖς* rather be in subjection are prone to of spirits?

It is God who is here styled the Father of spirits, and that in opposition to fathers of our flesh: so as hereby he intendeth that God is the author of our spiritual being, John i. 14, iii. 6, Num. xxvii. 10. This is in that,

1. He createth immediately from himself that part of man which is called spirit, Gen. ii. 7, Eccles. xii. 7.

2. He worketh in men the gifts of the Spirit—even that ability which their spirits have to act anything, Exod. xxxv. 31, Num. xi. 27, Judges xiii. 25. In this respect God is said to give a spirit to such and such, Exod. xxxi. 3, Num. xi. 25, Judges xiii. 25, 1 Sam. x. 9.

To be a Father of spirits is a divine work; for it is a new creation, and in that respect proper to God.





(a) Δλ.

(b) Συμψη.  
507.

**G**OD is so far from wronging his Children in correcting them, as he doth it for their profit. Herein it differeth from earthly Parents, as is evident by this particule of opposition, (a) *bnt.*

The (b) Greek word translated *profit*, signifieth that which bringeth something with it, namely some good thing, 1 Cor. 7.35. and 12. 7. In this sense it is here fully used. For God in afflicting his Children, aimeth at their good. Afflictions are especially comprised under those *All things, which work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. 8.28. David upon experience averreth thus much, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted*, Psal. 119.71. And the Church, *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth*, Lam. 3.27.

Of the particular good things which arise from Gods afflicting his Children, See v. 5. §. 37. and v. 7. §. 45.

If our own emolument, be not motive enough, to work patience under Gods correcting of us, what can be enough?

The particular kind of profit here especially aimed at, is thus expressed, *that we might be partakers of his holinesse*. How great a profit and benefit holinesse is, hath been shewed, Chap. 3. v. 1. §. 7.

Of the notation of the Greek word translated holinesse, see Chap. 2. v. 11. §. 100.

The more to commend the commodity here intended unto us, he thus stilch it; *His holinesse*. The relative *his* hath reference to God: so as it is Gods holinesse that is here intended. A greater commendation could not have been set upon a commodity. In this respect, Saints are stiled *the people of Gods holinesse*, Isai. 63. 18. and they who walk unworthy of their holy calling, are said to profane the holinesse of the Lord, Mal. 2. 11.

It is said to be Gods holinesse sundry ways.

1. In regard of the excellency thereof. For in *Canaans* language, excellent things are said to be of God.

2. In regard of the originall of it. It commeth from God, Jam. 1. 17.

3. In regard of the nature and kind of it. It is a divine grace: of the nature of God himself. This is that which is stiled the divine nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4.

4. In regard of the likenesse and resemblance we have therein to God, Lev. 19. 2. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. There is nothing wherein a creature can more resemble his Creator, then in holinesse. This is that Image of God, after which God at first created man, Gen. 1. 26, 27. Eph. 4. 24.

5. In regard of the communion which thereby we have with God. For *without holinesse no man shall see God*, v. 14. But they who have communion with God are stiled *an holy Priest-hood, an holy nation*, 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9. God therefore hath chosen us, *that we should be holy before him*, Eph. 1. 4. Christ for this end, *gave himself for his Church, and sanctified, and cleansed it, that it might be holy*, and so fit to be presented unto God, Eph. 5. 25, 26, 27.

Besides these generals, there are other particulars which shew why the holinesse of justification, and why the holinesse of sanctification are said to be Gods.

The holinesse whereby we are justified, is said to be Gods,

1. In regard of the very matter and essence of it. For it is the holinesse of the Son of God, our surety very God. In this respect we are said to be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

2. In regard of Gods imputing his Sons righteousness to us, and accounting it ours, Psal. 32. 1: Rom. 4. 6.

3. In regard of Gods accepting it as ours. For that which God accepts, may well be stiled his, *Eph. 1. 6.*

The holiness whereby we are sanctified, is said to be Gods,

1. In regard of the immediate worker of it in us : which is the third person in sacred Trinity, who is very God, the Spirit of God : who in regard of this divine operation, is stiled the Holy Ghost, *Rom. 15. 16.* and sanctification is said to be that of the Spirit, *2 Thes. 2. 13.*

2. In regard of the instrumental means of working it, which is Gods word.

3. In regard of the pattern of it, whereunto it is framed : that is Gods will, *Mat. 6. 10. 1 Thes. 4. 3. Rom. 12. 2.* Gods will is like the mould whereinto metal is cast ; and our sanctification is like metal cast into that mould : so they who are truly sanctified, carry the very Image of the will of God.

This giveth an evidence of the good and great respect which God beareth to his in conferring upon them his own holiness, even the excellency of his excellencies. It was an high degree of dignity, that God should at first create man after his own Image : but, after man had forfeited that dignity, to confer a greater, which is the holiness of God here meant, is beyond apprehension. The honour which *Ahasuerus* did to *Mordecai*, in causing the royal apparel to be put on him, and the royal Crown to be set upon his head, and he set upon the Kings horse, was counted so great, as this proclamation was made thereof, *Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour*, *Est. 6. 8. &c.*

But behold a dignity infinitely greater then that, Saints are arrayed with the holiness of God : Gods holiness is as a Crown set on their heads. Thus shall it be done to them whom the King of heaven delighteth to honour.

Of the grace of God, See v. 15. §. 82.

16: and sanctification is said to be that of the Spirit, 2 Thes. ii. 13.

2. In regard of the instrumental means of working it, which is God's word.

3. In regard of the pattern of it, whereunto it is framed; that is, God's will, Mat. vi. 10, 1 Thes. iv. 3, Rom. xii. 2. God's will is like the mould whereinto metal is cast; and our sanctification is like metal cast into that mould; so they who are truly sanctified carry the very image of the will of God.

This giveth an evidence of the good and great respect which God beareth to his, in conferring upon them his own holiness, even the excellency of his excellencies. It was a high degree of dignity that God should at first create man after his own image; but, after man had forfeited that dignity, to confer a greater, which is the holiness of God here meant, is beyond apprehension. The honour which Ahasuerus did to Mordecai, in causing the royal apparel to be put on him, and the royal crown to be set upon his head, and he set upon the king's horse, was counted so great, as this proclamation was made thereof, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour,' Esth. vi. 8, &c.

But behold a dignity infinitely greater than that; saints are arrayed with the holiness of God: God's holiness is as a crown set on their heads. Thus shall it be done to them whom the King of heaven delighteth to honour.

Of the grace of God, see Ver. 15, Sec. 82.

#### Sec. 57. *Of saints partaking of God's holiness.*

It is said concerning the forementioned holiness of God, that we are *partakers* of it.

Of the notation of the Greek word, *μεταλαβῆναι*, translated *partakers*, see Chap. vi. 8, Sec. 47.

It here sheweth that saints have not of themselves the foresaid holiness of God. They receive it, and so are made partakers of it, 1 Cor. iv. 7, Phil. i. 7, 1 Pet. iv. 10, 2 Pet. i. 4.

1. It being God's holiness, man cannot possibly have it, but by participation from God: who can have anything that is God's, but by God's gift?

2. Man by nature is clean empty, and utterly destitute of all holiness, Ps. xiv. 3, 2 Cor. iii. 5.

3. Man of himself is most unholy, by the stock whence he cometh; by his conception and birth, by his condition and disposition, Gen. vi. 5.

1. This taketh away all ground of self-boasting from them that have this holiness of God.

2. This gives just cause of returning the praise and glory of all that holiness which we have, to him that hath made us partakers thereof, Roa. xi. 35, 36. This is one end whereat God aimeth, in making men partakers of his holiness.

#### Sec. 58. *Of afflictions working God's holiness.*

Mention is here in special made of God's holiness,

to give proof of the profit of corrections. They work in men that admirable gift of God's holiness. Thus much an apostle intendeth, under this phrase, 'that the trial of your faith might be found unto praise, and honour, and glory,' 1 Pet. i. 7. On this ground another apostle exhorteth Christians to 'count it all joy when they fall into divers temptations,' James i. 2. Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, and the prodigal, are special instances hereof.

1. Afflictions bring men to sight of sin, to sorrow for the same, to a humble confession thereof, and to earnest deprecation from the guilt and punishment of sin. Thus they come to obtain some sweet evidence of the remission of their sins and justification of their persons, Ps. xxxiii. 4, 5.

2. Afflictions are grievous to the flesh, and thereupon put on men to seek some ease and refreshing in spirit, which can be no other way than by partaking of God's holiness.

3. Afflictions are an especial means to wean men from the vanities of this world, and to subdue the unruly lusts of the flesh, whereby the first part of sanctification, which is mortification, is wrought in them, Hosea v. 14, 15.

4. Afflictions make men inquire after God, and learn what may be pleasing unto him. Upon this inquiry duly made, it will be found that nothing is more pleasing to God than holiness, Hosea vi. 1.

Add this motive to sundry others that have been noted before, and it cannot but bring us to endure what it shall please the Lord to lay upon us.

This is an especial means of trial, whether afflictions have had a kindly work on us or no. If they have, we have thereby been made partakers of the holiness of God.

#### Sec. 59. *Of the meaning of these words, 'No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.'*

Ver. 11. *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them who are exercised thereby.*

This verse is added to meet with that which flesh and blood might object against all the comforts, and encouragements before delivered, for well bearing afflictions; and that is, experience and sense will say, we find no joy, but feel much grief under afflictions.

To take away this, the apostle grants that to be true, which sense opposeth, that chastening for the present is grievous.

The grant, as expressed in Greek, is very emphatical.

For, 1. It is set down in the most general term, thus, *ταῦτα*, all chastisement seemeth *not* to be joyous, that is, as our English hath to the sense fully expressed it, *no chastisement*. The Hebrew and Greek do oft express the general with a negative, though

the Latin and English account a negative general to be as a special.

2. The apostle useth the negative, because that which he had said before might seem to imply that there is pleasures, delights, and joys in afflictions.

But this he expressly denieth, in this phrase, *not joyous*.

3. He adds the affirmative, *but grievous*, because sense feels it to be so.

4. The substantive in Greek, *χαλῶς*, is used instead of the adjective, thus, *not of joy, but of grief*. It is matter, not of joy, but *λῶπης*, of grief. There is much emphasis herein.

5. To mitigate and mollify the matter, he addeth a limitation of the time, thus, *πρὸς τὸ παρὸν*, for the present.

Hereby is meant, that time wherein the affliction lieth upon a man, and wherein he feelth the smart and grief of it.

6. He addeth another limitation, in this word, *δοκῶν*, *seemeth*; which is taken sometimes in opposition to truth and reality. For many things seem to be what they are not, Luke viii. 18, 1 Cor. iii. 18. But here it is taken for experimental sense, as where it is said, 'the shipmen deemed that they drew near,' Acts xxvii. 27. Yet this is here so to be taken, as when sense feels grief, faith may conceive comfort. Affliction is indeed grievous to outward sense, and in that respect seemeth to be so; but not to faith. Thus it is a limitation.

#### Sec. 60. Afflictions are grievous.

That which the apostle here granteth concerning the grievousness of affliction, giveth us to understand that God well understandeth man's condition; he understandeth the nature of afflictions, the weight and smart of them. He understandeth man's sensibleness of them, and weakness in enduring them. God himself witnesseth as much concerning the afflictions of the children of Israel in Egypt, thus, 'I know their sorrow,' Exod. iii. 7; 'He knoweth our frame,' Ps. ciii. 14; 'Thou hast considered my trouble, thou hast known my soul in adversity,' saith David to God, Ps. xxxi. 7.

1. It is God himself that afflicteth; therefore he must needs understand the heaviness and sharpness thereof.

2. God knoweth a man within and without, Chap. iv. 13, Sec. 77. A skilful physician seeing a body anatomised, soon discerneth the diseases and anguishes thereof.

This is a great comfort to us in our greatest distresses; for we cannot but know, that if God understand our grievous condition, he will answerably support us and help us.

This God will the rather do by reason of the matter here granted, that afflictions are not joyous; for where affliction is, joy is said to be darkened, Isa. xxiv. 11, Lam. v. 15. Experience giveth sufficient proof hereof.

*Obj.* We are commanded to rejoice in afflictions, Mat. v. 12, James i. 2.

*Ans.* Not simply for the affliction, but for the cause and effect thereof; of these, see Ver. 5, Sec. 39. That heaviness in the affliction, and joy in the cause and effect may stand together, it is evident, 1 Pet. i. 6.

This gives proof of the inhuman and more than barbarous cruelty of them who, from the patience and constancy, and from the comfort and alacrity of martyrs, infer that their sufferings are a pleasure and delight unto them, and thereupon seek to lay the more load upon them.

Too near to this barbarousness do they come, who, in the sore trials of saints, tauntingly say, now be merry, now sing, like the cursed Chaldeans, Ps. cxxxvii. 3.

This gives instance of the unconceivable work of the Spirit, who can raise joy out of that which is not joyous. Surely this is no less admirable than God's first work, Gen. i. 2, 3.

The apostle contents not himself with the negative, that afflictions are *not joyous*, but adds, as a granted case, that they are *grievous*; so doth another apostle, 1 Peter i. 5.

The grievous complaints, not only of weak men, women, and children, but also of the stoutest hearts, and men of greatest courage, give sufficient proof hereof.

They are contrary to flesh and blood, whereof all consist; they press, they pinch it, and in that respect are grievous.

Consider the particulars, and this general will the more evidently appear. Persecutions by imprisonment, banishment, sword, fire, sundry tortures, are they not grievous? So sundry diseases, as stone, gout, strangury, &c.; so reproach, loss of goods, oppressions, &c.

Oh, pity and bear with them that are afflicted: succour and support them in what you can. Their condition being grievous, it needs and requires compassion, help, and succour. Herein shew yourselves like unto God. See *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 5, Sec. 29.

#### Sec. 61. The grievousness of afflictions are especially to sense.

The apostle doth many ways mitigate the grievousness of afflictions; as, first, that it is especially to sense; implied in this word, *δοκῶν*, *seemeth*. Thus much is intended under this phrase, 'Is my flesh of brass?' Job vi. 12. It is from sense that men's complaints of afflictions are so great as they use to be.

*Obj.* The soul and spirit of man is oft sorely afflicted, Ps. xlii. 5, 6.

*Ans.* 1. That is by reason of a sympathy with the body.

2. There is a sense of the soul as well as of the

body. Were the soul insensible, spiritual judgments, which are the heaviest, would prove to be no judgments.

Hereby we may see a ground of that difference which is betwixt party and party in enduring the same kind of affliction. Some will inwardly fret and vex themselves, and outwardly toss and tumble, rage and roar, and shew much impatience; others, on the other side, meekly and quietly, with much humility and patience, bear the affliction. The reason is, because the former are led only by sense; as they feel, so are they affected: the latter have an ability above sense to endure whatsoever is laid on them, and that by faith in God, his properties, and promises.

Two things may be here objected:

1. They who have faith are oft much disquieted; witness Job and David.

2. Heathen men, who have no faith, manifest admirable patience, as Regulus.

*Ans.* To the first: believers have flesh in them as well as spirit. That flesh is so sensible of sharp afflictions, as it oft hindereth the exercise of faith, Mat. xxvi. 41.

To the second: many heathen and natural men, through vainglory, or some other by and base end, have taken to themselves an invincible resolution, not to manifest any sense of the affliction which they endure, and thereupon seem to have no sense.

We Christians, by a patient enduring of that which seems not joyous but grievous, may gain and give evidence that the Spirit is more prevalent in us than the flesh.

For this end we must be well acquainted with the true grounds of comfort, which are these: Who afflicteth? God our Father. What moveth him? His love. What aims he at? Our need. What will he produce? Our good. What will follow thereupon? Everlasting glory.

Another mitigation of the grievousness of afflictions is, that they are but for a time, *αὐτοὶ τὸ πάλιν*, for the present, even for a little season. See more hereof on Chap. x. 37, Sec. 138.

#### Sec. 62. Of the future profits of afflictions.

A full solution of the forenamed objection, concerning the grievousness of afflictions, followeth, in these words, *nevertheless, afterwards, &c.* The Greek word translated *nevertheless* is that little particle of opposition, *ἀλλ*, which is commonly translated *but*. It here implieth a discrete proposition, as if it had been thus more fully expressed, *though* afflictions may for the time seem grievous, yet afterward they will produce a quiet fruit.

By this it appears that granting one truth impeacheth not another.

Truth is not contrary to truth. There may be some seeming contradiction, but upon a thorough inquisition into the matter, reconciliation will soon

be made betwixt truths. See more hereof, Chap. x. 1, Sec. 2.

The truth which the apostle here standeth to is, that afflictions are profitable. They yield their fruit.

The souls of saints are thereby made as good ground, which, by ploughing and harrowing, or digging and raking, is made more mellow and more fit to bring out a good crop: as children who, by their father's correction, have been brought from debauched and desperate courses, to a civil, honest, and peaceable life. Of the profit of afflictions, see Ver. 5, Sec. 36.

The profit of afflictions is here referred to the time to come, in this word, *ἔπειτα, afterwards*. This doth he testify that said, 'Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word,' Ps. exix. 67. Take instance hereof in such as by afflictions have been brought to God, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 13, 14, Luke xv. 17.

Afflictions are as medicines, which have a time to work.

They bring a man to a consideration of his former course, to an examination of himself, to a finding out of his sin, to a loathing and confessing of it, to purpose, promise, and covenant to forsake it for the future.

Hereby we learn to judge ourselves and others, not according to the present pain of afflictions, but to the future gain.

If afterwards they be bettered, then hath the physic kindly wrought. God's physic for the present makes the patient sick. Ploughing and harrowing ground makes it for the time seem barren; but afterwards the benefit of these and other like means ariseth. There must, therefore, be a patient expectation of future fruit.

#### Sec. 63. Of the peaceable fruit of righteousness arising out of affliction.

The particular and special fruit of affliction the apostle setteth out under this word, *δίκαιοσύνη, righteousness*.

Of *righteousness*, what it is, see Chap. i. 9, Sec. 114. Of the excellency of righteousness, see Chap. xi. 7, Sec. 33.

Though sundry distinctions may be made betwixt holiness and righteousness, yet I conceive that the apostle here intendeth under this word *righteousness*, the same thing that he did under this word *holiness*, Ver. 10, Sec. 58.

This fruit of affliction is amplified by an especial epithet, in this word, *εἰρηνική, peaceable*. This is so set down, as it may have reference to chastening, thus, it yieldeth a peaceable fruit; that is, chastisement worketh quietness and peace in a man. Or it may have reference to righteousness, the fruit of chastisement, thus, it yieldeth righteousness, which is a

peaceable fruit. Both tend to the same end, and imply that there is a peaceable fruit growing out of chastisement, either immediately or mediately, by righteousness, which ariseth from chastisement, and produceth this peaceable fruit. For righteousness and peace are oft joined together, as Isa. xxxii. 17, Ps. lxxxv. 10, Rom. xiv. 17 : and peace and comfort are oft noted to arise from affliction, Ps. cxxvi. 5, Mat. xi. 29. This will more clearly appear by a distinct consideration of the several kinds of peace.

1. Under external peace may be comprised freedom from troubles, and all manner of outward prosperities. After Job was well exercised with sore trials, God gave him this kind of peace, all manner of prosperity, Job xlii. 10.

2. Under internal peace are comprised God's favour, reconciliation with him, remission of sins, and peace of conscience. That this kind of peace followeth upon afflictions is evident, Ps. cxvi. 7, Mat. xi. 29, 2 Chron. i. 3, 4. Afflictions are a means to draw us to God, to make us search after his promises, and to apply them to ourselves: these cannot but breed peace of conscience. Besides, God useth to minister this inward peace to his saints, that they may be the better enabled to endure the chastisement.

3. Under eternal peace is comprised all that celestial glory and happiness which God hath prepared and promised to such as overcome. That this kind of peace is a fruit of affliction is evident, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 2 Thes. i. 7, 1 Pet. iv. 13.

Here behold an evidence of the unsearchable wisdom and almighty power of God, who can raise contraries out of contraries. Such are afflictions and peace. He can bring meat out of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong, Judges xiv. 14.

Among other motives for enduring afflictions, let this blessed fruit be well noted: a peaceable fruit followeth from thence.

The expression of *righteousness* in this case further sheweth that righteousness is the means whereby the foresaid peaceable fruit ariseth from affliction; righteousness is the proper fruit of quietness, and this two ways.

1. Privatively. For righteousness keepeth men from offending God, and from wounding and vexing their own conscience, and from running headlong into the broad way that leadeth unto destruction. Yea, furthermore, it keepeth men from the penalty of the human laws, from incensing such as have authority over them, and from contentions and quarrels with others.

2. Positively. Righteousness is acceptable to God; it causeth the light of his favour, which cannot but work much peace in a man's soul. It gives evidence of men's title and interest in Christ, which of all things doth most work peace of conscience, Rom. v. 1. Besides, righteousness is the way to walk in, for attaining eternal peace.

Hereby we have information in the true cause of the quarrels betwixt God and man, of the troubles and perplexities of conscience, of the discords and contentions among men, and the endless and easeless torture in hell; this is want of righteousness.

Learn hereby how to get a plentiful crop of peace and quietness. Sow the seed of righteousness, Hosca x. 12, Gal. vi. 7. In this kind, he that soweth plentifully shall reap plentifully.

Sec. 64. *Afflictions are as means of exercising saints.*

That it may be known who they be that partake of the foresaid benefit of afflictions, the apostle thus setteth them out, *them that are exercised thereby.*

Of the notation of the Greek word, *γυμνασάμενοι*, which we translate *exercised*, see Chap. v. 14, Sec. 75. Though the word were at first used for such as strive for mastery or victory at the Olympian games, yet use hath applied it to all manner of exercises, and that of the body and soul. Mention is made of bodily exercise, 1 Pet. iv. 8, and of a heart exercised, 2 Pet. ii. 14. From the common use of this word, a name is taken and given to a place of any exercise, even for a school of learning.

The word here used is of the passive voice, but hath reciprocal signification answerable to the last Hebrew conjugation (*Nithpael*), to *exercise one's self*; as if it were thus translated, *who by it shall exercise themselves*. For a man may passively be too much exercised with affliction, and yet not reach the forementioned fruit thereby. Instance Ahaz, 2 Chron. xxviii. 17, 18, &c.

But they are properly said to be exercised, or to exercise themselves by afflictions, who thereby are brought contentedly and patiently to endure them, so as thereby they take occasion of manifesting their sound faith, patient hope, undaunted courage, simple obedience, and other like graces.

Here it is taken for granted that afflictions are means of exercising saints. They are as the exercises of champions, or as dangerous wars to soldiers, or as tempestuous seas to mariners, or as scholastic exercises to scholars, to try them, to prove them, to discover of what spirit they are. In this respect the learned languages put one and the same word for instruction and correction. In this respect an apostle saith that faith is tried by affliction, 1 Pet. i. 7. Yea, expressly he saith of afflictions, that they are to try them, 1 Pet. iv. 12. We heard before that God's ancient worthies had 'trials of mockings and scourgings,' Chap. xi. 36, Sec. 253.

As the fire consumes the dross of gold, or other like metal, so doth affliction such corruptions as cleave to men. This teacheth us to labour after truth in grace, that so it may abide the trial, and also to fit and prepare ourselves for trials. An unexercised man will not dare to enter into the list.

Afflictions prove fruitful by saints exercising them-

selves therein. In this respect an apostle pronounceth him 'blessed who endureth temptation,' James i. 12.

They may be said to be exercised by afflictions, who with patience and courage undergo the hardness of the trial, and, withal, persevere and hold out unto the end. Patience and perseverance are requisite for that exercise which by affliction brings profit. Of patience, see Chap. x. 38, Sec. 135. Of perseverance, see Chap. iii. Sec. 68.

Sec. 65. *Of the resolution of Heb. xii. 5-11.*

Ver. 5. *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you, as unto children, My son, despise not them that chasten thee of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.*

6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

7. *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

8. *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

9. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?*

10. *For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*

11. *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

In these seven verses is set down comfort for the afflicted.

Two points are herein to be considered :

1. The manner of propounding the comfort.
2. The matter whereof it consisteth.

The manner is by a preface. Whereof there are two parts :

1. A mild reprehension.
2. A sweet insinuation.

In the reprehension we have,

1. The act blamed, *ye have forgotten.*
2. The subject, *the exhortation.*

2. The insinuation noteth out two points :

1. A relation betwixt God and such as he afflicteth: they are his *children*.

2. A manifestation thereof, in this phrase, *which speaketh unto you.*

The matter of the comfort is,

1. Propounded, in a text of Scripture, vers. 5, 6.
2. Amplified, by an exposition of that Scripture.

In the text of Scripture we have,

1. A mild compellation, *my son.*
2. A wise direction: wherein is declared,

- (1.) The matter enjoined, ver. 5.
- (2.) A motive to enforce it, ver. 6.

The matter discovers two extremes to be avoided.

One, of the excess; the other, in the defect.

In both of them the fault is propounded and aggravated.

The first fault, in the excess, is to *despise*.

The second, in the defect, is to *faint*.

The aggravation of both is set down two ways.

1. In the kind of afflictions, in two words, *chastisements, rebukes*.

2. In the author and order thereof, *the Lord*.

The motive to enforce the foresaid direction is taken from the procuring cause of God's correcting his.

Herein are two points :

1. The distinct kinds of motives, which are two.

(1.) Love, *whom the Lord loveth.*

(2.) Care, *whom he receiveth.*

2. Distinct kinds of afflictions. 1. Chastising.

2. Scourging.

In the exposition of the foresaid text there is,

1. A clearing of the sense thereof.

2. A removing of an objection from it, ver. 11.

The text is cleared two ways :

1. Simply, vers. 7, 8. 2. Comparatively, vers. 9, 10.

The simple consideration of the point is set down,

1. Affirmatively, ver. 7. 2. Negatively, ver. 8.

The affirmative part is, 1. Propounded. 2. Proved.

1. A restraint of the main point.

2. An extent thereof.

The restraint declares a supposition of a duty to be performed on our part, *if ye endure chastisement*.

2. An illation or inference of God's dealing, thus, *he dealeth with us as with sons*.

The proof is taken from God's impartial and constant dealing with all his sons, where is manifested the extent of the forenamed restraint.

In this proof observe,

1. The manner of propounding it, interrogatively.

2. The matter whereof it consisteth. And that in four particulars.

(1.) The author of afflictions, *the father*.

(2.) The patient afflicted, *son*.

(3.) The kind of affliction, *chastisement*.

(4.) The universality, *what son not?*

The negative consideration of the point sets down the condition of such as are not chastened : which is a condition clean contrary to the former. This is,

1. Propounded. 2. Proved.

It is propounded,

1. Affirmatively, *ye are bastards*.

2. Negatively, *not sons*.

In the proof of it is laid down,

1. The ground of that condition, set down conditionally, *if ye be without chastisement*.

2. The kind of proof, God's constant dealing with all : *whereof all are partakers*.

The comparison whereby the apostle doth further illustrate the foresaid point of God's chastening his

children in love, is taken from earthly parents. It is propounded, ver. 9, and illustrated, ver. 10.

The comparison propounded consisteth of two parts :

1. A proposition. 2. An application.

In the proposition there is,

1. A description of the persons with whom the comparison is made, *fathers of our flesh*.

2. Their act, *which corrected us*.

3. Our respect to them notwithstanding that correction, *we gave them reverence*.

In the application we are to consider,

1. The manner of applying it, with this emphatical interrogation, *shall we not much rather?*

2. The matter whereof it consisteth. Herein are expressed,

- (1.) A description of God, *the Father of spirits*.

(2.) The duty of believers to God, *be in subjection*.

(3.) An effect following thereupon, *and live*.

The illustration of the forementioned comparison is, by the difference of earthly fathers' and our heavenly Father's correcting, which are these :

1. The time of their nurture. *They for a few days*. The contrary intended of God is, that he doth it so long as there is need.

2. The end. *They after their own pleasure*. But God *for our profit*. This latter is amplified by the particular benefit that thence redoundeth : which is,

1. Expressed in this word, *holiness*.

2. Illustrated two ways :

(1.) By the excellency of it, in this relative particle, *his*—that is, *God's*.

(2.) In our participation thereof. *That we might be partakers of it*.

In removing the objection against the foresaid direction about enduring afflictions, there is,

1. The objection propounded.

2. A solution added.

In propounding the objection there is,

1. A concession or grant.

2. A limitation thereof.

The concession is set down two ways.

1. Negatively. *No chastening is joyous*.

2. Affirmatively. *But grievous*.

The limitation is double.

1. In reference to outward sense, *seemeth*—namely, to sense.

2. In reference to the time, *for the present*.

The solution is taken from the future benefit.

Here note,

1. The intimation of the answer, *nevertheless*.

2. The expression thereof, wherein is set down,

(1.) The time when the benefit is received, *afterwards*.

(2.) The kind of benefit, *righteousness*. Amplified by the effect thereof, *peaceable*.

(3.) The means of obtaining it, *it yieldeth the fruit*.

(4.) The persons that partake thereof, *them that are exercised thereby*.

Sec. 66. *Of observations raised from Heb. xii. 5-11.*

I. *People's failings are to be made known*. So doth the apostle here, ver. 5, *ye have forgotten*. See Sec. 30.

II. *It is a fault to forget encouragements*. This fault the apostle here expressly taxeth. See Sec. 30.

III. *God's word affordeth consolatory exhortations*. The Greek word translated *exhortations* implieth as much. See Sec. 31.

IV. *Forgetting grounds of encouragement makes men faint*. This is the reason why the apostle here reprehendeth their forgetfulness. See Sec. 31.

V. *God in the Scripture speaketh unto us*. This word, *speaketh*, hath reference to the Scripture. See Sec. 32.

VI. *God's word is for all ages*. That which was spoken to the church in Solomon's time, is here spoken to the church in the apostle's time, as is intimated in this phrase, *unto you*. See Sec. 31.

VII. *God dealeth with saints as a father with children*. The metaphor of children here used proveth as much. See Sec. 32.

VIII. *It is sufficient to quote the words of Scripture, though book, chapter, and verse be not named*. So doth the apostle here. See Sec. 35.

IX. *People are as children to their pastor*. It is the minister that here saith, *my son*. See Sec. 33.

X. *General doctrines are intended to particular persons*. This hint of a particular person, *my son*, gives proof hereof. See Sec. 34.

XI. *Divine principles are with testimonies of love to be instilled into men's hearts*. This compellation, *my son*, is a testimony of love. See Sec. 33.

XII. *Afflictions are of God*. They are here called the chastisement of the Lord. See Sec. 36.

XIII. *Saints' afflictions are chastisements*. So they are expressly called. See Sec. 37.

XIV. *There are extremes about afflictions, whereunto men are ready to fall*. Here are two mentioned, *despising*, and *fainting*. See Sec. 38.

XV. *Extremes are to be avoided*. We must neither *despise* nor *faint*. See Sec. 38.

XVI. *To despise chastisements is a great fault*. It is here forbidden in the first place. See Sec. 38.

XVII. *It is a fault also to faint under afflictions*. This is also reproved. See Sec. 38.

XVIII. *God by afflictions instructeth his children*. The meaning of the word translated *chastisement* implieth as much. See Sec. 37.

XIX. *Afflictions are convictions of sin*. The word translated *rebuketh* implieth thus much. See Sec. 39.

XX. *God loves sons of men*. This here is taken for granted, in this phrase, *whom the Lord loveth*. See Sec. 41.



XXI. *God takes care of his children.* This is intended, under this phrase, *whom he receiveth.* See Sec. 41.

XXII. *Afflictions are evidences of God's love and care.* So they are here brought in. See Sec. 41.

XXIII. *God oft sorely afflicteth his children.* The word *scourging* implieth as much. See Sec. 42.

XXIV. *God's love and care in afflicting his should make them willing to submit to him.* Thus much is intended under this causal particle, *for.* See Secs. 40, 42.

XXV. *God's grant hath its condition.* This is implied, under this phrase, *if ye,* &c. See Sec. 43.

XXVI. *Afflictions are made profitable by enduring.* This is the condition here expressed, *endure.* See Sec. 44.

XXVII. *God dealeth with his as sons.* This is expressly set down. See Sec. 45.

XXVIII. *Afflictions are fruits of God's fatherly care over saints.* The inference of God's dealing with them upon chastening, proves as much. See Sec. 45.

XXIX. *Afflictions are the common condition of all God's children.* This is the intent of this emphatical interrogative, *what son is he?* &c. See Sec. 46.

XXX. *Immunity from afflictions is a bastard's prerogative.* The apostle saith of such, that they are bastards. See Sec. 47.

XXXI. *Men are hardly brought to believe that afflictions are fruits of God's fatherly love.* The apostle therefore again inculcatheth this, that all are partakers of afflictions, and that they are not sons who do not partake of them. See Sec. 48.

XXXII. *Argument upon argument must be used in matters hardly believed.* After sundry arguments, the apostle addeth this word, *furthermore.* See Sec. 49.

XXXIII. *Men can produce but an earthly being.* They are fathers of the flesh. See Sec. 49.

XXXIV. *Parents must correct their children as there is cause.* The Greek word attributed to them signifieth correctors. See Sec. 49.

XXXV. *Genuine children do not the less respect their parents for correcting them.* This phrase, *we gave them reverence,* intends as much. See Sec. 50.

XXXVI. *God is the author of our spirits.* He is here styled the Father of spirits. See Sec. 51.

XXXVII. *God's correction is patiently to be endured.* This is to be in subjection. See Sec. 52.

XXXVIII. *Patience under God's affliction bringeth life.* The addition of this phrase, *and time,* intendeth as much. See Sec. 53.

XXXIX. *God is more to be respected in his dealing with us than earthly parents.* This interrogative, *shall we not much rather,* imports as much. See Sec. 52.

XL. *The good that man doth for man is but a while.* It is but for a few days. See Sec. 54.

XLI. *Men are prone to make their own will their rule.* This phrase, *after their own pleasure,* declares as much. See Sec. 55.

XLII. *Men's own will puts them on to correct their children.* They chastened after their own pleasure. See Sec. 55.

XLIII. *God in afflicting his children aims at their good.* He doth it for their profit. See Sec. 56.

XLIV. *Afflictions work holiness.* This is the particular profit here expressed. See Sec. 58.

XLV. *Men are made partakers of God's holiness.* This relative, *his,* hath reference to God. See Sec. 56.

XLVI. *Saints receive that holiness which they have.* They are made partakers of it. See Sec. 57.

XLVII. *Conceits which thwart truth are to be removed.* Here the apostle removes an objection which might keep men from yielding to that truth which he had delivered. See Sec. 59.

XLVIII. *God well understandeth men's condition.* He here granteth that afflictions are grievous. See Sec. 60.

XLIX. *Afflictions are no pleasing things in themselves.* Thus they are not joyous. See Sec. 60.

L. *Afflictions are grievous.* Thus much is here granted. See Sec. 60.

LI. *The unpleasingness and grievousness of afflictions is especially to sense.* This word, *seemeth,* implieth as much. See Sec. 61.

LII. *The unpleasingness and grievousness of afflictions is for a while.* It is here said to be for the present. See Sec. 62.

LIII. *Granting truth impeacheth not a just cause.* This is implied under this particle, *nevertheless.* See Sec. 62.

LIV. *Afflictions, as ordered by God, are profitable.* The profit is here set down in this verse. See Sec. 62.

LV. *The profit of affliction ariseth after enduring it.* This word of time, *afterward,* implieth as much. See Sec. 62.

LVI. *Righteousness is the proper fruit of affliction.* It is here expressly set down. See Sec. 63.

LVII. *Afflictions produce quietness of mind.* This epithet, *peaceable,* hath a general reference to afflictions. See Sec. 63.

LVIII. *Righteousness is the root of quietness.* It is therefore styled a peaceable fruit of righteousness. See Sec. 63.

LIX. *Afflictions are a means of exercising saints.* They are exercised thereby. See Sec. 64.

LX. *Afflictions prove fruitful by saints exercising themselves therein.* Unto them it yieldeth the foresaid fruit. See Sec. 64.

Sec. 67. *Of the meaning of Heb. xii. 13.*

Ver. 12. *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.*

13. *And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way: but let it rather be healed.*

The first illative, *ὅθεν*, *wherefore*, sheweth that this verse hath reference to the former, as a use to be made thereof, and that by prescribing means for the better observing the foresaid point of well enduring afflictions.

The means are set down metaphorically.

The metaphors are two.

One, in this phrase, *lift up the hands which hang down*.

This is taken from fencers, or wrestlers, or soldiers, or other like champions.

The other, in this phrase, *and the feeble knees*. This is taken from runners in a race.

Champions use their hands; runners their legs, made useful by the joints in the knees.

Both these parts in the body are very pertinently produced, because they are of all parts most active, and most useful for acting, and effecting anything.

This phrase, *which hang down*, is the interpretation of one compound Greek word, *παρήμενός*, which signifieth *slack or loose*. It is derived from a simple verb, *ἔει, ἔει, ἔει*, which signifieth *to send or let go*.

The epithet here used, applied to hands, signifieth dangling hands, hands that have lost their strength. A body that hath lost its ability, agility, or vigour, by inordinate pleasures, hard labours, much sickness, or old age, is called *ῥῆμα παρήμενός*, a spent or wasted or weak body.

The other epithet, *παρὰρῆμα*, applied to the knees, is also a Greek compound; we translate it *feeble*. It is derived from a simple verb, *ῥῆμα*, that signifieth *to loose*, Luke xiii. 15. The compound participle here used is oft taken by way of a substantive, and translated, 'taken with a palsy,' and the disease itself, *παράρῆμα*, namely, 'a palsy,' hath in Greek a derivation from the same root. A palsy is a resolution of the nerves, sinews, arteries, and other ligaments. By this means a man's knees and other joints come to be very weak, and unfit for their function. Fitly, therefore, is the word here translated *feeble*.

Concerning the foresaid dangling hands and feeble knees, the apostle here exhorteth *to lift them up*. The word, *ἀνορθώσαι*, here used, is derived from a noun, *ὀρθός*, that signifieth *right*, and properly signifieth to rectify, re-edify, or make up again that which is decayed, Acts xv. 16, Luke xiii. 13. It is a very fit word to express the apostle's intent about redressing that which is amiss.

The things which are here spoken of the parts of the body, *hands*, and *knees*, are meant of the soul, and the faculties thereof. Thus are they used, Job iv. 3, 4, Isa. xxxv. 3.

The meaning of the apostle may more plainly and fully be expressed in this paraphrase.

Considering that most precious and glorious fruit ariseth out of the afflictions whereunto God's children in this world are subject, be not dejected in your minds, nor faint in your spirits by reason thereof: but as champions use their arms and hands with their best ability; and runners in a race use their knees and legs with their best agility; and in case their hands or knees begin to fail, they will with their utmost endeavour raise them up again: so do ye, in your souls be courageous, and in case your spirits begin to fail, quicken them up again, and endeavour to renew your spiritual strength and courage.

*Quest.* How can such as have hands hanging down and feeble knees lift them up? Such hands and knees import weakness, but lifting up, strength.

*Ans.* 1. Christians in their greatest weakness have some strength: for weak grace presupposeth some grace, and some spiritual life: where there is life there is some ability to move, to stir, to do this or that.

Herein lieth the difference betwixt those that are spiritually dead and weak. The dead can do nothing at all. The weak may do somewhat.

2. There are degrees of strength. Some strength is in so small a degree, as it may be rather counted weakness than strength. Thus much is hinted in this phrase, 'I believe, help my unbelief,' Mark ix. 24. If lifting up be taken for an act of strength in the highest degree, weakness cannot lift up; but in some low degree it may. A sick man may go, though not so strongly as a healthy man.

3. God is so gracious in accepting the truth of man's endeavour, as if he offers to lift up his hand and knees, he will accept thereof; yea, he will thereupon give strength, and enable them indeed to lift up.

Sec. 68. *Of the meaning of these words, 'make straight paths for your feet.'*

The apostle in the thirteenth verse followeth the metaphor taken from runners in a race: who as they fit and prepare their parts to run nimbly and speedily, so they are very careful to keep the right way, which will bring them to the goal. This he thus expresseth, *and make straight paths for your feet*.

The word, *τετραγία*, translated *paths*, properly signifieth the track of a cart wheel made in the ground. It is also used to signify a beaten path.

To *make* (*τετραγία*) a path, is to manifest the course wherein one goeth, so as others may see it, to follow him. For a path is a common way for many to walk in. He that maketh a path, sheweth people thereby in what way they must walk.

Hereby the apostle imports that a Christian's course is exemplary: as a path directing others in their way; or as a cart or coach wheel leaves impressions in the ground, so a Christian's carriage leaves such impression as all sorts take notice thereof.

In reference therunto, the apostle addeth this epithet, *εὐθείας*, *straight*.

In English, this word *straight* is used in a double respect.

1. For that which is narrow, opposed to wide and spacious, Mat. vii. 13, 14.

2. For that which is right, opposed to crooked, Luke iii. 4, 5.

I take it to be here meant in this latter respect.

This phrase, *ταῖς ποσὶν ὑμῶν*, for *your feet*, is in the Greek so set down indefinitely without any preposition, as it may be diversely taken: and so it is by divers expositors.

Our last English thus turn it, for *your feet*; others thus, to *your feet*; others thus, with *your feet*.

The difference is not great.

Feet are here metaphorically taken for a man's carriage, behaviour, or course of life; and in every of the forementioned phrases the metaphor implieth that a Christian's course is so to be ordered, as it may appear that it is in the right way that leadeth to life.

Sec. 69. *Of the meaning of the latter part of Heb. xii. 13.*

To enforce the foresaid direction of making straight paths, the apostle addeth a motive taken from the damage which otherwise may follow upon neglect thereof. The issue is thus expressed, *lest that which is lame, &c.*

Of this participle, *ἵνα μὴ*, *lest*, see Ver. 3, Sec. 25.

In expressing the damage, he followeth his former metaphor taken from runners in a race, whereunto they are most unfit who are *lame*.

The word, *ζυγῶδες*, translated *lame*, properly belongeth to the body, and useth to be applied to such as are defective in their feet, legs, or other limbs, whereby they are unable to go. It is attributed to him that was a cripple from his mother's womb, Acts iii. 2; and it is reckoned up amongst Christ's miracles, that 'the lame walk,' Mat. xi. 5.

It is here applied to the soul, and intendeth a defect in the faculties thereof. We know that a lame man is very unfit to run a race, and by reason of his halting may soon step awry and leave the right way. Thus a professor that is not thoroughly informed in his understanding, and settled in his will and affections about his religion, but ready to wander now to this side, then to that, as occasion moveth him, is in danger to be turned out of the right way. So much doth the apostle express under this phrase, *turned out of the way*. This phrase is the interpretation of one Greek compound word, *ἐκτρέπτω*. The simple verb, *τρέπω*, signifieth to *turn*. This compound, to *turn from*, or to *turn away*; and being applied to runners, to turn out of the way, as here it is fitly translated.

It is a great damage for such as are in the right

Christian course to be turned out of that way; the apostle therefore addeth this seasonable advice, *but let it rather (ἵνα μὴ) be healed*.

Many that have been lame in their limbs have been cured, and made whole and sound therein, and that both miraculously, and also by ordinary means. The apostle here implieth that the like may be done concerning the soul. The word translated *healing*, is frequently used in the four Evangelists, and in the Acts, and applied to the cure of all manner of maladies, whether inward diseases or outward sores, yea, to the casting out of devils, Acts x. 38.

The nouns, *ἰαμα*, *ἰασις*, that signify *healing*, are derived from the same root; and so is the title, *ἰατρὴς*, given to a physician, whose calling is to heal.

The main intent of the apostle here is to bring them to redress what is amiss, that they may not continue in their failings, and so wax worse and worse, but rather use all means to recover that which they may seem to have lost, or to attain to that which they had not before, though they might and should have had it.

The apostle useth two particles, one a conjunction of opposition, *ἀλλ*, *but*, the other an adverb of comparison, *μᾶλλον*, *rather*, whereby he doth much enforce the point, as if he had said, Let not your lameness turn you out of the way, *but rather* use all possible means whereby that lameness may be cured.

Sec. 70. *Of the analysis of, and observations from, Heb. xii. 12, 13.*

Ver. 12. *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;*

13. *And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out the way; but let it rather be healed.*

The sum of these verses is, a direction for Christians well to bear afflictions.

Herein we may observe the inference which the apostle maketh of it, upon that which he had before delivered, in this word, *wherefore*.

2. The substance, wherein is manifested,

(1.) The matter enjoined.

(2.) A motive to enforce it.

The matter sets down two duties.

1. One to redress what is amiss, ver. 12.

2. The other to prepare for a better progress, ver. 13.

In the former is expressed,

1. An act to be done, *lift up*.

2. A double object thereof; both enforced with their several adjuncts.

The former object is expressed, under this metaphor, *the hands*; the adjunct thereof, *which hang down*.

The latter object is in this metaphor, *knees*; the adjunct thereof, *feeble*.

In the latter, about preparing for a better progress, two points are laid down.

One, to go on in the right way.

The other, to redress swerings therein.

In the former one thing is implied, that professors *make paths for or by their feet*.

The other expressed, in this word, *straight*; they must be *straight paths*.

The motive to enforce all the foresaid duties is taken from the damage that may follow upon the neglect of them.

That damage is,

1. Generally hinted, in this particule, *lest*.

2. Particularly exemplified, wherein are two points considerable.

(1.) A manifestation of a mischief.

(2.) A prescription of a remedy.

In setting down the mischief, is noted,

1. The cause, *that which is lame*.

2. The kind of mischief, *be turned out of the way*.

About the remedy, we may observe,

1. The manner of setting it down, *but, rather*.

2. The matter whereof it consisteth, *let it be healed*.

#### Doctrines.

I. *Particular duties are to be inferred upon general doctrines*. Upon the general doctrine of affliction, the apostle inferreth the duties following, with this particule, *wherefore*. See Sec. 67.

II. *True Christians may be weak Christians*. They to whom the apostle wrote were true Christians; yet they had *hands hanging down, and feeble knees*, which imply weakness. See Sec. 67.

III. *Weakness must be strengthened*. This is the main intent of the apostle's exhortation, See Sec. 67.

IV. *Man's best endeavour must be used for obtaining strength*. This metaphor of *lifting up hands hanging down, and feeble knees*, proves as much. See Sec. 67.

V. *Strength obtained must be well ordered*. This ariseth from the connexion of the thirteenth verse, being a direction, with the former verse, by this copulative, *and*. See Sec. 68.

VI. *A Christian's course is exemplary*. This phrase, of *making paths for their feet*, implieth as much. See Sec. 68.

VII. *A Christian's course must be a right course*. The word translated *paths* implieth as much. See Sec. 68.

VIII. *Professors are subject to inconstancy*. This is intended, under this metaphor, *lame*, as here used. See Sec. 69.

IX. *Inconstancy makes way to apostasy*. The mention of *lame turned out of the way*, intends this point. See Sec. 69.

X. *Inconstant persons must be established*. This is meant by *healing the lame*. See Sec. 69.

XI. *Fear of falling must make men more careful of recovery*. This is gathered from these two emphatical particles, *but, rather*. See Sec. 69.

Sec. 71. *Of peace*.

Ver. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord*.

To the forementioned duties about afflictions, the apostle addeth other duties that must grace a Christian's profession, and may be a means to keep them steadfast therein. The first is *peace*.

Peace, according to the Greek word, *εἰρήνη*, signifieth to *knit in one* (*εἰς ἓν εἶναι*), so as peace is an agreement in one betwixt different parties. Therefore it is styled 'a bond,' Eph. iv. 3. And he inferreth peace upon union thus, 'Be of one mind, live in peace,' 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

According to the different persons betwixt whom peace is, peace useth to be distinguished.

The parties are of three sorts:

1. God and man.

2. Man and his own conscience.

3. Man and man.

Peace betwixt God and man consists in that reconciliation which Christ hath made betwixt God and man, who is in that respect styled 'the Prince of peace,' as is shewed, Chap. vii. 2, Sec. 21.

Indeed, all peace cometh from God, and thereupon is he styled 'the God of peace.' See Chap. xiii. 20, Sec. 163.

Peace betwixt man and his own conscience is an effect of the forementioned reconciliation apprehended by faith, whereby the conscience ceaseth to trouble man, and resteth quiet in it.

Peace betwixt man and man is an agreement betwixt them.

This agreement is inward and outward. Inward, when men are joined together, in the same mind, and in the same judgment, 1 Cor. i. 10. This is properly betwixt saints; for they have one and the same word to enlighten their judgments, and to ground their opinion thereon. The particular unities mentioned, Eph. iv. 3, 4, &c., demonstrate as much.

Outward peace betwixt man and man is a quiet and peaceable conversing together. It consisteth in forbearing to wrong others, and in being ready to do all good offices of love and kindness. When this outward peace is joined with the inward, then is it most perfect. Such was the peace of the Christians in the primitive church, Acts iv. 32. Yet outward peace hath an excellency, though it be severed from the inward, in that it sheweth a readiness in man to have as much peace with others as he can.

The peace here meant is the third kind, peace betwixt man and man; for he had before encouraged these Hebrews to stand to their profession against all the opposition that a man could make; as a means thereto he addeth this direction, *follow peace*, for by following peace the violence of adversaries may be assuaged, and their opposition allayed. Besides, the apostle expressly setteth down the subject of peace here meant, in this phrase, *with all men*.

This virtue and grace of peace is the more proper to saints, by reason of the Spirit's altering and renewing their natural disposition; for by nature man is of a wrathful, revengeful, tumultuous, contentious disposition. They are as ravenous and devouring beasts one to another; but by the Spirit this disposition is altered, Isa. xi. 6-8.

*Obj.* 1. Many saints are subject to contention, 1 Cor. i. 11, Acts xv. 39.

*Ans.* 1. God's church on earth consists of a mixed company. There are therein children of the kingdom, and children of the world, Mat. xiii. 38. These latter be the contentious persons in the church, and of such may the apostle speak, 1 Cor. i. 11. And thereupon he adviseth to mark such, and to avoid them.

2. They who are on earth in the best manner regenerate, are but in part regenerate. The flesh remains in them, and that inclination which is in them to contention is from the unregenerate part; and in this respect was it that two great apostles had so great a contention betwixt them as they departed asunder one from the other, Acts xv. 39.

*Obj.* 2. Many heathen and unregenerate men have been of a quiet and peaceable disposition, and have followed peace.

*Ans.* 1. That disposition which is in heathen or in other natural and unregenerate persons, was but a mere seeming disposition; it had but a show of the grace or virtue. It could not come from true love, but rather from self-love, aiming at by-respects. This caveat of doing no wrong, *nisi licetissimum*, 'except provoked,' shews that their peaceableness was no true virtue. A fierce dog may be quiet till he be provoked.

2. Though the Spirit renewed not such men, yet it restrained them for the good of polities and societies, which otherwise could not have stood. God's Spirit, by restraining grace, moved the spirit of Cyrus, Darius, and sundry of those kings under whom the Jews were, to afford them peace. So were sundry heathen emperors moved to Christians.

#### Sec. 72. Of following peace.

The word, *ἀκολουθεῖτε*, whereby the apostle expresseth our endeavour after peace, is thus translated, *follow*. It is an emphatical word. It is attributed to an eager pursuit of such things as fly from one. It is used of hunters and hounds, which follow the game to take it, if it be possible.

In the New Testament it is taken two ways—

1. In a bad.
2. In a good sense.

In a bad sense, for persecuting saints, which meth to be done with the greatest eagerness that can be, even from city to city, Mat. x. 23, and xxiii. 34, Acts xxii. 1.

In a good sense, for using our uttermost endeavour to attain the things that are good, as 'charity,' 1 Cor.

xiv. 1; 'righteousness,' 1 Tim. vi. 11; 'that which is good,' 1 Thess. v. 15; and 'the mark for the prize of the high calling,' Phil. iii. 14; yea, 'such things as concern peace,' Rom. xiv. 19. We must so seek after peace, as we seek after everything that makes thereto. There is another word as emphatical to this purpose, which we translate 'endeavour,' Eph. iv. 3; but it is translated 'labour,' Heb. iv. 11; and 'study,' 2 Tim. ii. 15. The more to press an eager pursuit of peace, two words are joined together, thus, 'seek peace, and follow after it,' Ps. xxxiv. 14, 1 Pet. iii. 14. These two phrases, 'if it be possible,' and 'as much as lieth in you,' Rom. xii. 18, though they may seem limitations of this duty, yet they are also amplifications of the same, and shew that there must be nothing wanting in our endeavours; but our uttermost ability must be put out in following after peace. We have a worthy pattern hereof in David, who was for peace when others were for war, Ps. cxx. 7. So deals God with us, Rom. v. 10, Jer. iii. 1, and Christ our Saviour, Eph. ii. 17. With much vehemency of affection and expression of speech doth the apostle press this, 1 Cor. i. 10.

The excellency, necessity, and utility thereof do much commend it unto us.

1. For the excellency of it, peace doth much adorn and beautify the best estates. When Jerusalem was the glory of the whole world, it was a city compact together. The citizens thereof were all of one mind, Ps. cxxii. 3.

In the purest time of the primitive church, the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind. In the first and purest estate wherein God made man, there were no divisions, no dissensions.

In heaven, where the blessed angels and spirits of just men made perfect abide, there is a sweet and perfect agreement of them all. Agreement is that which maketh us most like the blessed Trinity in unity. Hence is it that all things appertaining to the church are styled 'things of peace': as, 'the God of peace,' Heb. xiii. 20; 'the Lord of peace,' 2 Thess. iii. 16; Christ 'the Prince of peace,' Isa. vi. 9; the Spirit, whereby the church is sanctified, produceth peace, Gal. v. 22; God's covenant, 'a covenant of peace,' Num. xxv. 12; 'the gospel of peace,' Eph. vi. 15; the ministers, 'publishers of peace,' Isa. lii. 7; the members of the church, 'sons of peace,' Luke x. 6; that wherunto we are called is peace, 1 Cor. vii. 15; the reward prepared for saints is peace, Rom. ii. 10.

2. For the necessity of peace, it is absolutely necessary for preserving polities and societies, Mat. xii. 25, and for participating of the mutual gifts and abilities which God hath conferred on several men. Where there is no peace, there will be no employing of them for the mutual good of others; nay, where there is no peace, men cannot with comfort and in safety live one

by another; they will be as fierce dogs, wolves, leopards, if not as very devils. The more prudent they may seem to be, the more they will undermine others; the mightier they are, the more they will oppress. Take instance of nations that are at enmity one with another, of kingdoms where are tumults and insurrections, of cities and incorporations, of parishes and of families, where are dissensions and contentions.

3. For the utility of peace, it is much every way. The psalmist, as it were ravished with a serious consideration of the benefit of peace, sets it out with a holy admiration, thus, 'Behold how good,' &c., Ps. cxxxiii. He there resembleth it to the precious oil of the tabernacle, which was the most precious composition that ever was made, and to the dew that falleth from the mountains into the valleys, which makes them most fruitful.

The profit of peace will more clearly appear by considering it in the divers kinds of peace.

1. There is an oecumenical peace, when several nations do mutually enjoy the commodities one of another. It is said of Solomon, that he had peace on all sides round about him, 1 Kings iv. 24.

2. There is a national peace, whereby in the same nation good orders are kept, magistrates respected according to their place, subjects relieved according to their need, good laws made and put in execution, together with sundry other benefits.

3. There is an ecclesiastical peace, when there is a good agreement in the church of God. Hereby God's houses are preserved and beautified, God's ordinances are freely and duly observed, people are better edified, ministers maintained, and good discipline executed.

4. There is a domestical peace, whereby families are made comfortable societies, husband and wife sweet yoke-fellows, children well educated, parents duly revered, masters had in honour, servants well provided for, and the affairs of the family well prosper. So many, so great are the benefits of peace, as they can hardly be reckoned up. No marvel, then, that peace hath been promised, prayed for, given as a blessing, and praise rendered to God for it. See more hereof in *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. See. 96.

Just occasion might here be taken of complaining of the want of so excellent, needful, and useful a gift. Where is peace to be found? Wars are everywhere among nations, even among those that profess the true religion. Tumults and insurrections everywhere, schisms and dissensions in commonwealths, churches, families, and other societies.

This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

Sec. 73. *Of peace with all men.*

The persons with whom peace is to be followed,

are set down in this large extent, *μετὰ πάντων, with all men.*

This must be taken of man's best and uttermost endeavour. The word, *ἀνακρίτε, follow*, though it imports an eager pursuit, yet but a pursuit, not simply an obtaining. The most eager hunters and hounds that can be, oft lose the game; so may they who do the uttermost that they can to procure peace, fail thereof. Therefore the apostle, in pressing this point, bath pertinently and prudently inserted these two limitations, 'if it be possible,' and 'as much as lieth in you,' Rom. xii. 18. They shew that no more than our uttermost endeavour is required, no impossibility is imposed upon us, yet nothing must be omitted that may make thereunto.

Peace is a fruit of love, which must be extended to all, for all sorts of men are comprised under this word, *neighbour*, whom the law maketh the object of love, Mat. xxii. 39.

That the extent of this apostolical precept may be the better discerned, I will exemplify it in some particulars.

Our endeavour after peace must be—

1. With those that are of the true religion: with them internal and external peace must be followed. The many unities set down, Eph. iv. 3, 4, are alleged for this end.

2. With such as are linked by special bonds of relation, as magistrates and subjects, ministers and people, husbands and wives, and other the like.

3. With strangers and foreigners, and such as are afar off. Christ preached peace to them that were afar off. This moved Joshua to make peace with the Gibeonites, Josh. ix. 9.

4. With enemies, Mat. v. 44. Even such as are so far from doing good to us, as they are ready to take all occasion of doing us wrong.

5. Such as are of another religion, Gen. xiv. 13, and Mat. xxi. 32.

*Obj.* Jehoshaphat was reproved for helping the ungodly, in that he went to war with Ahab, 2 Chron. xix. 2.

*Ans.* 1. There is a peace of confederacy, whereby men of different religions bind themselves from offering violence or any hurt one to another; yea, to communicate each to other of their several commodities, and to afford help each to other against such as shall wrong either of them, Gen. xxvi. 31. This is not unlawful.

2. There is a peace of amity and familiarity, whereby men give evidence of an approbation of one another's courses, and of too great affection one to another, knitting themselves as fast together as they can, and that in the nearest bond of relation that may be. For this was Jehoshaphat reproved, 2 Chron. xix. 2.

*Obj.* 2. We are forbidden to receive him that bringeth not the truth, 2 John 10.

*Ans.* We must distinguish betwixt persons of another religion. Some are not among us, but in other nations and countries. In this respect, there is no great danger of being seduced by them. There are also some of quiet spirits, and seek not to seduce others. With such there may be peace and concord.

Others live among us, are of turbulent spirits, take all occasions of gainsaying the truth, and endeavour what they can to seduce professors of the truth. Of such speaketh the apostle, 2 John 10.

*Obj.* 3. Christ himself saith, that he 'came not to send peace, but a sword,' Mat. x. 34.

*Ans.* Christ doth not properly speak this as the end of his coming, but as a consequence following thereupon. The most proper end of Christ's coming was to bring peace; but because the gospel, whereby that peace was revealed, was such a light as discovered the darkness wherein men lived, they that loved their darkness would not endure that light, but, by all the violence that they could, sought to suppress it; thence arose the sword.

*Quest.* If peace be to be followed with all men, how can one Christian go to law with another?

*Ans.* See an answer herunto in *The Guide to go to God, or Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, Sec. 150.

*Quest.* 2. How may Christians wage war?

*Ans.* See heretofore, *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 9, Secs. 17, 87.

Both law and war, rightly used, are means of procuring, recovering, and preserving peace.

*Sec. 74. Of peace-breakers.*

If peace be to be followed with all men, what may be thought of peace-breakers? Such as these—

1. Busybodies, and intermeddlers with matters that belong not to them, 1 Pet. iv. 15.

2. Men of churlish disposition, such as Nabal was, 1 Sam. xxv. 17. He endangered himself and whole family.

3. Suspicious heads, who in all things imagine the worst. Not without cause is this epithet given to this vice, 'evil surmises,' 1 Tim. vi. 4. This caused Saul so to persecute David as he did.

To this head may be referred hard censurers.

4. Whisperers, tale-bearers, reporters of such things as may stir up contention. The wise man resembleth such to fuel that maketh fire to burn, Prov. xxvi. 20, 22.

5. Quarrellers—such as on all occasion are ready to raise strife.

6. Proud persons, who scorn to pass by wrongs, or to seek peace, Prov. xiii. 10. In the pride of their heart they say, My friend shall find me to be his friend; mine enemy shall know with whom he hath to do,—a speech more besecming a heathenish Roman than a Christian professor.

7. Irreconcilable persons, who will accept of no

atonement, no peace: like the fellow-servant, Mat. xviii. 30. Such a one was Saul.

8. Men ready on all occasions to go to law, 1 Cor. vi. 1.

9. Lawyers, that stir up their clients to hold out their suits in law, and help them in their unjust causes, as Tertullus, Acts xxiv. 2.

10. All sorts of notorious sinners, who provoke the Lord to take away peace from people, Jer. xvi. 5, 12.

*Sec. 75. Of means to procure and preserve peace.*

For procuring peace, the apostle commends five special virtues, Eph. iv. 2–4.

1. Humility, or lowliness of mind, whereby we think as meanly of ourselves as is meet; and are ready to prefer others before ourselves. This will keep a man from pride, scorn, and other incendiary properties.

2. Meekness, which is a quiet disposition of the soul, whereby a man is of a mild temper to others, whether they be mild or harsh to him—as a sheep is ever like itself. A dog also may be sometimes quiet; but if it be provoked, it will fly in your face. Meekness keeps men from quarrelling, from whispering, from all manner of turbulent disposition.

3. Long-suffering, which is a patient disposition, whereby a man is moved to bear with wrongs. This moderateth anger, cruelty, and rage; this restraineth revenge.

4. Forbearing one another: this hath respect to others' infirmities, which they behold with such pity and compassion, as it makes them to pity them the more, but not the less to respect them. This keeps men from churlishness, which is a great enemy to peace.

5. Love: this is a uniting grace; it knits men's hearts together, 1 Sam. xviii. 1, Col. ii. 2; it is therefore of singular use to keep peace; it keeps down incentives to contention, and composeth men to peace, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5.

For preserving peace, two things are to be observed:

1. Avoiding things that break peace, which are set down, Sec. 74.

2. Labour after the things that make to peace, even such as these:

(1.) Be of one mind, 1 Cor. i. 10.

(2.) If that cannot be, be sure that that wherein thou dissentest be a truth grounded on God's word.

(3.) Dissent in love.

(4.) If men be such as we cannot be in amity and familiarity withal, yet let there be external unity.

(5.) Embrace all offers of peace, Luke xvii. 4.

(6.) Stand not on punctilios, who should first begin; be thou the forwarder, Gen. xiii. 8.

(7.) Cease not to follow it upon others' refusal, Ps. cxx. 7.

(8.) Mediate with others, and for others, though thou thyself beest not at difference with either party, Mat. v. 9, Exod. ii. 13.

(9.) If God take away peace, humble thyself, repent, and earnestly call upon God to restore peace, 2 Chron. vii. 14.

#### Sec. 76. Of joining holiness with peace.

Another grace which dependeth on the foresaid verb, *διώκετε*, follow, is *ἀγιασμός*, holiness.

Of this grace, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 5, 6, &c.

It is joined with peace by this copulative, *καί*, and; so as peace and holiness must go together. He that was 'king of peace,' was also 'king of righteousness,' Chap. vii. 3, Sec. 22. Hezekiah thus joineth them together, 'peace and truth:' by truth he meaneth purity of religion. 'Peace and righteousness' are said to 'kiss one another:' they are like two turtle-doves, which seldom part, but very oft are billing one another. The 'kingdom of God' is said to be 'in righteousness and peace,' Rom. xiv. 17; and the 'wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable,' James iii. 17.

Peace hath an especial relation to man and his good; holiness, to God and his honour. These two may no more be severed, than the two tables of the law.

1. This union of these two graces discovereth the uncertainty of that note which papists give of a true church—namely, union, concord, peace. These simply in themselves cannot be a note of the true church, because they may be without holiness; but the true church is a holy catholic church. There may be communion and peace amongst the most impious that be. If they could shew holiness of doctrine, holiness of order and discipline, holiness of life and conversation, their union were to purpose; but their idolatry, heresy, manifold errors, and superstitious ordinances, their filthiness and licentiousness, take away the glory of their pretended union.

2. This sheweth that the agreement of the common sort in disorderly courses, which they call good fellowship, is no true Christian peace, because it is without holiness.

3. This manifesteth the folly of those who, upon pretence of peace, neglect, if not reject, holiness—such as these:

(1.) They who, to keep their people the faster together, as they think, set up a religion of their own invention, and restrain them from God's holy ordinances. So did Jeroboam, 2 Kings x. 31.

(2.) They who suffer a toleration of idolatry where the gospel is professed, upon pretence of keeping peace. So did Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 4, &c.; and Joash, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17.

(3.) They who, being in idolatrous places, subject themselves to idolatry, to keep peace and avoid trouble, Ezek. xxiii. 5, 12.

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(4.) Governors who, to have the good-will of their people, either yield to an unholy act, as Aaron did, Exod. xxxii. 24; or suffer their people to do that which is unholy, as Zedekiah did, Jer. xxxviii. 5.

(5.) Subjects who, to gain and retain peace with their governors, conform themselves to their unholy pleasure, John xii. 42. This may be applied to all sorts of inferiors; yea, and to friends and neighbours. A heathen man being moved by his friend to swear for him in a false cause, returned this answer, that a friend must accommodate his friend so far as the altar;<sup>1</sup> that is, so far as may stand with holiness.

Peace is a most precious thing; but, as gold, it may be bought too dear; and it is bought too dear if holiness be let go for it.

4. In all endeavours after peace, either of gaining or retaining the same, be sure that it want not this companion of holiness. If peace and holiness cannot in this or that case stand together, let peace depart rather than holiness. These limitations, 'if it be possible, as much as lieth in you,' are not to be applied to holiness. It is not in our power to let holiness go away; neither may it be presupposed that it is impossible to attain holiness as peace; for peace consisteth in the agreement of others as well as of ourselves; but holiness consisteth in a man's own disposition: all the men in the world cannot keep him that hath a mind to be holy from holiness. Lot remained holy in the midst of Sodom, 2 Pet. ii. 8. Well, therefore, might the apostle press his exhortation to holiness with the same emphatical verb, *διώκετε*.

#### Sec. 77. Of seeing God.

To put us on the more to endeavour after holiness, the apostle useth this motive, *without which no man shall see the Lord*. Though this relative, *which*, may seem to have reference both to peace and holiness—for it may be of both numbers—yet the Greek *ὃ* putteth this doubt out of question; for it is of the singular number and masculine gender, as the Greek word, *ἀγιασμός*, translated *holiness*, is.

The motive is taken from the damage of wanting holiness, which is an impossibility of seeing God.

Of this word, *ὁρᾶται*, *seeing*, and the divers kinds of sight, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 72.

It is here implied that God may be seen, so Mat. v. 8, 1 John iii. 2; and it is said of Jacob and Moses, they saw the Lord, Gen. xxxii. 30, Heb. xi. 27.

*Obj.* The contrary is affirmed, that 'no man can see God,' Exod. xxxiii. 20, John i. 18, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Therefore he is styled 'invisible,' 1 Tim. i. 17.

*Ans.* Seeming contradictions in words must be reconciled by distinguishing the different significations and acceptations of them.

For the point in hand, man is said to see two ways.

1. With corporal eyes. 2. With spiritual.

<sup>1</sup> Δεῖ τοῖς φίλοις συμπράττειν, ἀλλὰ μέχρι βωμῶν.—*Pericles*.



Both these are ordinary, or extraordinary, and that in this life and in the life to come.

Things ordinarily seen with corporal eyes, are sensible, and visible objects, within the ordinary reach of sight, Gen. xxiv. 63, 64.

Things extraordinarily seen with corporal eyes, are extraordinary visions, Dan. x. 7, or visible objects, at an extraordinary distance. As when Stephen on earth saw the human nature of Christ in heaven, Acts vii. 56.

In the life to come, after the general resurrection, saints with their bodily eyes shall see such glorious objects, as the very sight thereof will add much to their blessedness.

The spiritual eyes of a man's soul are two.

1. Understanding, Eph. i. 18.

2. Faith, Heb. xi. 27.

The former is more common; for all of all sorts, regenerate and unregenerate, Christians and heathen, may with the eye of understanding see God in some measure—that is, conceive that there is an eternal, almighty, most wise, just, and gracious God, Rom. i. 20.

The latter is proper and peculiar to the saints, and in that respect styled 'the faith of God's elect,' Tit. i. 1.

Spiritual sight of God is in this world imperfect; but will be perfected in the world to come, 1 Cor. xiii. 9–12.

To apply these distinct kinds of sight to the point in hand, the forementioned seeming contradiction about seeing him who is invisible, may be thus reconciled.

1. God simply considered in his divine essence is a spirit, and cannot be seen with bodily eyes.

2. God fully considered in his infinite excellency and majesty is incomprehensible, so as no man, no, not with the eyes of his soul, can see God to the full, 1 Tim. vi. 16.

Yet in some respect may God be seen both with corporal and spiritual eyes.

He was with corporal eyes seen in sundry apparitions and resemblances; as in a cloud, Exod. xiii. 21, Lev. xvi. 2; in brightness, Ezek. i. 26–29; in a human shape, Gen. xviii. 3; in a true body, John xiv. 9, 1 Tim. iii. 16.

The three former were extraordinary, proper to the old times, before Christ was exhibited.

The last was for that time that Christ lived on earth; then all that would come to him might see God made manifest in the flesh, even with their bodily eyes. Yea, after his ascension, when Christ was in heaven, Stephen saw him with his bodily eyes, Acts vii. 55, and Paul also, 1 Cor. xv. 8.

At the day of judgment all men shall see him with their bodily eyes, 2 Cor. v. 10, and in heaven, after that day, shall saints continually behold him, 1 John iii. 2, 1 Thes. iv. 17.

Some restrain this of my text to seeing Christ in

heaven, and that because he is styled, *ὁ κύριος, the Lord.*

But though this be not excluded, yet so general a phrase is not to be restrained to one particular.

For in a larger extent the Lord may in some measure be seen with both the eyes of the soul, understanding and faith, in this world, and the world to come.

In this world, the Lord is seen in his holy ordinances, as his word, and sacraments, prayer, and praising him; in which, being duly performed, the soul is as it were rapt out of the body and presented before God, contemplating him.

Yea, further, in this world the Lord is seen by an experimental knowledge of his grace and favour to believers, and by an assured faith and confidence, which is so clear and evident as if they did see God's face. That which is seen to the eyes of the body cannot be more sure.

In the world to come, the Lord is seen by an apprehension and sensible fruition of God's glory and favour, so far as the creature is capable of.

#### Sec. 78. *Of the honour and benefits of seeing God.*

The foresaid point of *seeing God*, giveth evidence of the great and good respect which God beareth to man; though God be invisible, incomprehensible, yet he is pleased to afford means whereby man may see him. Among the Persians and other heathen, it was accounted a high honour to be admitted to see the king's face, Esth. i. 14, and v. 2. But what was that to the seeing of the Lord of heaven and earth? It is one branch of that which the apostle styeth 'a great mystery,' that God was 'seen of angels,' 1 Tim. iii. 16. What is it then to be seen of sons of men? Moses desired this as an especial evidence of God's favour, Exod. xxxiii. 18; and Jacob, as a testimony of his high account thereof, and as a memorial to all posterity of that favour, named the place where he saw God, Peniel—that is, the face of God, Gen. xxxii. 30. This honour and favour have all true believers.

This honour is the greater in regard of the many benefits which flow from thence, both in this life and the life to come.

In this world sight of God—

1. Makes men fearful of sin, and that not only in the sight of men, but also in secret, where they see God, Gen. xxxix. 9. Herein lieth a main difference betwixt the unholy and holy. God seeth them both; but the unholy see not God as the holy do.

2. It maketh men careful to please God; instance Enoch, Gen. v. 24, Heb. xi. 5.

3. It emboldeneth against all that man can do, and maketh saints endure anything, Heb. xi. 27. For by seeing God they are assured to have sufficient assistance and seasonable deliverance.

4. It much encourageth and comforteth, even in

death itself; witness the case of Stephen, Acts vii. 55, 56.

5. It assurcth us of a blessed resurrection.

In the world to come that sight which saints shall have of God, will possess and fill their souls with all the content, joy, and delight that possible can be, Ps. xvi. 11, and xvii. 15. It is therefore styled *beatifica visio*, a *beatifica vision*. The sweetness, the fulness, the happiness thereof, no tongue can express, no heart can conceive. The souls of the glorified saints are ravished therewith. This is it whereof most truly it may be said, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,' 1 Cor. ii. 9.

Sec. 79. *Of holiness, as a qualification of them that see God.*

The aforesaid honour of seeing God is not common to every one; it is proper to holy ones. Christ himself termeth those that were made partakers of this honour, 'pure in heart,' Mat. v. 8, which is all one as 'holy.' All who in Scripture are noted to see God [were holy ones], as Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 30; Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 23; Isaiah, vi. 5; Ezekiel, i. 29; Daniel, viii. 9, and x. 5, &c.

God himself is holy. This they who best know God do with much earnestness profess, Isa. vi. 7. Rev. iv. 8. I will not deny but that this trebling of the word, 'holy, holy, holy,' may have reference to the three persons; yet withal, and that most especially, to the infinite excellency of God's holiness. Now nothing makes us so like to God as holiness; nothing makes us so amiable in his sight, and so pleasing unto him, as holiness. This, therefore, must needs be an especial means to move God to afford us access to himself, to come into his presence, and to behold his face. Esther's beauty pleased Ahasuerus, therefore she had access to him, Esth. v. 6. No beauty, no deckings, can make any woman so gracious in man's eyes, as holiness makes saints in God's.

1. This doth much amplify the benefit of holiness. Whereof see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 7.

2. This is a good incitation to labour after holiness, even because it is the means of seeing God. Hereof see more, Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 7.

The greater care ought to be taken hereabouts, because of the absolute necessity thereof. This is two ways set down in my text, and that by two negatives. The first denies the thing. *Without* (*χωρίς*) holiness God cannot be seen.

The second denies the persons. *Οὐδείς*, *no man*, of what rank and degree soever he be, can without holiness see God.

There are in the Greek these three negatives, *ὅ, χωρίς, οὐδείς*, *not, without, no man*. Of the emphasis, see Chap. xiii. 5, Sec. 71.

It is said concerning heaven, that there shall in no

wise enter into it anything that defileth, Rev. xxi. 27; but unholy ones defile. This the apostle referreth to the judgment and conscience of men themselves, thus, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?' 1 Cor. vi. 9.

There is such an infinite distance betwixt the holy God, and unholy men: so as these can no way come to see him.

1. This manifesteth an absolute necessity of holiness. It is as necessary as to see God; but in the sight of God consisteth our happiness. A man were better not be, than not be happy.

2. This manifesteth the great damage which unholy persons bring to themselves; they deprive themselves of that which is most to be desired, even of seeing God. Without this we can have no experimental comfort in God's gracious presence; no sound confidence in his mercy, or in anything to be done by him for our good; yea, all hope of future communion with God in celestial glory is taken away. And is this all? Were it all, it were enough, and too much. But from this deprivation of seeing God, followeth in this world horror and terror of conscience, and 'a certain fearful looking for of judgment,' Heb. x. 27. And in the world to come, torture and torment, endless and easeless, merciless and remediless.

The schools raise a dispute about the privation of the beatific vision, and subjection to hellish torment, whether of them be the greater vengeance. But that dispute is in this place needless, in that unholy ones stand guilty of both.

This negative generality of the persons, *οὐδείς, no man*, is of use to quicken up every one, magistrates and subjects, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, male and female, old and young, and all others whatsoever, to labour after holiness. There is nothing at all that can make any one partakers of this privilege, but holiness.

Sec. 80. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xii. 14.*

Two special graces are commended in this verse. Herein two points are to be considered.

1. A proposition.

2. A proof of part thereof.

The proposition contains,

1. The distinct graces, which are two, *peace* and *holiness*.

2. Our endeavour after them, *follow*.

The former of the graces, *peace*, is amplified, by the extent thereof, *with all men*.

The latter hath a motive to enforce it.

The motive is taken from the damage that may follow upon neglect of the duty. In setting down the damage, observe,

1. The manner of expressing it, in these negatives, *without which no man*.

2. The matter whereof it consisteth, which is a

precious privilege forfeited. In these two points are considerable,

1. The privilege itself, which is, *to see God*.
2. The means of forfeiting it, *want of holiness*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Peace is a commendable Christian duty.* It is here by the apostle commended to Christians. Sec. 72.

II. *Peace must earnestly be sought.* It must be followed and pursued. Sec. 72.

III. *Christians must endeavour to be at peace with all men.* This extent is expressly set down. Sec. 73.

IV. *Holiness must be added to peace.* The apostle doth here so add it. Sec. 76.

V. *Matters of moment are with emphasis to be expressed.* These negatives, *without which, no man*, intend as much. Sec. 77.

VI. *God may be seen.* This is here taken for granted. Sec. 77.

VII. *Holiness is the means of seeing God.* This is here implied, by the mention of holiness. Sec. 79.

VIII. *Without holiness it is not possible to see God.* This is here expressed. Sec. 79.

Sec. 81. *Of the meaning of the former part of the fifteenth verse.*

Ver. 15. *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God: lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

The manner of inferring this verse upon the former, with a participle, thus, *ἐπισκοποῦντες*, *looking*, implieth that it dependeth on the former, as a means for the better performing of those graces that are there required. God's grace is that means; they that fail of God's grace, can attain neither to true peace nor holiness. It is by God's grace that men are enabled to live peaceably with other men, and holily with God. Great reason, therefore, that they diligently look, *lest any fail of the grace of God*.

The Greek participle, *ἐπισκοποῦντες*, translated *looking diligently*, is the interpretation of one Greek compound word.

The simple verb, *ἐπισκοπεῖν*, whence it is derived, signifieth *to look about*. Thence a noun, *σκοπὴ*, which signifieth *a watch-tower*; and another noun, *σκοπὴς*, which signifieth him that is set upon the watch-tower, *a watchman*.

This compound, *ἐπισκοπῶ*, is used, *to oversee*, or to take the oversight, 1 Pet. v. 2, and he that is appointed to overlook, or oversee others, is styled, *ἐπισκοπός*, *overseer*.

It is attributed to Christ himself, 1 Pet. ii. 25.

The ancient Grecians gave this title to God himself, because the eyes of the Lord in every place behold the evil, and the good. Our ecclesiastical writers apply the word to such as have the oversight, care, and government of church affairs. Our English styleth them *bishops*.

As there are public persons to oversee public affairs,

so there may be for private affairs, private overseers. The apostle therefore layeth this duty to the charge of every private Christian.

The simple verb signifieth *to look*, or *see*, Phil. ii. 4.

The compound here used carrieth emphasis; and importeth a thorough looking and viewing. To express that emphasis, our English hath added this adverb, *diligently*.

Further, to shew that a Christian's care must not only be about himself, the apostle addeth another clause, *lest any man*. This particle, *μή*, *lest*, intendeth caution, circumspection, and prevention.

The other word, *τις*, *any man*, under which are comprised men's own selves, and others also: as if he had said more amply, *lest you yourselves, or any other, be defiled*.

Of the Greek word translated *fail*, see Chap. iv. 1, Sec. 11.

The preposition, *ἀπό*, sheweth that failing in this place hath reference to that which was once had, but in part lost.

They failed of that which they well began to obtain, and might have retained and increased further.

That whereof the apostle would not have them fail is styled *grace*, which is diversely taken in Scripture. The several significations thereof may be drawn to two heads:

1. The free favour of God, which is the cause of all the good we have. See Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 78, and Chap. iv. 16, Sec. 97.

2. Those gracious gifts which God is pleased to work in us. Of this distinction, see Chap. xiii. 25, Sec. 196.

In this sense it is here especially taken.

Of Christians' watchfulness, intended in this phrase, *diligently looking*, see Chap. xiii. 17, Sec. 149.

Of circumspection over ourselves, see Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 123.

Of circumspection over others, see Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 124.

Of Christians' impartiality in their circumspection over others, see Chap. ii. 12, Sec. 124.

Of preventing apostasy, or falling away from grace, see Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 122.

Of professors being subject to fall from grace, see Chap. iii. 12, Secs. 131, 136, 137.

Of God's grace the ground of all good, see Chap. iv. 9, Sec. 97.

Sec. 82. *Of grace, as applied to God.*

In the expression of grace, it is here said to be of God. So it is very frequently styled; yea, this phrase is used, 'the God of all grace,' 1 Pet. v. 10.

1. God is the original fountain whence all grace floweth, James i. 17.

2. The Spirit of God works in us that grace which we have. This spirit doth God pour upon his people, Zech. xii. 10.

3. Grace is a part of God's image, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.

1. This doth much commend grace, and sets out the excellency thereof. For in Scripture phrase, excellent things are said to be of God.

2. Herein appears a manifest difference betwixt that gift which cometh from above, James i. 17, and is freely given, and that which is acquired by the industry of man. The former is of God, the latter of man. It is usual in Scripture thus to distinguish the things of God from the things of men; and to shew that they are not of men, they apply them to God, John i. 13, Gal. i. 10.

3. We may hereby learn how we may get or increase grace. 'Ask it of God,' James i. 5, and use such means as he hath sanctified for that end: such are, 'the gospel of the grace of God,' and 'the word of his grace,' Acts xx. 24, 32.

4. This should restrain us from perverting grace, because it is 'the grace of God.' The things of God are sacred, and sacred things are not to be perverted. To pervert and abuse grace is a kind of despising the Spirit of grace. How heinous a thing this is, is shewed, chap. x. 29.

5. Two special duties hence arise, that grace is said to be of God. One, to return all the praise to God for any grace we have; the other, to use every grace to the glory of God. See of this title, *His holiness*, Ver. 10, Sec. 56.

### Sec. 83. Of breeding corruptions.

To the former kind of object, whereabout Christians' subjection<sup>1</sup> must be exercised, is that corruption whereunto we are subject, thus expressed, *lest any root of bitterness spring up*, &c. This latter dependeth on the first word of the verse, *επισκοποῦντες*, *looking*, as is evident, two ways.

1. In that the former particles are here repeated, namely, *ὑμῖν*, *lest any*.

2. In that a participle, *ἀνα ζῶντα*, *springing up*, is used in this latter sentence. Of this particle of caution, *lest*, and of the extent thereof, in this word, *any*, see Sec. 81.

This word, *ρίζα*, *root*, is metaphorically used, and setteth forth our corruption. We know that that part of a plant which lieth within the earth, draweth the moisture of the earth to it, quickeneth and putteth a life into that moisture, and so sendeth it up into the body and branches of the plant, and thereby maketh it fruitful. Thus it sheweth, that that inward corruption which lurketh in a man, sprouteth forth into manifold sins. This in Scripture is styled 'the flesh,' Gal. v. 17, 19; 'the old man,' and 'the body of sin,' Rom. vi. 6.

This phrase, *ρίζα*, *any root*, implieth that there are many sprigs and strings of the great root. For there is but one general capital root. That, and

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'circumspection' ?—Ed.

other inward corruptions, are all of them breeding, James i. 15. They are like leaven, 1 Cor. v. 6.

This will further be manifested by an induction of particulars, such as these:

1. The flesh, Gal. v. 19–21. Hence sprout all actual sins.

2. Error. This is styled 'leaven,' Mat. xvi. 6, 12. Grant one absurdity, and many more will follow from thence.

3. Hypocrisy. This also is a 'leaven,' Luke xii. 1. It sets men on work to invent a thousand tricks.

4. Lust, James i. 14, 15. Hence arise many grievous sins.

5. Covetousness. This is 'the root of all evil,' 1 Tim. vi. 10.

6. Maliciousness. This also is a 'leaven,' 1 Cor. v. 8. To this may envy be added.

7. Pride. This is the cause of all contention, Prov. xiii. 10, and of sundry other sins, Ezek. vii. 10.

8. Anger, Gen. xlix. 7, Prov. xxix. 22.

9. Idleness, Ezek. xxxvi. 49, 2 Sam. xi. 7.

10. Infidelity. This draweth from God, Heb. iii. 12. To these I might add, *καὶ τὰ ὅμοια τούτοις*, 'and such like,' as the apostle doth, Gal. v. 21.

This teacheth us to be watchful, as against every sin, so especially against breeding corruptions. A skilful gardener thinks it not enough to cut off the heads of weeds, but will pull up the roots. Be watchful over thine heart and soul, Mat. xii. 25, and xv. 19. Above all, suppress natural corruption, and inward passions and lusts. For this end observe these rules:

1. Get assurance of regeneration, whereby corrupt nature is altered. Till a man be born again, all will be in vain.

2. Be well instructed in the mysteries of godliness, that so thou mayest be kept from being seduced with errors.

3. Bring thy will into subjection to God's.

4. Keep thine heart with all diligence, Prov. iv. 23.

5. Be of a tender conscience, 1 Sam. xxiv. 6, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10.

6. Set thine affections aright.

### Sec. 84. Of the bitterness of corruption.

To make Christians the more watchful against the forenamed root of corruption, he addeth this epithet unto it, *πικρία*, *bitterness*.

The manner of expressing it in the abstract, thus, *ρίζα πικρίας*, *root of bitterness*, implieth much emphasis: that it is a most bitter root. The like is used, Acts viii. 23. It is a Hebraism, wherein, and whereby, the excess of a thing is set down, as in these phrases, 'man of sin,' 2 Thess. ii. 3, 'child of perdition,' John xvii. 12, 'children of disobedience,' Eph. ii. 2.

Herein the apostle alludeth to this phrase, 'root that beareth gall and wormwood,' Deut. xxix. 18. Gall and wormwood are both exceeding bitter. Experience testifieth as much. So also doth sacred Scrip-

ture. Of gall it is thus said, 'Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter,' Deut. xxxii. 32; 'Thou art in the gall of bitterness,' Acts viii. 23. Of wormwood also it is said, 'Her end is bitter as wormwood,' Prov. v. 4; and 'He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood,' Lam. iii. 15. Yea, to express the greater bitterness, they are oftentimes both joined together, 'gall and wormwood,' Deut. xxix. 18, Jer. ix. 15, and xxiii. 15, Lam. iii. 19.

The corruption here intended appeareth to be very bitter. Thus *evil* and *bitter* are joined together, to shew the bitterness of evil, Jer. ii. 19. In this respect corruption is like to 'the waters of Marah,' Exod. xv. 25, and like 'the water of jealousy,' Num. v. 18; so as I may say of it, as Abner did of the sword, 'it will be bitterness in the latter end,' 2 Sam. ii. 26.

1. This bitterness is manifested by the opposition, yea, and plain contrariety, of corruption to God's word, which is 'sweeter than honey and the honey-comb,' Ps. xix. 10. Yea, it is contrary to all God's excellencies.

2. The very taste thereof appears to be bitter to a man regenerate, who is enabled to discern betwixt that which is spiritually sweet and bitter. The sweetest thing to his spiritual taste is grace, therefore corruptions must needs be bitter. Hereupon it is noted that Peter 'wept bitterly,' Mat. xxvi. 75.

3. It is bitter in the effects, and those temporal, Lam. iii. 15, 19, and also spiritual, which are the wrath of God, the curse of the law; bondage under sin and Satan, which are worse than the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, whereby their lives were made bitter, Exod. i. 14. For this is it which causeth weeping and gnashing of teeth, Mat. xxv. 30.

1. This manifesteth the distempered estate of such as take delight in sin. To drink gall, wormwood, and other bitter things with delight, cannot be the effect of a good temper and taste. A woe is denounced against such, Isa. v. 20; yet such are all by nature, especially they who take pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 Thes. ii. 12, and unclean persons, Prov. v. 3, 4.

2. This is a strong dissuasion from all corruption, which cannot but work upon those who duly poise the seeming pleasantness of sin with the certain bitterness thereof. They who have their understanding well enlightened, and have a good temper in their souls, shall find gall and wormwood to be little to set out the bitterness of corruption. By external bitterness a child is weaned from the breast, yet that is but an outward taste. Should not we, by this real bitterness, be much more weaned from sin? This use is the main end of adding this epithet of *bitterness* to the root of corruption.

3. Learn how to remove this bitterness. This must be done by taking bitter pills, which are the pills of contrition, Mat. xxvi. 75, 2 Cor. vii. 10. This is manifested by spiritual grief for offending

God, and for the danger we bring to the soul, Ps. li. 4, 12. They who thoroughly feel the bitterness of sin, will willingly take these pills, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, Luke vii. 38, and xviii. 13, Acts ii. 37, 2 Cor. vii. 11.

#### Sec. 85. Of keeping down corruption.

This phrase, ἀναρριπνύω, *springing up*, added to the foresaid root of corruption, sheweth that that root is to be kept down, and in the very beginning to be suppressed. Herein the apostle alluded to a skilful and careful gardener, who will weed up all noisome weeds so soon as they begin to spring and peep above ground. So did David, 1 Sam. xxiv. 6, 2 Sam. xxiv. 10; and Peter, Mat. xxvii. 75.

This is to be done,

1. In regard of the nature of it, which is growing and increasing; like an ill weed that groweth apace, and the longer it groweth, the stronger it groweth; and the stronger it groweth, it is the more hardly rooted out. It is said of the crocodile, that no creature grows from so small a beginning to so great a magnitude as it doth, and that no creature is so dangerous to man as it is. Corruptions in the soul are like noisome humours in the body, which, suffered to abide, prove incurable. Experience gives sufficient evidence hereof, Jer. xiii. 23. In relation to the metaphor, note Prov. xxiv. 30, 31.

2. Corruption is speedily to be rooted out, in regard of the effects; for it is contrary to God's purity, it offendeth his majesty, and incenseth his wrath, which is as a fire. See more hereof in *The Plaster for a Plague*, on Num. xvi. 46, Sec. 32.

1. This sheweth an especial reason of that abundance of corruption which everywhere aboundeth. Breeding corruptions are suffered to spring and grow up, to get head, and so to soak out the life of grace.

2. This discovereth the folly of putting off and deferring repentance. See *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 14, Treat. 2, Part 4, Sec. 12.

3. To observe the main direction here given for diligent circumspection against corruption. For this end observe these rules:

(1.) The first peeping of corruption, which is in the heart and affections. Herein every one hath a great advantage over himself, because he knoweth the things within himself, 1 Cor. ii. 11. This we cannot know of others.

(2.) Do what thou canst to pluck it up by the roots, otherwise it may sprout up again.

(3.) So soon as the blade of corruption is seen to grow up in others, suffer it no longer to grow in them, Lev. xix. 17.

#### Sec. 86. Of the trouble which corruption causeth.

A fearful effect of the forementioned corruption springing up, is thus expressed, ἐντροπίζω, *trouble you*. This is in Greek a compound word, and here only

used in the New Testament. The simple verb is used to set out that anguish and vexation which the devil doth oft use to those whom he possesseth, Luke vi. 18, Acts v. 16.

This compound loseth nothing of the emphasis, but rather addeth thereto. It is by other authors used to set out noisome savours, irksome sounds, which molest and trouble the senses. It is also used to set out importunate creditors, who will not let their debtors be quiet; and to wind in the body, which much troubleth it; and to all such as cause trouble in a man's house, in the church, and commonwealth. Thus the sprouts of the forenamed bitter roots will exceedingly molest a man's mind and conscience, and never let him be quiet till he redress what is amiss.

That growth of corruption causeth trouble, is evident by the Holy Ghost's joining evil and trouble together, Dent. xxxi. 17, 21. Take a particular view of the distinct kinds of troubles which arise from thence, and the point will more evidently appear.

1. It troubles the conscience; instance Judas, Mat. xxvii. 3, 4. In this respect it is said that there is no peace to the wicked.

2. It troubles a man in his body by noisome diseases, and pains, and want of necessities. In this respect the wise man saith of a wicked man, that he troubleth his own flesh, Prov. xi. 17.

3. It troubles his estate, by wasting or entangling it; for he is said to 'trouble his own house,' Prov. xi. 29.

4. It troubleth his children, kindred, and such as any way depend on him, 2 Kings x. 31.

5. It troubleth the church. This it doth by false teachers, Gal. i. 7, and v. 12.

6. It troubleth the whole state, Josh. vii. 25, 1 Kings xviii. 13.

7. The worst trouble of all is in the world to come, Rom. ii. 9, 2 Thes. i. 6.

It was before noted that corruption incenseth God's wrath. God's wrath is a fire. The longer that houses on fire continue to burn, the more trouble they bring.

Learn hereby, when troubles arise, to search after the cause thereof. Hereof see *The Plaster for a Plague*, on Num. xvi. 46, Sec. 4. As the cause is found out, so remove it. Hereof see *Dearth's Death*, on 2 Sam. xxi. 1, Sec. 18.

#### Sec. 87. Of corruptions defiling many.

To the former effect of *troubling*, the apostle addeth another, of *defiling*. The Greek word *μιαίνω* is properly translated, as Jude 8, and in sundry other places. There are nouns derived from it, whereof one, *το μίαιμα*, signifieth *pollution*, 2 Pet. ii. 20; the other, *μιασμός*, *uncleanness*. The adding of this effect to the former, sheweth that the trouble before mentioned is no such trouble as any can have comfort therein, in that it is a defiling trouble. For corrup-

tion, which is the cause of that trouble, infecteth and defileth. In this respect sundry corruptions are resembled to leaven, which sourth and infecteth: as corrupt doctrine, Mat. xvi. 6; hypocrisy, Luke x. 1; maliciousness, 1 Cor. v. 8; lewd and evil company, 1 Cor. v. 6, 7; our spreading and infecting nature. The apostle reckons up sundry effects that sprout from thence, Gal. v. 9.

*Obj.* The kingdom of heaven is said to be as leaven; how then can leaven infect?

*Ans.* Things resembled to leaven are to be taken according to their own kind, whether they be good or evil; and the metaphor of leaven is used in the general nature of it, which is to diffuse to others that virtue which it hath in itself. If the thing itself be good, then it intendeth a diffusion of that which is good; if it be evil, then it intendeth infection and diffusion of that which is evil. Thus the word is said to be a savour of life unto life, and a savour of death unto death. Thus Christ and the devil are both resembled to a leaven: Christ in his strength and courage, the devil in his voracity and desire of mischief. So in sundry other things, the same similitude may set out contrary matters.

Corruption is also set out to be of an infecting nature, by the comparison of a gangrene, 2 Tim. ii. 17, which fretteth, infecteth, and eateth up one part after another; yea, it is also resembled to a fire.

This is also a strong motive to make men watchful against corruption, that they be not infected and defiled therewith. How watchful are men against the leprosy and against the plague, in that these diseases do infect and defile a man!

The last word, *πολλοί*, *many*, doth add much emphasis to the point, and sheweth that the infection of corruption is very great; not only parties themselves, but others also, and those many, are defiled therewith. By Jeroboam's sin were many defiled, 1 Kings xii. 30. This was his style, Jeroboam 'which made the people to sin,' 2 Kings x. 29. So many were defiled with the god of Ahab, as Elijah thought none free but himself, 1 Kings xix. 14. The false prophecies of false prophets defiled more than the true and faithful prophets could instruct and heal; witness Jeremiah's time. Not only scribes and Pharisees, and the rest of the Jews, but also Christian disciples, were infected with the pharisaical conceit of an external and worldly monarchy of the Messiah. Multitudes of believers in the apostles' time were infected with the leaven of the ceremonial law. After the apostles' time, as other heresies, so that pestilent heresy of Arianism spread exceeding far, inasmuch as the Arians assembled sundry councils, which ratified their heresies, and bishops gave their suffrages thereto. An ancient father hath this elegant expression of the fierce spreading of this heresy:—The whole world doth groan, and wonders that she is made an Arian. Yet popery hath spread itself far

farther. How many in Germany, Denmark, Swethland,<sup>1</sup> and other places, who have renounced the popish religion, are notwithstanding infected with consubstantiation, ubiquity of Christ's body, freewill, and many like errors! Arminianism also, and Anabaptism hath much prevailed. I would to God that the infection of many of those leproses and plagues had not spread so far as they have done into this island, whereby many have here been defiled.

As this circumstance of multitude is a great aggravation of corruption, so the suppressing of it is a great amplification of their good pains who do their best endeavour to suppress it.

Sec. 88. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xii. 15.*

Ver. 15. *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God: lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

The sum of this verse is a Christian's caveat.

Hereof are two branches—

1. The inference, in this particle, *looking*.
2. The substance, wherein,
1. The act required. 2. The object thereof.

In setting down the act, observe—

1. The kind of duty required, *look*.
2. The extent thereof, *diligently*.

The object is twofold—1. Concerning grace; 2. Concerning corruption.

The former is amplified,

1. By our care of failing of it.
2. By the extent of that care, *that no man*.
3. By the excellency of the grace, *grace of God*.

The second kind of object,

1. Set down metaphorically, in this word, *root*.
2. Amplified—1. By the *bitterness* of it.
2. By the increasing nature of it, *springing up*.
3. By the trouble it bringeth.

4. By the infection of it, *defiled*. This latter is amplified by the multitude defiled, *many*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *By God's grace it is that men live peaceably with others, and holily before God*. This ariseth from the inference of this verse upon the former. See Sec. 81.

II. *Christians must be watchful over themselves*. The word translated *looking*, intendeth as much. See Sec. 81.

III. *Christians' watchfulness must be a serious watchfulness*. The emphasis of the Greek word intends as much. See Sec. 81.

IV. *A Christian's watchfulness must extend to others*. Thus much is inferred, from this phrase, *lest any man*. See Sec. 81.

V. *The grace is the special object of a Christian's circumspection*. So much is here expressed, under the mention of *grace*. See Sec. 81.

VI. *A Christian's grace is God's grace*. See Sec. 82.

<sup>1</sup> That is, *Swedenland*, or *Sweden*.—Ed.

VII. *Professors may fail of grace*. So much the apostle implieth here. See Sec. 82.

VIII. *Circumspection must be against corruption*. The joining corruption with grace under the word of *watchfulness*, proves as much. See Sec. 83.

IX. *Corruption is of a breeding nature*. As the word *root*, so this epithet, *springing up*, demonstrateth as much. See Sec. 85.

X. *Corruption is speedily to be suppressed*. The word *diligently looking*, intends as much. See Sec. 85.

XI. *Growth of corruption causeth trouble*. See Sec. 86.

XII. *Corruption is infectious*. In this respect it is said to *defile*. See Sec. 87.

XIII. *The infection of corruption spreadeth far*. See Sec. 87.

Sec. 89. *Of fornication.*

Ver. 16. *Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*

17. *For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

These verses depend on the former, as is evident by this phrase, *lest any*. Now it depends on that which goeth before, as a particular exemplification of a general caveat. Fornication and profaneness are roots of bitterness, therefore fornicators and profane persons we ourselves may not be, nor may we suffer such to be among us; for so much doth this phrase in the extent thereof import, *lest there be any*—that is, lest you yourselves, or any among you, be such. It seemeth that these two vices were too rife among the Hebrews, therefore he exemplifieth the general into these two particulars—viz., *fornication* and *profaneness*. As in the fourteenth verse he enjoined *peace*, which hath especial respect to man, and *holiness*, which respecteth God, so here he forbiddeth a special sin against man, which is *fornication*, and also a sin against God, which is *profaneness*.

Of the notation of the word translated *fornication*, of the difference betwixt it and adultery, of the heinousness of each sin, and of the remedies to redress them, see Chap. xiii. 4, Sec. 37, &c.

Sec. 90. *Of profaneness, and the heinousness thereof.*

The second particular, whereby the apostle's general caveat is exemplified, is *profaneness*, which is amplified in a particular instance of a profane person, namely, Esau.

The word in the original, *βιβλος*, is derived from a word, *βλῆ*, which signifies a *threshold*, most usually applied to thresholds of sacred places; from whence is derived the word in the original, *βιβλος*, translated *profane person*, that is, one who is un-

worthy to step over a sacred threshold. The notation of the Latin word<sup>1</sup> imports as much, namely, *far from the church*, which is a sacred place. Our English word *profane* comes from the Latin.

The notation of the word gives good light to the signification of the thing. Profaneness is a slighting of sacred things. The apostle's exemplification thereof shews as much, as will evidently appear by the story, Gen. xxv. 32. This sin is styled a neglect of salvation, Heb. ii. 3, 'how shall we escape,' not caring for, or 'neglecting (*ἀσθενήσαντες*) salvation?' and to set out this sin to the life, and to aggravate it, he adds this epithet, 'so great salvation.' So as profaneness is a light esteem of things of great price, as all sacred things are. Such are they which Christ means, Mat. vii. 6. Sacred things are there styled pearls (which are most precious things), and profane persons are resembled to hogs and dogs, which lightly esteem pearls.

The heinousness of this sin is manifested by the object whereabout it is exercised, and that is *sacred*, as in general was shewed before, and is in Scripture exemplified by many particulars, as,

1. God himself, Ezek. xxii. 26, 'I am profaned among them.'

2. God's name, under which is comprised whatsoever God hath made known himself by, Lev. xviii. 21, and xix. 12.

3. God's covenant, Mal. ii. 10.

4. God's sanctuary (Lev. xxi. 12, 23), which was the place of God's holy presence.

5. God's ordinances (Lev. xxii. 9), wherein and whereby God is sanctified.

6. God's Sabbaths, Neh. xiii. 17.

7. All the holy things of God, Ezek. xxii. 26.

8. God's ministers, Lev. xxi. 9.

Now because profaneness doth manifest itself in and about holy things, these two use to be opposed, Ezek. xlv. 23, 1 Tim. iv. 7. And, accordingly, such as profess themselves to be holy and godly, or would be accounted so, ought to oppose and set themselves against all profaneness, and avoid the same.

1. How blameable, then, is the unworthy walking of many Christians! whose unworthy walking, as it is sundry other ways manifested, so in particular by their profaneness. In this respect the complaint of God, by the mouth of his prophet (Hosea viii. 12), against the Israelites, may be taken up against Christians. God hath committed to us many sacred and precious things, but they are all counted as strange things, lightly esteemed, much profaned. Yea, God himself (as he complaineth, Ezek. xxii. 26) is profaned; he is too lightly esteemed; he is not feared, revered, admired, adored, nor praised as he should be by Christians, to whom he hath so clearly made known himself to be the only true God. In like manner, the Lord's house, the Lord's table, the Lord's

day, the Lord's word, the Lord's ministers, the Lord's holy ones, yea, all the holy things of the Lord are too lightly esteemed, and too much profaned. Is it any wonder if God lightly esteem us, and cause us to be profaned and polluted with new and strange judgments? Yea, we have cause to fear that he will cause us, and all the good things which we enjoy, to be profaned, as he 'profaned the king's crown by casting it to the ground,' Ps. lxxxix. 39, and as he 'profaned the princes of the sanctuary,' Isa. xliii. 28.

2. Let us, therefore, be stirred up to avoid profaneness. For your help take these few directions:

1. Observe what things are holy. God's word will well inform thee herein. That shews how God himself is holy; how the place where he manifesteth his presence is holy; how his people are holy.

2. Be informed in the excellency of holiness, whereof see Chap. iii. Sec. 7.

3. Be well instructed in the difference that is betwixt holy and common things, as Ezek. xlv. 23.

4. Frequently and seriously meditate on God's indignation against profane persons.

By these and such like rules, we may be kept from profaneness.

#### Sec. 91. Of Esau, and his impious disposition.

The person in whom the instance of profaneness is given, is Esau's. Grammarians and etymologists of Hebrew names give the notation of the name to be a *work done*, because he was born hairy all over, as if he had been fully wrought in his mother's womb. Hereunto the Holy Ghost seemeth to allude, Gen. xxv. 25. He is branded by the Holy Ghost for a very reprobate, a despiser of God, of goodness, and good men. He it was of whom God said, 'Esau have I hated,' Mal. i. 3, Rom. ix. 13.

As he was rough in the constitution of his body, so also in the disposition of his soul. He in his person was contrarily affected to his brother Jacob, the beloved of God; and his posterity to the children of Jacob, the church of God. The psalmist complaineth much of the hatred of the Edomites, which were the posterity of Esau, and so do the other prophets.

From this Esau proceeded Amalek, Gen. xxxvi. 12, the despitefullest enemy that Israel ever had; the first that annoyed them after their deliverance out of Egypt, Exod. xvii. 8, Deut. xxv. 18, 19. But concerning the very person of Esau himself, these particulars are given of his impious disposition:

1. His calling was to be a cunning, wild, and fierce hunter, Gen. xxv. 27. He so pursued his pleasures, as it made him faint again.

2. He contemned his birthright, which is the particular specified by the apostle here; whereof more hereafter.

3. He married wives of the accursed nation, the

<sup>1</sup> *Profanus quasi procul à fano.*



Hittites, which were a great grief to his parents, Gen. xxvi. 31, 35.

4. His heart was set on the things of this world.

5. He hated, and thought to destroy his pious brother, for his prudence in getting the birthright and blessing; and, to aggravate his impiety herein, he appointed the time of murdering his brother to be in the days of mourning for his father, Gen. xxvii. 41.

6. Notwithstanding his former impiety in marrying daughters of the Hittites, he added to those wives another wife, not much better, being the daughter of Ishmael, the scoffer and persecutor of his father Isaac, Gen. xxviii. 9.

7. Twenty years' absence of his brother Jacob could not assuage his wrath, hatred, and envy; for hearing of his brother's return from Padan-aram, he went out with four hundred soldiers to meet him, and slay him. But God changed his purpose, Gen. xxxii. 6.

#### Sec. 92. *Of the privileges of the birthright.*

The particular sin of Esau, expressed by the apostle, was the selling of his birthright. The word, *πρωτοτοκια*, in the original, translated *birthright*, is of the plural number, importing many privileges belonging to it.

The privileges appertaining to the firstborn amongst the members of the church are recorded in Scripture to be of two sorts :

1. Temporal.

2. Spiritual.

The temporal privileges were two :

1. Dignity; for upon death, or resignation of the father, the firstborn was the governor of the family. In this respect God saith to Cain, the elder brother, in relation to Abel, the younger (Gen. iv. 7), 'thou shalt rule over him : ' *q.d.*, though I have accepted thy brother and his sacrifice before thine, yet have I not taken from thee the dignity and authority of the firstborn. In this respect, Esau having sold his birthright, God so ordered it that Jacob should have the dignity and dominion over him, Gen. xxvii. 29, 37.

By virtue of the firstborn's dignity and dominion, he sustained the office of a prophet, to instruct the family; and of a priest, to pray—at least till God set the tribe of Levi apart for that function; for the Levites were taken instead of the firstborn, Num. iii. 41.

2. The other temporal privilege was duplicity of portion; for the firstborn had at least a double portion. Thus the birthright being translated to Joseph, the firstborn of Rachel, his seed made two tribes, Ephraim and Manasseh, 1 Chron. v. 1, 2. There was an excess of law for this, Deut. xxi. 17.

The spiritual privileges were also two.

1. One was to be a type of Christ, who was the firstborn, or first-begotten of his Father, by reason of his eternal generation, Col. i. 15, Heb. i. 6. And

the firstborn of his mother, in that he first opened her womb, Mat. i. 25.

2. The other spiritual privilege was, that it was a type of the heavenly inheritance, in which respect the heirs thereof are styled firstborn, Heb. xii. 23.

In regard of the two former temporal respects, Esau shewed himself an egregious fool; for who but a fool would sell lands and inheritances for a bauble! But in the two latter spiritual respects he shewed himself notoriously profane, in highly esteeming so holy and heavenly privileges.

These he is said to sell—that is, to part with his birthright, and the privileges thereof, clean away, without any expectation of having it again; for men expect not the things again which they sell, as they do the things which they lend.

The particular commodity for which Esau sold his birthright, is said to be *one morsel of meat*.

*Obj.* Gen. xxv. 34, it is expressly said that Esau sold his birthright for bread and pottage.

*Ans.* The word *βρώσις*, which the apostle useth, signifieth *edulium*, whatsoever may be eaten, so as this general, *meat*, compriseth that particular of bread and pottage under it.

And this sheweth it was the satisfying of his appetite that he preferred before the birthright.

And to aggravate his sin the more, the apostle addeth this particle, *one, μίας, one morsel*, which sheweth the smallness of the price for which he sold his birthright.

#### Sec. 93. *Of the use to be made of God's judgments on others.*

Ver. 17. *For ye know how that afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

The punishment of Esau's profaneness is here set down, and that as a motive to us to keep us from the like sin. That it is a motive, is evident from this causal particle, *γὰρ, for*, as if he had said, Be not ye profane as Esau, because Esau's profaneness was after such a manner punished.

For judgments on some are caveats for others, whereupon the prophet Jeremiah setteth before the people of the Jews the judgment of God upon Shiloh, where his name was placed at first, as a caveat unto them not to place their vain confidence in the temple, as Jer vii. 12, 'Go ye now to my place, which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.' And in 1 Cor. x. 7, &c., the apostle setteth before the Corinthians the judgments of God upon his people of old for their sins, as caveats for them, to keep them from those very sins; for saith he, 'Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them did, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt

Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyers; and in the close makes this application, 'Now all these things happened unto us for ensamples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.'

And truly, if we consider God's unchangeableness, how he is still as pure, as just, as jealous, as potent a God as ever he was, what of old he hated he still hateth, we have just cause to make his judgments on others caveats and admonitions unto us, not to adventure upon their sin, lest their judgments light upon us.

*Obj.* Judgments are not so frequent and severe as of old.

*Ans.* 1. God having in former ages shewed what in justice he may do, what by his power he can do, and what sinners provoke him to do, he forbears them the more, that they may the more thoroughly consider his former dealing, and be the more warned thereby.

2. He then dealt with his as with children. He had then rods for them, and used them more frequently. He hath scourges for his churches grown to a riper age. The rods were corporal and temporal judgments. The scourges are blindness of mind, hardness of heart, a reprobate sense, infidelity, impiety, and such like spiritual judgments.

3. God now reserves impatient sinners to greater torments in hell, as our Saviour speaks of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, Mat. xi. 21, 22. And how that it should be 'more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for Chorazin and Bethsaida,' and 'more tolerable for Sodom than for Capernaum,' in regard that they had greater measures of grace vouchsafed unto them.

4. Greater temporal judgments have been inflicted under the gospel for despising it. The last destruction of the Jews was sorest. Fearful judgments have befallen all the churches planted by the apostles. When were more fearful judgments on any, than lately on the churches in Germany?

This doth afford direction in the right use of such judgments as we read of, or hear of, especially of such as are recorded in sacred Scripture, not as matters of admiration, but as matters of admonition, that as we fear such and such judgments, so to take notice of the cause; and as we fear the judgment, take heed of the cause, lest the like befall us, or a worse.

#### Sec. 94. *Of the knowledge of the Scriptures.*

The apostle, to convince them of Esau's punishment, appealeth to their own knowledge and understanding which they had out of the sacred Scriptures, wherein that history is recorded, saying unto them, *τὰς, ye know.* Whereby the apostle implieth, that the sacred Scriptures ought to be well known by us,

which our Saviour implieth in John v. 39, where he expressly commandeth us to 'search the Scriptures;' saith he, 'Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.' And saith the apostle, Col. iii. 16, 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.'

All inducements that may be of force to move us to be acquainted with any writings, concur in sacred Scripture.

1. Many take great delight in antiquity, and therefore take great pains in searching ancient records; but none comparable to sacred Scripture in antiquity. It beginneth with the beginning of the world, yea, it revealeth what God decreed before the world, even from eternity.

2. Others are much taken with rare and extraordinary matters; and even herein doth the Scripture surpass all other writings. Witness the story of the creation, of the deluge, or the destruction of Sodom, of God's bringing his people out of Egypt, and governing them in the wilderness, and settling them in Canaan, and the many miracles therein recorded, &c.

3. Many seek after profound mysteries; and what books herein comparable to the sacred Scriptures? For instance, the great mystery of religion, as of the Trinity of persons, incarnation of the Son of God, his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, &c.

4. Many prudently study the things that are most profitable; but there are no writings that make more thereto than the Scriptures. They both declare what is truly profitable and most advantageous. They make known true riches, and true honour. They shew the way how to attain thereto. Among other books, Solomon's Proverbs are of singular use to that end. Note 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

5. None but fools would spend their time and study about fables and lies; but would be informed in the truth of matters.

Now, no book can better do that than the sacred Scriptures; for it is the word of the Lord God of truth, all whose words are most true, Ps. exix. 160, John xvii. 17. This, among other excellencies of the word, is not the least. As it is an excellency in itself, so it is the excellency of all other excellencies. For what is antiquity, rarity, profundity, or any other seeming excellency, without truth, but as so many pearls in a blind eye, which make it the more deformed? The more ancient, the more seemingly rare, profound, and profitable, falsehood is, the more detestable and pernicious it is.

How blameworthy, then, are they who neglect the reading of the word, and thereby deprive themselves of the means of knowledge! How many be there who never in their lives read through the Scripture! How far short do they come of these Hebrews, whose knowledge in the Scriptures the apostle doth here grant!

And how should the consideration of the fore-mentioned excellencies of the sacred Scripture stir up all to be frequent and diligent in reading and searching the Scriptures, whereof the Hebrews here are a worthy pattern unto us!

Sec. 95. *Of Esau's seeking the blessing too late.*

The punishment of Esau's profaneness was a denial of the divine blessing, which Isaac, his father, as a prophet of God, and therein the hand and instrument of God, conferred upon Jacob. The blessing was a ratification of the birthright. For it comprised under it all the prerogatives thereof, as,

1. Dignity and dominion, Gen. xxvii. 29.

2. Patrimony, ver. 28.

3. The spiritual prerogatives are comprised under these words, 'Cursed be he that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.'

It is rightly styled a *blessing*, because thereby he was made blessed.

This blessing, in regard of the temporal privileges thereof, Esau would fain have had; for it is said, *he would have inherited the blessing*. In the Greek it is said, *ἔβηκεν ἐκζητοῦντάς, was willing or desirous to inherit*.

This word, *inherit*, in the text, importeth two things.

1. A right to it as firstborn, by virtue of his birth, which he had sold. He would eat his cake, and have it.

2. A perpetual right thereto for himself and his posterity. For inheritances have no set term of days, or years, but extend to men and their children, and children's children, without date, if it be not cut off.

Thus he was desirous to have inherited the blessing, but when it was too late, as this word, *μετὰ ταῦτα, afterward*, importeth; for it may have a double relation, one to the selling of his birthright, Gen. xxv. 33. After he had sold his birthright, he desired a ratification of it to himself by his father's blessing; but it was too late to think of recovering that which was clean sold away. The other relation is to his father's conferring it on Jacob, Gen. xxvii. 30. In this respect, Esau's seeking the blessing was too late, as this word, *ἀπερριπτόμενος, translated he was rejected*, sheweth: for it hath respect to Isaac's refusing to bless Esau after he had blessed Jacob. They, therefore, that apply this to divine reprobation, and bring this instance to make it temporary, do clean mistake the mark. True it is, that so soon as Esau came to Isaac, and made himself known to be Esau, it is said (Gen. xxvii. 33), that 'Isaac trembled very exceedingly.' He was cast into a strange *ecstasis*, or into a great astonishment, and that by a divine word, which brought into his mind that ancient word of God, Gen. xxv. 23, 'The elder shall serve the younger,' wherewith, as with a bridle, he was held back from altering what he had done. In this respect, it is added, that Esau *found no place of*

*repentance*. First, no means to move his father to repent and alter his mind, and to reverse or recall the blessing which he had conferred on Jacob; for, saith he, Gen. xxvii. 33, 'I have blessed him, and he shall be blessed.' Wherefore they also clean mistake the mark who apply this to Esau's repentance, and thence infer that repentance may be too late; yea, some take occasion from hence to impeach the authority of this epistle, whereby we see how dangerous it is to mistake the sense of sacred Scripture.

But though repentance were applied to Esau, yet would none of the foresaid errors follow thereupon; for Esau's repentance could be no better than the repentance of Judas (Mat. xxvii. 3), which was merely legal, more for the punishment than for the sin.

That which perplexed Esau was the loss of earthly dignity and patrimony, which is intended under that relative particle, *αὐτῷ, it, he sought it*, which may have reference either to, *εὐλογία, the blessing*, or to, *μετὰ νοία, repentance*; both be of the feminine gender, and both tend to the same purpose: for in seeking that blessing which Isaac thus conferred on Jacob, he sought to have his father repent of what he had done; and he sought to make his father repent, that he might have the blessing.

From Esau's rejection here upon his seeking the blessing, it doth follow, that blessings may be sought too late, which the church sadly acknowledgeth, Cant. 5. 6. 'I opened,' saith she, 'to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.'

This the five foolish virgins found true by sad experience, Mat. xxv. 3, &c. And so much God threatneth, Prov. i. 24, 25, &c. For God, who is the fountain of blessing (as the apostle James acknowledgeth, James i. 17), hath his fit times and seasons, as he hath means in and by which he conveyeth his blessings, and out of which he will give no blessing; so, likewise, his seasons: hence the psalmist, in Ps. xxxii. 6, speaketh of a 'time when God may be found;' and also the prophet Isaiah, in chap. lv. 6; implying thereby that there is a time when God will not be found.

Whence we may learn one special reason why many who seek comfort to their souls, and peace to their consciences, and assistance of the Spirit, and other divine blessings, fail of them; namely, because they seek them too late. Indeed, God hath promised to such as seek, that they shall find, Mat. vii. 7. But it is to such as seek aright; for note what the apostle James saith, James iv. 3, 'ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.'

Now, there are many ways whereby men fail in seeking.

First, Some fail in and about the means: they have means of their own invention, and subject not themselves to the means which the Lord hath warranted and sanctified, as Rom. x. 2, 3. All the heathen, all infidels, all pagans which are without the light of God's word, whereby the means of seeking God aright is revealed, miss of the right means. So do all sorts of heretics that pervert God's word; yea, and ignorant persons, who have not the knowledge thereof.

Secondly, Others fail in and about the matter of seeking of God, in that they seek him, and divine blessings from him, only in show and appearance, as all manner of hypocrites, whereof the Lord complaineth, Ezek. xxxiii. 31. Or if in truth, yet very loosely and carelessly, as if God and his blessing were the least thing to be regarded. Note Jer. xlviii. 10.

Thirdly, Many fail in the time, as the instances before shew.

There is a failing in the time of seeking, two ways:

1. When men begin too late.
2. When they continue not long enough, as Saul in 1 Sam. xiii. 8-10.

#### Sec. 96. Of Esau's seeking the blessing with tears.

Esau's earnest desire of the blessing is expressed by his seeking of it by tears. The word, *ἐζητήσας*, whereby his desire is set forth, is a compound verb, which adds much emphasis. The simple verb, *ζητέω*, signifieth to seek, but the compound, *ἐζητέω*, signifieth more than ordinary seeking; therefore, our English hath to that purpose added this epithet, *carefully*, though he sought it carefully with tears.

And that he did more than ordinarily seek, it is evident by that which is added, namely, *μετὰ δακρύων*, with tears. This is thus expressed, Gen. xxvii. 34, 'He cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry;' and ver. 38, thus, 'He lift up his voice and wept.' This was an external evidence of a very earnest and vehement desire; yet he prevailed not thereby. So that earnest desires may sometimes be in vain. And, therefore, it will be the wisdom of such as are moved as Esau did, diligently to seek divine blessing, and yet find no better issue and fruit in their seeking than Esau did, to search after the cause thereof. This was the counsel given by God himself, Josh. vii. 13, &c. See my *Plaster for a Plague*, Sec. 4, and *Death's Death*, Sec. 18.

First, therefore, Examine thyself concerning thy spiritual estate, whether true grace be in thee or no. If thou be an Israelite indeed (as was said of Nathanael, John i. 47), thou hast no cause to expect thy prayers, thy cries, thy tears should be heard; for 'an hypocrite shall not come before the Lord,' Job xiii. 16; and God abhors such, Ps. cvi. 40.

Secondly, Consider the end thou aimest at, whether it be not some by and sinister respect, in regard of thyself and own advantage; as Num. xxii. 8, James iv. 3.

Thirdly, Call to mind whether thou hast not formerly stopped thine ear against God's outward call by his word; for thereupon the Lord threateneth to turn a deaf ear to our prayers, as Prov. i. 24, 28, 'Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproofs,' &c. Ver. 28, 'They shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me;' or whether thou hast not stopped thine ear to God's inward call, as Mat. xiii. 15.

Fourthly, Observe whether there be not some execrable matter lurking in thy soul, as Josh. vii. 13. Note Judges xx. 21, 25.

Fifthly, Well weigh the matter of prayer, whether it be not such as the Lord is resolved not to grant; as Deut. iii. 26, 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 2 Sam. xii. 14, 16.

Sixthly, Take notice of the manner of thy prayer, if it be not too coldly; for note what the apostle James sayeth, James v. 16: It is 'the fervent prayer' only that is 'effectual.'

It is further observable in Esau, that though he sought the blessing, *μετὰ δακρύων*, with tears, yet was he rejected, so that not only his cries, but also his tears were in vain; neither of them did prevail; which may seem the more strange, because of that high account which God maketh of men's tears, as I have shewed in my *Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 18, Sec. 97.

Which may inform us of the difference betwixt God's discerning of spirits and man's. Men may be taken and beguiled with tears, as Jer. xii. 6; but God cannot.

And it may instruct us how to judge of tears, our own or others'. For this, distinctly note the fore-mentioned ground and kind of Esau's tears.

Quest. When are they acceptable?

Ans. 1. When they flow from a broken heart, Job ii. 12.

2. When for grief at sin—either our own, as Luke vii. 38, Mat. xxvi. 75, or for other men's sins, Ps. cxix. 136.

3. When for God's displeasure or anger, Ps. vi. 1, 8.

4. When out of an expression of earnest desire, as 1 Sam. i. 10, Hosea xii. 4, Mark ix. 24.

5. When upon threatening of judgments, or foresight of them, 2 Kings xxii. 19.

6. When in agony or sense of pain, Heb. v. 7.

God pities those whom in such cases he sees weeping. As an evidence hereof, he is said to 'wipe away tears,' Ps. cxvi. 8.

Sec. 97. Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xii. 16, 17.

Ver. 16. Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who, for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright.

17. *For ye know, how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

The sum of these verses is the exemplification of the Christian's caveat. Hereof are two branches:

1. The inference, in these words, *lest there be any.*
2. The substance; wherein two vices are condemned:

1. Fornication.
2. Profaneness. This latter is,

1. Propounded, in these words, *or profane person.*

2. Amplified, in a particular instance of a profane person.

In setting down this instance, we may observe,

1. The person in whom the exemplification is made, namely, *Esau.*

2. The point whereof the exemplification consisteth, where we have,

1. His sin, ver. 16.

2. His punishment, ver. 17.

1. His sin was the selling of his birthright for a morsel of meat.

Wherein we may observe,

1. The act, *he sold.*

2. The commodity which he sold, viz., *his birthright.*

3. The price for which he sold it, namely, *meat*, which is amplified by the smallness thereof, *one morsel of meat.*

His punishment was a denial of the divine blessing, which Isaac, his father, as a prophet of God, had conferred upon Jacob, expressed in ver. 17; wherein we may observe—

1. The inference, in this participle, *for.*

2. The substance, in the words following; in which we have—

1. The proof, in these words, *ye know.*

2. The point, wherein <sup>recovery</sup> punishment is distinctly noted.

The point is,

1. Propounded.

2. Aggravated.

In the proposition, we may observe,

1. The kind of punishment.

2. The time.

In the aggravation we have,

1. The reason, which was his father's unalterable resolution.

2. The means for the recovery thereof, *he sought it carefully with tears.*

Doctrines.

1. *Generals are to be exemplified by particulars.* This ariseth from the inference of this verse upon the former. See Sec. 89.

11. *Fornication ought to be shunned by Christians.* This ariseth from the first vice here condemned by the apostle, namely, fornication. See Sec. 89.

III. *Christians must not be profane.* This ariseth from the other vice condemned, namely, profaneness. See Sec. 90.

IV. *One sin as well as another must be avoided—* profaneness as well as uncleanness. This ariseth from the disjunctive particle, *or*; let there be no fornication or profane person.

V. *Evil examples are to be avoided.* This ariseth from the example of profane *Esau*, instanced here by the apostle.

VI. *Pious parents may have most impious children;* as Isaac a profane *Esau*.

VII. *External privileges of old had mystical prerogatives;* for many prerogatives were included under the external privilege of the birthright. See Sec. 92.

VIII. *Mean matters for the body are by many preferred before the greatest spiritual blessings.* This ariseth from Esau's preferring a morsel of bread before his birthright, and the privileges thereof. See Sec. 92.

IX. *God's choicest blessings are by many little regarded.* The birthright was a very choice blessing, and yet how little regarded by Esau! See Sec. 92.

X. *A man given to his appetite will let go anything for it.* This ariseth from Esau's selling his birthright for one morsel of meat. See Sec. 92.

XI. *Judgments on some are caveats for others.* This ariseth from the apostle's bringing in of Esau's profaneness, as a motive to keep us from the like sin. Whereof see Sec. 93.

XII. *The sacred Scriptures ought to be well known.* This the apostle taketh for granted in the Hebrews; for, to convince them of Esau's punishment, he appealeth to their own knowledge and understanding in the Scriptures, saying, *ye know* what is recorded concerning Esau. See Sec. 94.

XIII. *Blessings may be sought too late.* This ariseth from Esau's rejection, notwithstanding he so earnestly sought the blessing. See Sec. 95.

XIV. *Earnest desires may be in vain.* For, though Esau sought the blessing carefully, yet was he rejected. See Sec. 96.

XV. *Tears may nought prevail.* Though Esau sought the blessing with tears, yet was he rejected. See Sec. 96.

Sec. 98. *Of the abrogating of the legal discipline and sacrifices.*

Ver. 18. *For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest.*

19. *And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken unto them any more:*

20. *For they could not endure that which was commanded. And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:*

21. *And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.*

From the beginning of ver. 18, to the end of this chapter, we have a digression from those practical points which he began to lay down, ver. 14, and in which he proceeds, chap. xiii.

The digression is about the difference betwixt the law and the gospel; which, though it be a digression, yet is it a very pertinent one; and that both to the main scope, which the apostle aims at in this epistle, and also to the particular points going immediately before. For the said difference is here inserted as a reason to enforce what was before delivered.

The first particle, γὰρ, *for*, importeth as much.

Now the reason may have reference to the main scope of this epistle, which is constancy in well entertaining the gospel. For if the gospel be far more excellent than the law, it ought to be with all faithfulness entertained.

The argument may be thus framed. The most excellent ought to find best entertainment: but the gospel is the most excellent;

Therefore it ought to find best entertainment.

The assumption is proved by comparing it with the law.

This reason may also have a fit resemblance to the sin immediately before taxed, which is profaneness, or a vilifying of the gospel; for the most sacred things ought least to be vilified: but the gospel is the most sacred thing; therefore ought least to be vilified; if it be, we have cause to expect the sorer vengeance. This for the dependence.

The sum of the digression is, the Christian's privilege, which is, that the legal discipline is taken away from them, which was foretold, Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, &c., 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel,' &c. And Heb. x. 9, the apostle saith expressly, 'He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second;' where the apostle sets down the abrogating of legal sacrifices, and the establishing of Christ's sacrifice.

The reasons thereof may be taken both from the weakness, and unprofitableness of the legal discipline and sacrifices.

1. The *weakness* thereof appeareth, in that the law was utterly unable by itself, and by strict observance of the rites thereof, to do that which was needful to be done, namely, to make the observers perfect.

2. The *unprofitableness* thereof appeareth in this, that though a man be zealous of the law, and take much pains, and be at great costs thereabouts, yet he shall get nothing thereby, but lose all his pains and costs; all will be in vain. The apostle found this true

by experience. For after he had set forth his zeal about the law, and declared how blameless he was, touching the righteousness which is in the law, he addeth, 'what things were gain to me, those I counted loss and dung;' Phil. iii. 6-8.

1. Which shews the blindness and foolishness of the Jews, who, after the gospel preached, continued to cleave close to the law; yea, such as believed would have the law joined with the gospel, Acts xv. 5. This both caused the first council, and occasioned the Epistle to the Galatians.

Much more blinded and hardened are the Jews at this day. So likewise Turks, Persians, Moroccans, and all who hold Moses, and deny Christ.

2. This may inform us in God's goodness, who hath taken from his church that terrible and deadly law.

He brought his people to it at first to keep them in awe, to make them more long for liberty, and to make it more welcome to them, and to move them more readily and thankfully to embrace and entertain it. But when he had long enough tutored his church under that discipline, he sent his Son who took it away.

3. Let us be admonished to take notice of those ends which God aimed at in his legal discipline, and to walk worthy of that liberty that is brought to us.

From the comparison which the apostle here useth, 'For ye are not come into the mount,' &c., ye are not come to such things as cause terror, 'but ye are come to mount Zion,' &c., we may observe,

That the best things are reserved for the last times; the many prophecies of these times proves as much, as Isa. ii. 2, Joel ii. 28. So sundry hyperbolic speeches prove as much, as Isa. xi. 6, and xxx. 26, and liv. 11-13, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34, Ezek. xxxvi. 11. See more hereof in my *Sermon on Ezek. xxxvi. 11, preached before the House of Lords*, Sept. 24, 1645.

Sec. 99. *Of the terror of the law.*

Now followeth the particular circumstances mentioned by the apostle.

The first is touching the place where the law was given, here called a *mount that might be touched*. Some expound it, a *mount touched*, viz., by God, and thereby became a terrible mountain, smoking and burning, according to that which the psalmist saith, Ps. civ. 32, 'He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke.'

This sense is somewhat agreeable to that which followeth, and the original word, ἀγγαζωμένη, will also bear it, but our English translation doth better translate it, a *mount that might be touched*—that is, an earthly mountain, which might be felt; now, by this he meaneth the mount Sinai, whereon the law was given, opposed to spiritual Zion, much spoken of in the Scriptures, and mentioned ver. 22.

So that herein lieth one main difference betwixt

the law and the gospel, that the law is but earthly in comparison of the gospel; for thus much intimateth the apostle by this description of Mount Sinai, whereon the law was delivered; it was a mount that might be felt and touched, Exod. xix. 11. That the law and the things thereof were but earthly and carnal, in comparison of the gospel, see Chap. vii. 16, Secs. 80, 81.

The second circumstance is touching the terror of the law, which is set out—

1. By external signs.

2. By fearful effects.

The signs which appeared at the delivery of the law, whereof we may read more at large, Exod. xix. and Deut. v., were these:

1. A mount *toucheth*, i.e., that did tremble and quake, as the psalmist expresseth, Ps. lxxviii. 8, 'The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God, even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.'

2. *Burning with fire*, which is the first here mentioned. And it is said, Deut. iv. 11, 12, that 'God came down on Mount Sinai in fire, and spake unto the people out of the midst of fire.' This is here mentioned partly to set forth the majesty of God, and partly to declare the terror of the law, which burneth up all things before it, even as the fire doth consume stubble; therefore it is called 'a killing letter,' 'a ministration of death,' 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7; whereas the gospel giveth the spirit of life.

3. *Blackness and darkness*, mentioned, as in Deut. v. 22, so here by the apostle. These two only imply the same thing. Blackness here meant is that darkness which appears in the air when a thick cloud hath covered the whole face of the sky. Moses maketh mention of a thick cloud, and of a great smoke which appeared on Mount Sinai, whence proceeded this blackness and darkness here mentioned.

This betokened the obscurity of the law, together with the blindness and ignorance of man; and also that dim light which the law revealeth, in comparison of that bright light and clear sunshine manifested by the gospel, wherein lieth a special difference between the law and the gospel.

4. *Tempest*. That was another sign of terror, which properly signifieth a fierce violent storm. Under this word the apostle compriseth that thundering and lightning which Moses mentioneth, Exod. xx. 18. This implyeth that trouble and vexation of conscience which the law bringeth; wherein there lieth another difference between the law and the gospel, for the gospel bringeth and breedeth in a man peace and quietness of conscience.

5. *Sound of trumpet* was another sign of terror. Of sounds, a trumpet is ordinarily the shrillest and loudest. Reports of cannons were not then in use. Trumpets were of most use in war, as Josh. vi. 20, Judges vii. 22; and in that respect terrible.

To inquire what kind of trumpet, whether silver, or brass, or horn, is too curious. Trumpets are attributed to angels, Mat. xxiv. 31, Rev. viii. 2, to set out a shrill and loud sound, which much affrighteth. Trumpets also set out the majesty of a king, and it is added here to set out the majesty of the lawgiver; for before kings and great monarchs they used to sound trumpets, as 2 Kings xi. 14.

6. *Voice of words* was another sign of terror; thereby is meant a distinct, articulate voice, not as of thunder or tempest, but as of man; such a voice as might be understood; for it was a voice of words, namely, those 'ten words,' as they are called, Exod. xxxiv. 28, Deut. iv. 13, of which the moral law consisteth; for it is said, Exod. xx. 1, that 'God spake all these words.' It being the voice of God, it must needs be a terrible voice, as the psalmist expresseth, Ps. xxix. 4, 5, especially the voice of such words as the moral law containeth.

The terribleness of this voice appeared by the effect which followed thereupon—namely, the people were not able to endure it; for, saith the apostle, 'which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded,' vers. 19, 20.

Now, as the former signs were terrible to the sight and feeling, so these two latter were terrible to the ears. Herein also lieth another difference betwixt the law and the gospel; for the gospel began first to be preached by Christ himself, having taken upon him our nature, and so become like unto us, and after from time to time hath continued to be preached by men like ourselves: whereas the law was delivered by God himself.

7. *Stoning of beasts, and thrusting through with darts* was another sign of terror. These we find recorded by Moses, Exod. xix. 13, and repeated here by our apostle. Hereby is implied that by tempest, thundering, and lightning, stones were raised out of the mountains, or else that such stones fell from heaven, as Josh. x. 11, and thunderbolts which were as darts. This could not but cause much terror.

These were the signs of terrors.

The effects concerned beasts and men.

1. Beasts might not, yea, durst not, come near the mount. Though they had no understanding of the law, yet they were affrighted with the manner of delivering it.

2. Men likewise were affrighted, both of the common sort, and also the most eminent and excellent amongst them all. He that had greatest familiarity with God, and freest access to him, and was the strongest in spirit, even Moses himself, was affrighted.

The common people, ver. 19, 'entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more.' See Exod. xx. 19, and Deut. v. 24, 25.

The reason hereof is rendered in ver. 20, where it is said *they could not endure that which was com-*

*manded.* And that in regard both of the matter of the law, and also of the manner of delivering it. The matter is an exact observance of all that the law requires, which is impossible, by reason of flesh, and a curse upon every transgression. Who could endure this? The manner was noted before to be so terrible, as none could endure it.

As for Moses, though a man eminent in grace, yet he professeth of himself, *ἐκφοβός εἰμι καὶ ἐντρομος, I exceedingly fear and quake.* Our English hath well put in this adverb, *exceedingly.*

For the two compounds have their emphasis.

This is a great aggravation, that such a man as Moses should be so affrighted.

*Quest.* Where is this recorded concerning Moses?

*Ans.* 1. Some say that Moses, being the mediator for the people, might say it in the people's name.

But to this answer may be replied, that thus the apostle's aggravation of the terror of the law is taken away.

2. Thomas, Liranus, and Cajetan apply it to Exod. iii. 6. But to their answer may be replied, that is nothing to the scope of the apostle, who spake of the law.

3. It is noted, Exod. xix. 19, that in the midst of the terrors Moses spake, and God answered him. Moses might then speak these words, and God thereupon comfort him.

4. The apostle might come to the knowledge of them by special inspiration or extraordinary revelation, for note what the apostle saith, Gal. i. 12.

5. This of Moses might be registered in civil chronicles of the Jews, as 1 Kings xiv. 19.

Thus you have seen how terrible the discipline of the law was, manifested by the first manner of delivering it. It is further proved in 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 9, where it is called 'a letter that killeth,' 'the ministration of death,' 'the ministration of condemnation.'

Many weighty reasons may be given hereof.

1. To set out the majesty of God, as Ps. lxxviii. 7, and 1. 3.

2. To set out our vileness and weakness, as Job xl. 4, and xlii. 6, Isa. vi. 5, Ezek. i. 29, Dan. x. 8. That thus much was effected by the terrible delivery of the law, is evident, Exod. xx. 19, Deut. v. 24, &c.

3. To draw them from the law, that they might not rest on it for justification. Note Gal. iv. 21, &c.

4. To seek after other means, as the apostle expresseth, Gal. iii. 24, where the law is said to be 'our schoolmaster;' a sharp and severe schoolmaster, that it might force us to seek after another discipline.

5. To work earnest desire after Christ, and high pricing of him, as it is said, John viii. 56, Mat. xiii. 17.

6. To make the ministry of the gospel be better respected, 2 Cor. iii. 6, &c.

7. To keep us from despising man's ministry; for

that terror of the law upon God's delivering it, shews a necessity of man's ministry.

This terror of the law affords us many profitable uses, as,

1. Instruction in the majesty and terror of God. Where he is pleased to manifest his glory, mountains will quake and tremble, Ps. lxxviii. 8; fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him; read Ps. xevii. 2-5, and xxviii. 7, 8, &c. Such is the glory of his majesty, such his terror, as it hath frightened the most excellent of men, as Isaiah, Isa. vi. 5; Ezekiel, Ezek. i. 29; Daniel, Dan. x. 8; St John, Rev. i. 17; Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 17; Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 22; the angels, Isa. vi. 2.

2. Admonition, to fear that fearful Lord, and to tremble before him. A heathen king made a decree to this purpose, as Dan. vi. 26: 'I make a decree, saith king Darius, that in every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; who should not fear before such a God as this is?'

*Obj.* We never saw him arrayed with such terror.

*Ans.* It is enough that he hath given evidence thereof, and that that evidence is come to our hearing; should he continually shew his glory, the earth could not stand, it would be turned upside down. It is for man's sake that he conceals his glory so much as he doth: wilt thou so far pervert his goodness to thee as to respect him the less, because he tenders thy weakness, and covers that from thee which would not only dazzle and affright thee, but also confound or consume thee? He deals with thee as he did with Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 22: 'I will cover thee,' saith God, 'with my hand, while I pass by thee.' Oh, the more than monstrous ingratitude of men! Thus dealt they with Christ, because he humbled himself so low as he did, for our sake he was despised. So much was foretold, Isa. liii. 3. But woe to them that now despise him. He shall appear in such glory as will make such as have here lightly esteemed him to tremble. Note Rev. vi. 12, &c.

3. Dissuasion from resting on the law, or thinking to be justified thereby. It is a terrible law, a killing letter. It can work no true sound confidence, but terror in soul, and horror of conscience. In many things thou transgresseth against it, and therefore art thou cursed, as Deut. xxvii. 26: 'Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.'

4. Exhortation, with all due respect to use the ministry of men; though they be but as other men, yet are they not to be despised. Our weakness requireth such kind of ministers. The Israelites at the delivery of the moral law, experimentally found the need thereof; wherefore they make a humble motion for it, and God granted it. Therefore he hath appointed such as we are able to endure, to be his ambassadors. In that respect they are to us in God's room: esteem them as God's ambassadors, receive



their word as the word of God. Note Luke x. 16, and John xiii. 26.

Sec. 100. *Of mount Sion a type of the church of Christ.*

Ver. 22. *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,*

23. *To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,*

24. *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

Here beginneth the second part of the comparison, which concerns the gospel. The sum whereof is, a description of the evangelical discipline.

It consists of ten distinct branches, which may be brought to two distinct heads.

1. The places whereunto, under that discipline, we are brought.

2. The persons to whom we are joined.

The places are described by three metaphors: *mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.*

The first metaphor whereby the place whereunto we are brought [is set forth], is here said to be mount Sion.

Here consider,

1. What mount Sion was,

2. How fitly the church is set out by it.

For the first, mount Sion was situate in the best part of the world, which was Canaan, the land which flowed with milk and honey, Exod. xiii. 5; and it was in the best part of that land, which was the tribe of Judah; and in the best part of that tribe, even in Jerusalem; and in the best part of that city, which moved David to build a city there, which was called the city of David, 2 Sam. v. 9. On it was a very strong fort, which the Jebusites held till David's time, and thought it to be impregnable, and thereupon scoffed at David when he went about to take it, 2 Sam. v. 8. After that David had built this fair city, called Sion, he placed the ark there, 2 Sam. vi. 12, 1 Kings viii. 1.

This mount Sion is opposed to mount Sinai, which was situated in the driest, barrenest, and most parching place of the world, even in a wilderness where was no water to drink, and therefore God caused water to flow out of a rock, and to follow the people, Exod. xvii. 6, Ps. cv. 11, 1 Cor. x. 4. Nor did the ground bring forth corn (they had manna from heaven, Exod. xvi. 3, 14, 15); nor trees to shelter them from the heat of the sun (Ps. cv. 39, they had an extraordinary cloud to cover them).

Fifty, therefore, doth the mount Sinai set out the law, which can afford no succour, no refreshing: and

as fitly doth the mount Sion set out the gospel, which is simply the best estate that possibly can be.

Because the ark, which was the most lively representation of God's presence, was set in Sion, it was made a choice type of the evangelical church where the Lord dwelleth. Therefore the prophets frequently set out the Christian church under the name of Sion, as Ps. ii. 6, Isa. xxviii. 16, Joel iii. 21.

2. In sundry respects is the church of Christ set out by Sion.

(1.) Sion, before David took it and built it, was the habitation of Jebusites, 2 Sam. v. 6. So the Christian church, of Gentiles before Christ dwelt in it, Eph. ii. 2, 11.

(2.) Sion was a high mountain, Ps. cxxxiii. 3, so the church, Isa. ii. 2.

(3.) Sion was a strong fort, 2 Sam. v. 7, 8, and Ps. cxxv. 1. So the church, against which 'the gates of hell shall not prevail,' as our Saviour expresseth, Mat. xvi. 18.

(4.) The ark was in Sion, 2 Sam. vi. 12. So in the church are God's ordinances.

(5.) It was in sundry respects the most excellent of all cities, Ps. xlviii. 1, 2, therefore called 'the mountain of God's holiness,' in the forementioned psalm, whereof glorious things are spoken, as the psalmist expresseth, Ps. lxxxvii. 3. It is styled 'the perfection of beauty, out of which God hath shined,' Ps. l. 2.

So is the church of Christ the most excellent place of all the world. Such is the excellency thereof, as St John maketh choice of the most choice things of the world to set it out, Rev. xxi. 10, 11, &c. Could the beauty and glory of the Christian church be discerned by us, all pearls and precious stones would seem more to obscure than illustrate it. This is 'she that is all glorious within,' Ps. xlv. 13.

(6.) God himself chose Sion for the place of his habitation, Ps. ix. 11, lxxvi. 2, and cxxxiii. 13, 14. In this respect it is styled, *αὐτοκρατορ*, 'the city of God,' Ps. xlviii. 1, 2, and lxxxvii. 2, 3. On this ground all the excellent things that are spoken of the city of God, are to be applied to Sion.

Thus the church is 'the house of God,' 1 Tim. iii. 15. And God is said to dwell among the members of the church, 2 Cor. vi. 16. And Christ to 'walk in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,' which are the churches, Rev. ii. 1.

(7.) God reigned in Sion more conspicuously than in all the world beside, Isa. xxiv. 23. There was the throne of David, who was an especial type of Christ. So the church is in an especial manner the kingdom of Christ. See my *Guide to go to God*, in 2 Petit., Sec. 35, 36.

(8.) Out of Sion came the law, Isa. ii. 3. 'There is the blessing and life for evermore,' Ps. cxxxiii. 3. So in the church is salvation. Out of it is no salvation. From it proceed all the means of salvation.

(9.) God's love was most set on Sion, Ps. lxxxvii.  
2. So on his church, Eph. v. 25.

1. This affords ground of contentment to such as are of the church. They are in the most excellent, the most sure and safe estate that can be, there where God dwelleth and reigneth, there where the brightness of his favour most shineth, there where is the bread of life and the water of life; where is peace, joy, and all happiness. So as they who are in the true church, and of it, may well say, as Ps. xvi. 6, 'The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.'

2. This may excite us to abide in the church ourselves, and to draw others into it. Peter's resolution, John vi. 68, becomes us all for ourselves; and the church's mind for others, Cant. viii. 1, 2, 8. Every one to do what he can to bring in others. Note Mat. xxiii. 15.

3. This may stir us up to pray for the good of the church. So did the psalmist for Sion, in Ps. cxxii. 6-8. Note Isa. lxii. 1. Our church far excelleth Sion, therefore we ought to be the more earnest.

4. This may afford ground of humiliation for the distresses and desolations of the churches. So the Jews of old for Sion. Note Ps. cxxxvii., and the Book of Lamentations. If we cast our eyes abroad, we shall find great cause of humiliation in this respect.

5. This may afford ground of gratulation, to praise God for the prosperity of the church. We especially that are of the church ought to do it, as the psalmist intimateth in Ps. lxxv. 1, 'Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion,' and Ps. cxlvii. 12, 'Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Sion.'

6. It affords a use of direction, to walk as becometh a citizen of Sion.

#### Sec. 101. *Of the church, the city of God.*

The second metaphor, whereby the place whereunto we are brought is *the city of the living God*, whereby is here meant the church, which is oft styled in Scripture 'the city of God,' as Ps. lxxxvii. 3, and xlviii. 1, 2, 8, 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God;' so likewise in Isa. lx. 14, and Rev. iii. 12.

That the church is 'a city,' see Chap. xi. 10, Sec. 47.

And it is called 'the city of God.'

1. Kar' ἱερότης, for excellent things are said to be of God.

2. For distinction from cities of men.

3. Because God is the author and governor of it.

4. Because the ordinances, immunities, and privileges thereof are all of God.

1. In that the church is a city, it may inform us in the state and condition of the church; it is a well-ordered estate, an estate that hath different degrees of persons, some for government, some for subjection, some to make known God's will, some to bring men into obedience thereto.

There are also laws, orders, and ordinances proper and peculiar to the church.

2. It doth afford a ground of consolation to such as in this world are as strangers and foreigners, that have no city to go to. If they be of the communion of saints, they are citizens of the best city that can be, the most safe and secure city, the best governed city, best provided for, which hath the best orders, fairest privileges, and fullest immunities that can be.

3. It should stir up such as are of the church, to carry themselves as becometh citizens of such a city, Phil. i. 27.

For this end, take notice of the laws and ordinances of this city.

In that the church is the *city of God*,

1. It doth exceedingly amplify the excellent estate and condition of this city. It is not a city of man, but of God. So the laws, ordinances, and all things appertaining thereunto are of God.

2. It should stir us up to pray to God for it. God will provide for, protect, and every way bless his own kingdom.

God is here said to be *the living God*, the city, Θεοῦ ζῶντος, *of the living God*. Of the living God, see Chap. iii. 12, Secs. 138, 139.

#### Sec. 102. *Of the heavenly Jerusalem.*

The third metaphor whereby the place whereunto we are brought, is *the heavenly Jerusalem*.

Of Jerusalem, see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi., Sec. 115.

The special thing here to be noted is that epithet *heavenly*, added to Jerusalem, which is so called—

1. For distinction sake, to distinguish it from earthly, and therefore, Gal. iv. 26, called 'Jerusalem which is from above.'

2. For excellency sake.

3. To manifest the end of it, which is to bring us to heaven, Mat. xix. 28, Rev. xix. 6.

4. To shew the nature and kind of it. It is an introduction to heaven, yea, a part of heaven, the beginning thereof. See my *Guide to go to God*, 2 Petit., Sec. 38.

Uses arising from this title *heavenly*, attributed to the place whither we come, may be these:

1. Incitation, to desire and endeavour to be of this city, citizens of this Jerusalem. It is a *heavenly Jerusalem*. Note Heb. xi. 16. This is a part of that 'heavenly city.' Of this we must be before we can be of that.

2. Admonition, not to envy the glory, pomp, riches, &c., of this world, nor the privileges of any earthly city.

*Ye are come to a heavenly city.* Ye that are citizens hereof, have more cause to pity them, yea, to triumph over them. All theirs are but earthly; all ours heavenly. And what comparison is there between earthly and heavenly?

3. Dehortation, from setting our hearts upon this world, upon the promotions, profits, and pleasures thereof; they are all earthly, they become not such as are citizens of this heavenly Jerusalem, no more than the habit or attire of Jews and Turks, sworn enemies of Christ, becomes a Christian.

Doting and setting our hearts on them, bewrays an earthly and worldly mind and heart, which is no way suitable to this heavenly Jerusalem. Nay, further, there is a bewitching force in the things of this world to our corrupt nature, whereby they are stolen and alienated from this heavenly Jerusalem, and from the heavenly things thereof.

All the things of this heavenly Jerusalem are things of God; but God and this present world are contrary each to other. Note James iv. 4, 1 John ii. 15.

4. Exhortation, to get a heavenly disposition, and to shew forth a heavenly conversation, for we are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem. This is the main scope of the third petition in the Lord's Prayer.

The particulars implied under this general exhortation, are three:

1. Let us 'cleave ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh, and of the spirit,' as the apostle expresseth, 2 Cor. vii. 1. In heaven there is nor can be any unclean thing, Rev. xxi. 27.

2. Grow up unto full holiness, as the apostle implieth in these words, 2 Cor. vii. 1, 'Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' In heaven all are holy. Heaven itself is the most holy place, Heb. ix. 8, 12, and x. 19. The supreme Sovereign thereof is the holy God, holy in his nature, holy in each person—'Holy Father,' John xvii. 11, 'Holy Son,' Acts iv. 27, 30, 'Holy Ghost,' Mat. xxviii. 19. The inhabitants there are all holy—'holy angels,' Mark viii. 38, 'holy saints.' When the angels fell from their holiness, they fell from that excellent habitation.

3. In all things have an eye to God's will. So it is in heaven. Therefore in the third petition our Saviour hath taught us to pray, that God's will might be done by us on earth as it is done by angels in heaven, Mat. vi. 10.

4. So far as God's will is made known, do it. 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them,' saith our Saviour, John xiii. 17. To know and not to do, aggravates condemnation, Luke xii. 47.

5. Do God's will after a right manner, as it is done in heaven by the angels, sincerely, entirely, cheerfully, diligently, zealously, constantly. He that said, 'Our conversation is in heaven,' Phil. ii. 20, shewed himself a citizen of this heavenly Jerusalem.

See, 103. *Of the innumerable company of angels.*

Hitherto of the description of the Christian church by the place whereto we are brought. The persons to whom we are joined follow.

The first of them are set out, in this phrase, ἀγγέλων ἀριθμῶν, an innumerable company of angels. Of

their name, nature, properties, functions, &c., vide Chap. i. 7, Sees. 81–87, &c.

Their number is implied, under these words, *innumerable company*. The word in the Greek, ἀγγέλων, doth signify ten thousand; but as *sacerdotis* by the Latins is frequently put for an indefinite and infinite number, so ἀγγέλων by the Grecians. Our English translators have accordingly well translated it an *innumerable company*, for indeed the number of angels is innumerable. We read of a host of angels, Rev. xii. 7, but no number put to it. We read, 2 Kings vi. 17, of 'a mountain full of horses and chariots of fire,' whereby are meant angels, but no number of them. There was then a great host of enemies that compassed the city, yet of that troop of angels, saith Elisha, 'They that be with us are more than they that be with them.' Those angels did Hezekiah mean when he said, 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 'There be more with us than with the king of Assyria;' yet of the king of Assyria's army were slain at a clap a hundred and eighty-five thousand.

*Obj.* We read of a set number, Mat. xxvi. 53—viz., of 'twelve legions of angels,' which in common account amount to eighty thousand.

*Ans.* 1. The text doth not precisely express that number, but saith, ὡς χίλιαι, 'more than twelve legions.'

2. That number is to be taken indefinitely.

3. Christ means not all the angels in heaven, but so many as in man's opinion might be thought sufficient to guard him against all the opposition which the Jews could make; for twelve legions of good soldiers were reputed an invincible army. The like answers may be given to that greater set number, whereof we read, Dan. vii. 10, as, 'thousand thousands, yea, ten thousand times ten thousand;' for,

1. They set out an indefinite and infinite number.

2. All the angels of God are not there meant; there were many others in other places.

1. This number, or rather innumerable company of angels did God at first make, and doth still preserve in their first entire estate, the more to set out his own magnificence. Thus is the magnificence of the great King of heaven and earth set out by having so many of such attendants.

2. To animate and encourage saints against the multitude of devils; for we read, Rev. xii. 7, the dragon gathered together a host of evil angels. There were not only seven devils in one woman, but a legion, that is, 6,666 in one man. If at once there were so many in one man, how many were there in all the world beside? for certainly no man is free at any time, but hath devils attending on him, to solicit him to evil. There is need, therefore, of an innumerable company of good angels to guard him. There are many more angels than men; so as every saint may have assurance of so many to guard him, as he may well say as Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 16, 'they that be with us are more than they that be with them.'

1. This may serve for the refutation of their presumptuous conceit, who undertake to set down the distinct number of angels, which yet the apostle here styleth *innumerable*.

2. This may raise up our hearts in admiration of God's great and glorious majesty. If in regard of the visible host of heaven, the psalmist might say, as Ps. viii. 1, 'O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens,' how much more in regard of this innumerable company of invisible and spiritual creatures? For this end meditate, as on the nature, properties, and functions of angels, so of the innumerable company of them.

#### Sec. 104. *Of the general assembly.*

Having shewed the first sort of excellent creatures to which we are brought by the gospel, namely, angels, come we now to the second sort, who are here said to be holy men, who are,

1. Generally propounded, in this phrase, *general assembly*.

2. Particularly exemplified, by the name *firstborn*.

The word, *πρωτόγενε*, translated *general assembly*, is a word which is used to set out a solemn public meeting of many people, from sundry places, to some great solemnity. The meeting of all sorts of people, out of all parts of Greece, to see the Olympian games performed, was called *πρωτόγενε*, which term the apostle here applyeth to the catholic church.

*Catholic* is a Greek word, which signifieth general or universal. That this general assembly is meant of the church, is evident, by the next word, *ἐκκλησία*, church, which is joined to it by a copulative particle, *καὶ*, and. The next word, *πρωτόγενε*, *firstborn*, sets out the persons that belong to this general assembly.

From the former we may observe that the Christian church is a *general assembly*. The notation of the Greek word, *ἐκκλησία*, which is derived from the verb, *ἐκκαλεῖν*, to call out, sheweth that it is an assembly called together. The compound word, *πρωτόγενε*, sheweth that it is a *general assembly*.

This general assembly is excellently set out, Rev. vii. 9. The prophecies of old concerning the amplitude of the Christian church import as much, as Isa. lx. 4, &c. But most expressly is this proved, Eph. i. 9, 10, Col. i. 20.

That the truth of this point may be the more distinctly discerned, let us take a brief view of the respects wherein the Christian church is styled a general assembly.

1. In respect of persons; for the whole number of God's elect are comprised under this assembly. This our apostle notes, in this phrase, 'whose names are written in the book of life.'

2. In respect of place; for the Christian church is not bounded within the borders of Judea, nor of

the ten tribes, but diffuseth itself among the Gentiles. This was of old foretold, as the apostle proveth by many testimonies, Rom. xv. 9, 10. In this extent it is said, John iii. 16, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

3. In respect of the time, from Adam to the end of the world, so long as it should be increasing, and after to continue to eternity.

The reason of this general assembly cannot be in them who are of it; for they of themselves are no better by nature than they who are out of it, Eph. ii. 3, 11, 12. But it resteth wholly and only in God, in his free grace, 1 Cor. xv. 10, and rich mercy, as Eph. i. 7, and ii. 4, 7.

The means of bringing us into this general assembly are—

1. Outward, the word, Eph. i. 23, and 2 Thess. ii. 14.

2. Inward, the Spirit. Of both these, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Sec. 19.

1. This may give satisfaction to that great question, whether the church was before Luther's time?

I answer, it was where this general assembly was.

2. This may serve for the refuting of papists, in arrogating and appropriating this title *catholic* to the church of Rome. For,

1. It implies a plain, direct contradiction. *Catholic* is universal, *Roman* is particular; for the same thing in the same respect to be *universal* and *particular* is contradictory.

2. The church of Rome hath so much, and so far erred from the catholic faith, as it cannot be accounted a part of the catholic church.

3. This informs us—

(1.) In the difference betwixt the Jewish synagogue and the Christian church.

[1.] That was of one people; this of all nations.

[2.] That in one small part of the world; this throughout the whole world.

[3.] That tied to the temple at Jerusalem for their solemn services; this extended to all places, Mal. i. 11.

[4.] That to continue till Christ's first coming; this to the end of the world.

(2.) In the difference betwixt the catholic church and particular churches.

[1.] That is invisible; for, howsoever the members thereof be children of men, who are visible creatures; yet their essential and specific form, which makes them to be indeed of the catholic church, is not visible, for it is an inward, spiritual, effectual calling.

But particular churches are visible; for profession of the true faith, and subjection to the ordinances of a particular church, is sufficient to make men members thereof. Hypocrites may be as true members of a particular church, as the upright, especially till they be discerned and discovered. So was Judas, Ananias, Sapphira, Demas, and sundry others.

[2.] Hence ariseth a second difference. The catholic church consists only of the elect being effectually called. Such are here described, *firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.*

But particular churches are mixed assemblies, as the parables of sundry sorts of grounds, of corn and tares, of the draw-net, of wheat and chaff, of the fruitful and barren fig-tree, of vessels of honour and dishonour, shew.

[3.] The catholic church can never fail, Mat. xvi. 18. Particular churches may; for where are the churches planted by the apostles?

[1.] The catholic church is diffused throughout the whole world, and extendeth itself to all times, as I shewed before.

But particular churches are tied to certain places, as national churches and parochial churches.

[5.] The catholic church extendeth itself beyond this world, even to heaven; for part of it is triumphing in heaven, as this phrase, *spirits of just men made perfect*, sheweth.

But particular churches are only on earth. No divisions, or distinctions, or relations, or ordinances in heaven as on earth, Rev. xxi. 22, 23.

These and other like differences are the rather to be observed, because of our adversaries, who confound the catholic and particular church of Rome, and thereby apply to their particular churches all the properties, privileges, and excellencies of the catholic church, whence have risen the many and great controversies betwixt us and them about the church, as about the essence of it, the visibility, stability, infallibility, and authority of it.

Sec. 105. *Of regeneration, and the causes thereof.*

The first particular whereby that blessed society to which we are brought by the gospel, is set out, in this phrase, *ἐκκλησία πρωτοτόκων*, church of the first-born.

The Greek word translated church, cometh of a Greek verb, *καλέω*, which signifieth to call, the compound whereof, *ἐκκαλέω*, signifieth to call out, hence the word here translated church, which signifieth a company called together. Of their calling outward and inward, and of the means of the one and the other, God's word and Spirit, see Chap. iii., Sec. 13.

By the word men are called to profession of the true faith, which is the outward calling. Hereby visible particular churches are constituted. By the Spirit true faith is wrought in them, whereby they are brought to yield from the heart true obedience to the faith which they profess. These are they which constitute the forementioned general assembly, the true catholic church, and these are they who are here intended, under these words, *firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.*

The title, *πρωτοτόκων*, firstborn, is a compound word of a verb, *τινω*, that signifieth to bear, or bring

forth, and of an adjective, *πρῶτος*, that signifieth first. It importeth two things—

1. A nativity or birth.

2. The excellency thereof.

The birth here intended cannot be meant of a birth after the flesh. In that respect Nicodemus his scruple is to purpose, John iii. 4, 'How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?'

All such kinds of birth in this mystery are excluded, John i. 13, in those phrases, 'not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man.' It is therefore styled, Tit. iii. 5, *παλιγγενεσία*, regeneration, a being born again, or a new birth. And this must needs be spiritual.

The excellency of this birth is noted in this participle, *first*.

For the first is a word of order, and of honour.

It is applied to Christ, the second person in sacred Trinity, and to sons of men. See Chap. i. 6, Secs. 67, 68.

In this place it may be appropriated to the Jews, or extended to all saints. Yea, both these may even, in this place, well stand together.

For the Jews, being God's firstborn, and we being brought to them, and made partakers of their privileges, are also God's firstborn as well as they.

From this privilege we may observe—

1. They who are of the true church are new born. The metaphor of *firstborn* being applied to the church, imports as much. So much, likewise, is intended, Ps. lxxvii. 5, 'And of Son it shall be said, This and that man was born in her.' But more fully expressed, John i. 12, 13, and James i. 18. Christ makes it a matter of absolute necessity, John iii. 3, 5, 7, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

The reason thereof may be taken from that utter depravation which hath seized on man; for repairing whereof no patching or piecing will serve the turn, but a new making.

It is called a new birth, to distinguish it from our general birth; and it is styled a *birth*, to set out the work of God more lively.

1. Hence we should be stirred up to put ourselves upon examination, whether we be of the number of God's new born. Till we have some evidence thereof, we can have no assurance of any interest to the general assembly, or to the privileges appertaining thereunto. For your help herein, take these few signs of regeneration:

(1.) A new form and image, even such a one as 'after God is created in true holiness and righteousness,' Eph. iv. 24. Hereby St Paul knew that they at Rome to whom he wrote were born again, because, saith he, Rom. vi. 17, 'Ye have obeyed from the heart-root that form of doctrine; ἐν ᾧ παριδοθήτε, 'into which ye were delivered.' Here he useth a fit

resemblance, taken from a mould into which metals are cast; the metal will be of that shape whereof the mould is, and bear that image which is engraven on the mould. Thus they who by the word are begotten again, will carry the shape and image of the word, which is the image of God. So do all creatures that are not monsters bear the image of that which begat them. If ye say of a pig or puppy, this is a woman's child, will any believe you? Much less will I believe that he who carries the devil's image is born of God.

(2.) Spiritual life manifested by spiritual motions and affections, such as the apostle intendeth, under this phrase, Rom. viii. 5, 'They that are after the Spirit, do mind the things of the Spirit.' And also under this, 'God will quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit,' ver. 11. A child that is not still-born will soon manifest life in it, by the natural motions thereof.

Now in regeneration none are still-born. If, therefore, there be no spiritual life, no spiritual motions, surely there is no regeneration.

(3.) Readiness on all occasions to go to God, as to his father, and of him to seek every needful thing. To whom will children more readily go for supply of their wants, than to their parents, of whom they were begotten and born? 'I will arise and go to my father,' saith the prodigal, Luke xv. 18.

(4.) A constant purpose, and faithful endeavour to avoid all sin. This is that which St John, 1st Epist. iii. 9, intendeth in this phrase, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;' with the inner man, in the renewed part, he doth not commit sin. Of this inner man the apostle speaketh, Rom. vii. 17, where he saith, 'It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.'

2. Hence we should be stirred up to use all means for the beginning and accomplishing of this blessed work.

This especially concerns such as upon examination find not this work begun. They are to take due notice of the causes of regeneration, which concur to the working thereof, which are briefly these:

1. The primary author is God; for in this respect we are 'born of God.' 'God hath begotten us,' James i. 18, even 'God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,' 1 Pet. i. 3.

2. The procuring causes are God's will and God's mercy.

There could be nothing out of God to move him. It must needs, therefore, arise from his own mere will. So saith the apostle, James i. 18, 'Of his own will begat he us.'

And there could be nothing in man to move God hereunto; for man by nature is most miserable.

It must needs, therefore, arise from God's mere mercy; for misery is the proper object of mercy. On this ground it is justly said, 1 Pet. i. 3, that 'God,

according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again.'

3. The immediate matter of regeneration is God's Spirit. In this respect we are said to be 'born of the Spirit,' John iii. 4. And regeneration is styled 'the renewing of the Holy Ghost,' Tit. iii. 5; for it is a divine work, above human ability.

4. The ordinary instrumental cause is God's word, so James i. 18. God begat us 'by the word of truth.' In this respect the word is styled 'incorruptible seed,' 1 Pet. i. 23. The gospel is that part of God's word which is most effectual hereunto, and it is thereupon styled 'the gospel of salvation,' Eph. i. 13. And 'the power of God unto salvation,' Rom. i. 16.

5. Ministers and preachers of the gospel are ministerial causes of regeneration; who are, in relation to their ministry, said to 'beget' us, and styled 'fathers,' 1 Cor. iv. 15, Philen. 10.

All these are comprised under the efficient cause, and are so far from thwarting one another, as they sweetly concur to produce this divine work of regeneration, being subordinate one to another, and may in this order be placed together. It being the will of God to shew mercy to man, he ordained ministers to cast the seed of his word into men's souls, which being quickened by the Spirit, men are hereby born again.

The material cause of regeneration is Christ incarnate, 'God made manifest in the flesh,' as the apostle speaketh, 1 Tim. iv. 16. In this respect we are said, Eph. v. 30, to be 'of his flesh, and of his bones.'

The formal cause of regeneration is God's image planted in us, which consists in holiness and righteousness. After this image we are said to be 'renewed,' Eph. iv. 24. This makes an essential difference betwixt a natural and regenerate man.

The final causes, next and subordinate to the glory of God's free grace and rich mercy, are especially two:

1. To make men able to do good; namely, such good as may be acceptable and honourable to God, profitable to other men, and truly advantageable to themselves.

The apostle, therefore (Eph. ii. 10), speaking of regeneration (which is a kind of creation), thus expresseth this end, 'we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works.'

2. To make men fit for glory; for corrupt flesh cannot partake of celestial glory. Whereupon saith Christ, John iii. 3, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' So far shall he be from being admitted into it, as he shall not come so near as to see. That fitness for heaven is an end of regeneration, is thus declared, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, God hath 'begotten us again unto a lively hope, and to an inheritance incorruptible,' &c.

See, 106. *Of saints being God's firstborn.*

In that the society to which we are brought by the gospel is set out, by this phrase, *church of the firstborn*, we may observe, that all they who are new born are God's firstborn. For as the believing Jews were so by virtue of their priority; so the believing Gentiles, being brought into the Jews' society, and made partakers of their privilege, are so likewise. Where the called of God are comprised under this collective word, *Ephraim*, they are styled 'God's firstborn,' Jer. xxxi. 9; so where the called of God are comprised under this collective word, *Israel*, they are styled 'God's firstborn,' Exod. iv. 22. The whole church was comprised under the title *Israel*. In the same respect all saints are called 'heirs,' Rom. viii. 17; and 'kings,' Rev. i. 6. Yea, all not only 'one body,' as 1 Cor. xii. 13; but also 'one spouse,' Cant. v. 1, 2 Cor. xi. 2.

The reasons of saints being God's firstborn may be,  
1. Their union with Christ; for they are so nearly united unto Christ, as he and they make but one body, which is excellently set down, 1 Cor. xii. 12. By virtue of this union, Christ's privileges are conferred on them. As he is a king, so they; as he a priest, so they, Rev. i. 6; as he a son, so they, John i. 12; as he an heir, so they, Rom. viii. 17; as he God's firstborn, Rom. viii. 29, so they.

2. God's equal and impartial respect to them all. He loves them all with the same love. His heart is set on every one of them, as if they all were but one; and, therefore, they are all styled, *τις α ἀγαπᾷ, dear children*, Eph. v. 1.

3. Their equal right to the privileges of the firstborn. The forementioned titles of *heirs* and *kings*, prove as much.

1. This may inform us in that right which believers have to the heavenly inheritance, they are firstborn, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. Though all that are begotten of men are not heirs, but only the firstborn; yet all begotten of God are, because they are all firstborn.

Esau had a birthright, yea, and a blessing procured to him, as he was the firstborn, Gen. xxvii. 19, 32; so Reuben, 1 Chron. v. 1.

The law expressly provideth that the firstborn have the inheritance, wherunto he hath a right, though his mother were hated, Deut. xxi. 16. Much more have God's firstborn a right to his inheritance, even that heavenly inheritance which the Father hath prepared, the Son purchased, and the Spirit sealed up to their souls. This right, therefore, cometh not from any worth of theirs, nor from any merit of anything done by them, but from this prerogative conferred upon them: for, as the apostle James expresseth (James i. 18), 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruit of his creatures.' Therefore the apostle Peter, 1st Epist. i. 3, blesseth God for this privilege, saying, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord

Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'

2. This should also stir us up to search after the evidences of this our right. Heirs of great inheritances will be very diligent herein; yea, and they will take the advice of learned counsel. Should not we much rather use all means to get assurance of this prerogative, to be of the church of the firstborn? Note the exhortation of the apostle Peter, in 2d Epist. i. 10.

If we be new born, we are firstborn; and, therefore, the evidences of our new birth are assured evidences that we are God's firstborn; therefore well weigh them. You had them in the foregoing section.

3. This may admonish such as are the more eminent of the church, not to despise them who are in some outward respect inferior to them. Be the difference in wealth, or honour, or authority, or superiority, or learning, or wit, or any gift of body or mind, yet in God's esteem, and in the greatest privilege, they are all one; all firstborn, all heirs, all kings. Note Gal. iii. 28, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.' This is it which the apostle mainly aims at, 1 Cor. xii. 15, 16, &c. Well weigh this point, ye that are any way above others, and consider what the apostle James saith, James ii. 1, 2, &c.

4. This doth afford a ground of consolation to such as are of poor parentage, and can expect no inheritance from their father on earth; to young brothers, from whom the elder carrieth all; to females, who cannot inherit: they are all God's firstborn. So to all that are poor, mean, illiterate, weak, or any way despicable in man's conceit. A great comfort and encouragement it is to such, that they are God's firstborn. Note James i. 9.

5. This doth afford a use of direction.

First, in general, to walk worthy of this privilege and prerogative, for it is a great privilege, a high prerogative.

In particular,

(1.) Moderate your care for things here below; for being God's firstborn, ye may rest assured he will provide sufficient for the present, and hereafter give you a kingdom.

On this ground doth Christ press this point, Luke xii. 29-32. I may to these use the prophet's phrase, Jer. xlv. 5, 'Seek ye great things for yourselves! seek them not.' Will a king's firstborn eark and care for farms, offices, or other like means of livelihood? Much less should God's firstborn eark and care for these earthly things.

(2.) Patiently bear temporal losses, reproaches, disgraces, and what else may be endured for thy profession's sake.

The right of the firstborn will recompense all.

Note Heb. x. 32-35, and xi. 9, 10, 26, 35. This also is well beseeching in God's firstborn.

(3.) Be an example to others how to behave themselves. They who in any respect are above others, must be as lights unto them. The advice of Christ, Mat. v. 16, 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,' &c., doth especially appertain to such.

Thus may we win and save others, as 1 Pet. iii. 1, 2, 1 Tim. iv. 16.

And this is a great improvement of the talent which God commits to us, whereby men bring gain to the Lord, which he will not let pass unrewarded. Read Mat. xxv. 15, 27.

Thus shall we bring a good repute to our profession, yea, and much honour to our Father, Mat. v. 16.

Sec. 107. *Of Christians enjoying the same privileges as the Jews formerly did.*

In that the society to which we are brought by the gospel is set out, by this phrase, *church of the firstborn*, it doth inform us, that under the gospel all Christians are made one with Jews; for it is noted as a work of the gospel to bring us Christians to those who by priority of time are God's firstborn. This was of old promised by God, Gen. xii. 13, and desired by saints, Ps. lxxvii. 3, and foretold by prophets, Gen. ix. 27, Mal. i. 11, and the accomplishment thereof manifested, Eph. ii. 13, Gal. iii. 27.

The grounds of the point may be,

1. To give evidence of the extent of God's mercy, Rom. x. 12.

2. The more to set out the honour of Christ's coming.

For as the honour of his second coming is set out by the appearing of all people to be judged by him, so of his first coming, by calling all nations to believe in him.

1. This may inform us in a main difference betwixt the law and the gospel. The law was proper to one only nation, the Jews, as Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20; the gospel is common to all, Heb. iv. 2; and therefore saith the apostle, Rom. i. 16, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.'

Not only so, but the law was a partition-wall, which kept Jews and Gentiles one from another; but by the gospel that partition-wall is broken down, Eph. ii. 14.

If the law were then worthy to be had in so high esteem, as David had it in, in how much higher esteem is the gospel now to be had? Heb. ii. 2.

2. This may instruct us in the dignity and excellency of the Christian church. The psalmist, having an eye on the church of Israel, styles it 'the city of God,' and thus saith of it, Ps. lxxxvii. 3, 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.'

The like glorious things, and that in a far more excellent manner, may be applied to the church of Christ; for this church is brought to that, and the privileges of that church are brought to this.

This was foretold, Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, and lxvi. 10-12. In regard of the right which the Christian church hath to the ancient Jewish church, the titles proper to that are extended to this: for this is called *Sion*, and *Jerusalem*, and *the city of God*, as in the foregoing verse; and the members of this, *firstborn*, *heirs*, *children of promise*, *children of the free woman*, Gal. iv. 28, 31, *Abraham's seed*, Gen. iii. 29, *Israel of God*, Gal. vi. 16.

Their main privileges (whereof we also are made partakers) were these:

1. A special covenant betwixt God and them, Gen. xvii. 2, 4, 7, Heb. viii. 8.

2. A seal of that covenant, Gen. xvii. 10, Rom. iv. 11, Phil. iii. 3, Col. ii. 11, 12.

3. To them were committed the oracles of God, Rom. iii. 2; so to the Christian church, 1 Tim. iv. 15, Col. i. 5, 6.

4. They had their priests; so have we.

5. They had their altars; so we, Heb. x. 8-10.

6. They had their anointing; so we, 1 John ii. 20, 27.

7. They had their incense; so we, Mal. i. 11, Rev. viii. 3.

8. They had their passover; so we, 1 Cor. v. 7.

If further our privileges be compared with theirs, we shall find them in the excellencies far to exceed theirs.

3. This may serve as a motive to acquaint ourselves with the histories of them recorded by the Holy Ghost, to be stirred up to a holy emulation and imitation of them.

To amplify these in some particulars.

Offer your sacrifices to God, as Abel did his, Gen. iv. 3.

Call on God, as Enos did in his times, Gen. iv. 26; walk before God as Enoch did, Gen. v. 22; and so in the rest. Thus shall we indeed shew that we are come to the *church of the firstborn*.

Sec. 108. *Of the meaning of this phrase, 'which are written in heaven.'*

The second particular whereby the true members of the general assembly are set down is in this phrase, *in οὐρανοῖς ἀπογεγραμμένοι*, which are written in heaven.

The phrase is not literally to be taken, but metaphorically.

The metaphor is taken from the custom of men. Magistrates over countries, cities, or burghs have their books or rolls, wherein the names of all their true denizens or free citizens are written; so have universities and colleges; so have generals of armies and their under-captains; and all manner of societies or governors of people. As they have books



wherein men's names are written, so they have a court, or some other safe and secret place, where they use to keep those names.

In relation hereunto, God is said to have his roll or book.

For *writing names* here mentioned, importeth as much; and his court of rolls, which is heaven, here mentioned, is a secret and sure court.

These phrases are for teaching's sake, to make us the better conceive God's mind to us; and metaphors are of excellent use to that end; for registering men's names in the rolls of such and such incorporations, assures them of their right to the privileges thereof; so this writing of our names in heaven, assures us of our right to the privileges of heaven.

Now, concerning God's books, I find sundry sorts mentioned, as God's open and God's secret books.

1. God's open book is the sacred Scripture, wherein his whole will, so far as is meet for man to know, is revealed; wherein also the way to attain life, and avoid death, is declared, Ps. xl. 7, Isa. xxxiv. 16. By this book well observed, we may find out what persons, what matters, are registered in his secret books.

2. God's secret books are general, or special.

General, of two sorts:

(1.) His eternal decree of all things, Ps. cxxxix. 16.

(2.) His perfect remembrance of all things that are done, Ps. lvi. 8, Mat. iii. 16.

When men intend to have matters kept in mind, and not forgotten, they will write them down; so, to shew God remembers, and will not forget, he is said to have 'a book of remembrance.'

His special books are also of two sorts:

1. One of life.

2. The other of judgment, Dan. vii. 10.

These books of judgment are men's consciences.

These two are distinguished, Rev. xx. 12.

Now, then, to note out these books, and in order, we have five in number:

1. The book of God's general decree.

2. The special book of life.

3. The book of God's remembrance.

4. The open book of God's revealed will.

5. The book of judgment, whereby all shall be tried.

His second sort, which is 'the book of life,' is here more fully meant, which is God's eternal election of that *particular* number of men unto eternal life.

preparation names are said to be *written*, because they are to their *eternal* decree set down.

from any *eternal* said to be *written in heaven*.

thing donee God's decree is, as himself, on high, not forced upon earth. As we cannot go to heaven in presseth *judgment* here we live, so neither can we search with the word things in heaven are counted unsearchable things of X. 12.

Peter, 1st Ep. heaven is a safe place, Mat. vi. 20. saying, 'Blessed they that blot them out.

3. Because, by the divine decree of election, they are made free denizens and citizens of heaven, Eph. ii. 19, Mat. v. 3; and the privileges and immunities of heaven belong to them. In this sense this book is styled 'book of life,' as Phil. iv. 3.

Sec. 109. *Of God the judge of all.*

Another kind of persons to whom by the gospel we are brought, is *God the judge of all*.

By the person here styled *God*, the second person in sacred Trinity, even the Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is meant.

By this function, *judge*, his last act of government is intended, even the last judgment at the end of the world, after which, as mediator betwixt God and man, he shall give over the kingdom to God the Father, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

Under this particle, *πάντων*, *all*, 'God the judge of all,' all reasonable understanding and immortal creatures are meant, as angels and men, whether good or bad.

This copulative particle, *and*, knits this clause with the other precedent sentences, and shews that as every of the other clauses, from the beginning of the 22d verse, implieth a distinct privilege of the new testament, so this also. And as they, so this depends on the first clause, *but ye are come*, &c., which is set down in opposition to the terror of the law, described, ver. 18. Therefore these clauses are set down as so many favours and privileges, whereof this is one, to have access to the supreme judge, which is a prerogative of the new testament. This is here set down in the midst of other prerogatives, and so coupled with them, as it must needs be of the same nature and kind as they are, viz., a special prerogative.

Besides, it is set down as the others, in opposition to the law, which is the old covenant, therefore it must needs be a prerogative of the gospel and new testament.

That the gospel makes this a prerogative, is evident, Titus ii. 11-13, Luke xxi. 28. Yea, the gospel pronounceth faithful ones blessed, Mat. xxiv. 46.

*Obj.* Some object that of our Saviour, Luke xxi. 35, 'Take heed lest that day come upon you unawares; for as a snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.'

*Ans.* The metaphor of a snare is used in a double sense.

1. In regard of the danger and mischief it bringeth; for by a snare the life of beasts and fowls is endangered, in that the snare itself kills such as it takes, or else fast holds them, till the hunter or fowler take them and kill them. Thus 1 Sam. xxviii. 9.

2. In regard of a sudden and unexpected event. Thus a beast going or running on in his way is suddenly and unexpectedly taken in a snare, or a bird lighting upon a sprig to peck at meat is unexpectedly taken with a snare. Thus Eccles. ix. 12.

In the former sense, Christ's coming is a snare only to the unbelievers and impenitent.

In the latter sense, it is as a snare to all of all sorts, for it shall suddenly come upon all. Note Mat. xxiv. 36, &c. Yet may men be provided and prepared for that which is most sudden, as a wise traveller, a prudent housekeeper, a circumspect captain, or governor of a castle. Thus will be all true believers prepared; instance the five wise virgins, Mat. xxv. 6, and the faithful servant, ver. 19, Mat. xxiv. 46.

*Obj.* 2. Some object that of our Saviour, Luke xviii. 8, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'

*Ans.* 1. That is not to be taken universally or generally, without limitation or exception, but indefinitely, comparatively; so few believers, so little faith, as compared to the multitude of unbelievers, and the great measure of infidelity, few or no believers observed; little or no faith discerned.

The grounds proving it to be a prerogative of the new testament, to have access to the supreme judge, are these:

1. The gospel sets out man's Redeemer and Saviour to be judge, and that in man's nature, and as his surety; who hath not only undertaken to discharge all his debts, but also indeed, *ὡς τὸ πᾶντις*, to the full, to the uttermost, discharged the same.

2. The gospel sets out the judge, in the manner of his judging, to be most glorious to the saints; for,

(1.) He shall come in the glory of his Father, Mat. xvi. 27. His human nature, which was on earth subject to manifold infirmities, and at his death lashed with whips, scratched with thorns, pierced with nails and spear, shall appear in a divine glory, far surpassing the glory of the bright sun, yea, and of the most glorious angels. And he shall come with an innumerable company of those glorious angels who on earth attended the saints.

(2.) Thrones shall be erected, Rev. xx. 4; not one only for the supreme judge, but many also for the saints, to be as assistants, Luke xxii. 30, 1 Cor. vi. 2. Is not this a great privilege?

(3.) The dead in Christ, that is, believers, shall first be raised, as the apostle expresseth, 1 Thes. iv. 16, 'The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first;' so as they shall have the honour first to behold him, to their unspeakable comfort.

(4.) The saints shall be separate from the wicked, and set on the right hand of Christ, as Mat. xxv. 32, 33, 'And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.' Here the saints are forced to complain

of their mixture with the wicked, Ps. cxx. 5, Mat. xiii. 27, 28.

(5.) Believers shall first hear that joyful sentence, Mat. xxv. 34, &c., 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungry,' &c.; and then shall they be set on the forementioned thrones.

The gospel sets out the issue of Christ's coming to judgment to be most comfortable and glorious to saints; for,

1. Their bodies, as they shall be raised, so they shall be changed, corruption into incorruption, as 1 Cor. xv. 53, 'This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.'

2. Their souls shall again be united to them, their spirits made perfect, as in the next clause.

3. Both souls and bodies united shall be in everlasting glory.

The gospel, not the law, revealeth all these; this, therefore, is a great privilege of the gospel.

1. This discovereth a main difference betwixt the law and the gospel. The law makes the thought of God, the judge of all men, to be most terrible. That makes them wish 'the mountains and rocks to fall on them, and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne,' as Rev. vi. 16.

The law admits no covering of sin, no forgiving of sin, no reward upon desert: in a word, as men are now since Adam's fall, the law permits the judge to give no other sentence than of eternal damnation.

2. This exceedingly commendeth the gospel, which doth more than the law possibly can. In righteousness it is no whit inferior to the law. It no more justifieth nor countenanceth sin than the law, but it maketh an unrighteous man righteous, which the law cannot do, and it makes him that hath been a sinner with comfort to appear before his judge, even such a judge as will set upon him the crown of righteousness, as 2 Tim. iv. 8.

3. This should stir us up to bless God for this blessed word, the gospel. It is well called *gospel*, that is, a *good spell*; and an angel might well say, Luke ii. 10, 'Fear not, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.' The fulness of that gladsome message consists in this, that it makes God, the judge of all, to be such a privilege as hath been shewed.

4. Labour we to be well instructed in the gospel, in the admirable privileges of the gospel; particularly in this: and thereupon to believe the gospel, and to believe in him who is the main object of the gospel: thus shall we be made partakers, as of other privileges, so of this great one.

5. This should provoke believers to love the appearing of God, the judge of all; to rejoice therein, that there is such a judge; to long for his appearing; to search after the signs thereof; to comfort ourselves

therein against all reproaches, persecutions, troubles, afflictions, or any crosses whatsoever.

Sec. 110. *Of the excellency of men's souls, as they are spiritual substances.*

The third particular whereby the members of the general assembly are set down, is in this clause, *καὶ πνεύματα δίκαια τῶν ἀνθρώπων, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*

These are such as are translated, and made actual members of the church triumphant.

*Quest.* Why are these thus brought in after the judge?

*Ans.* 1. To give evidence of the benefit of that function, which God our Saviour hath undertaken — viz., to be the judge of all. For by reason thereof, being found truly righteous, they are made perfect.

2. To assure us that we also, being such as they were, shall in time be as they are. Note 2 Tim. iv. 8.

The parties here expressed are said to be *spirits*. This title *spirit* signifieth an incorporeal spiritual substance; it is oft opposed to a corporeal substance, as Isa. xxxi. 3, Luke xxiv. 37, 39. Now a spirit is uncreated, or created. Uncreated, as God, John iv. 24. Created are reasonable, and unreasonable. Reasonable, as angels, Heb. i. 7, and souls of men, Eccles. iii. 21, Zech. xii. 1. Unreasonable, as the souls of beasts, Eph. iii. 21.

It is more clear than needs be proved, that the souls of men are here meant. For God can have no perfection added to him. The good angels abide as they were created, they are no more perfect than they were: indeed, by Christ they are confirmed and established in their first estate, but that estate is not altered. As for evil angels, they shall never be perfected. The souls of beasts are never severed from their bodies; they both perish together: neither are their souls capable of the perfection here intended. It is therefore most evident that by spirits are here meant souls of men, which are of a spiritual substance. In which respect they are here, and in sundry other places, called *spirits*, as Eccles. xii. 7, Luke xxiii. 46, 1 Cor. vi. 20. That the souls of men are of a spiritual substance appears,

1. Because they come immediately from God, as Gen. ii. 7. In this respect he is styled 'the God of the spirits of all flesh,' Num. xvi. 22, and xxvii. 16. And 'Father of spirits,' Heb. xii. 9. And men's spirits are said to 'return to him that made them,' Eccles. xii. 7.

2. God would make man after his own image, which a mere body without a spirit could not be. For 'God is a spirit,' John iv. 24, and his image consists in spiritual endowments, as knowledge, Col. iii. 10, and holiness and righteousness, Eph. iv. 24.

The reasons why the souls of men are of a spiritual substance.

1. That the divine excellencies of God might be

made the more conspicuous in this admirable fabric. For by reason of the spirit united to the body, man is the most admirable creature that God made, he is therefore styled, *μικροκόσμος, a little world.*

By his understanding, he resembleth the angels; by his sight, the sun and stars; by his breath, the air; by his sensible faculties, all the excellencies of unreasonable creatures; by his vegetable faculties, the excellencies of all manner of plants; by his flesh and bones, the substance of minerals, and other senseless creatures. Thus doth he contain in him the quintessence of all creatures, having a spirit to animate his body.

2. Their ends for which they were made, as,

To animate bodies, to quicken them, to enable them to do those several functions which belong to the several parts; as the eyes to see, ears to hear, noses to smell, palate to taste, mouth to speak, shoulders to bear, hands to handle and hold, and feet to go, which they cannot do without a soul; instance carved bodies and idols, Ps. cxv. 5-7. Yea, instance dead bodies, Judges xix. 27, 28.

3. That men might be the better enabled to glorify their Creator: for as it is in Hezekiah's thanksgiving, Isa. xxxviii. 19, 20, 'The living, the living, he shall praise thee.'

4. That they might be according to their disposition and carriage, more capable of the greater reward or punishment. For spirits are much more capable than bodies.

Take we a distinct view of the several faculties of man's soul, and we shall find man to be the rarest creature that God made. No senseless or unreasonable creature is comparable to man, by reason of man's reasonable soul. Yea, and a man hath herein a kind of excellency beyond angels, in that he hath a body united to the soul, wherein it may more discernibly exercise the abilities of a soul. Yea, and herein beyond all exception man hath an excellency above angels, in that his nature is such a one as the Son of God was pleased to assume, Heb. ii. 6, which he would not have done, if a spirit had not been united to his body.

*Quest.* If a spirit be so excellent a thing, how can it be begotten? seeing begetting is an act of the body as well as the soul.

*Ans.* 1. The ancient and common answer is negative; the soul is not begotten.<sup>1</sup>

2. Others answer, that by virtue of the divine blessing, Gen. i. 28, the soul is propagated, and that as other creatures bring forth according to their kind, so man.

How doth this aggravate the evil disposition of man, that consisting of so excellent a part as a spirit is, should so pervert and abuse it as he doth by sin?<sup>2</sup>

The aggravation of devils' sin is in this respect the greater, because they are wholly and only spiritual:

<sup>1</sup> Anima creando infunditur, et infundendo creatur.

<sup>2</sup> Optimi corruptio pessima.

such are their sins as no means of expiating them is afforded.

Though man be not wholly spiritual, yet is he in part, yea, and in his principal part.

My sin is that divine part polluted, and all the excellent faculties thereof perverted. So that the mind is become a blind and erroneous guide; the will, a stubborn and rebellious servant; the memory, an unhappy treasure; the conscience, a sluggish monitor; the heart, a false touch stone; the affections, domineering masters; the senses, pernicious inlets. Thus all the parts are become instruments of evil.

What a shame is it that men who have reasonable and immortal spirits, should become worse than the unreasonable and mortal brutes! such are atheists, idolaters, blasphemers, profane and impious persons, despisers of governors, hateful and revengeful persons, drunkards, gluttons, adulterers, murderers, and many other such like, as all notorious sinners. Hath God given men spirits to be more audacious and impudent in sinning?

2. This may admonish us to take due notice of this admirable part whereof men are constituted; and well to weigh what are the distinct faculties thereof, what their several functions, how to be employed, and answerably to use them.

(1.) The first and chiefest is the mind, which is given to man for a guide; labour to have it enlightened with God's truth, that it may be a good guide, Mat. vi. 22.

(2.) The will ought to be God's handmaid, ready to yield to God's will revealed to the mind, that we may be able to say as Samuel, 1 Sam. iii. 10, 'Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.'

(3.) The memory must treasure up all good directions and consolations for future times: that what is once learned may be of perpetual use, that we may say with David, Ps. cxix. 55, 'I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law.'

(4.) The conscience ought to be tender of the least sin, and quickly smite us, as it did David, whose 'heart is said to smite him after he had numbered the people,' 2 Sam. xxiv. 10; and after he had cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. And not let us be quiet till it hath brought us to thorough repentance, as it did Peter, Mat. xxvi. 75, and then to pacify us.

(5.) The heart ought to be upright, as Ps. xviii. 23. This sweeteneth all graces, and shews a good respect unto God.

(6.) All the affections must be as servants to the understanding; and be ordered thereby, each of them being placed on their right object, and ordered by discretion.

(7.) All the senses must be inlets of good, as Luke v. 26, Acts ii. 37, and iv. 4.

Blessed are they who make a right use of their spirit, and of the distinct faculties thereof.

Sec. 111. *Of the meaning of the word 'just.'*

The next point of the description is the property, *δικαιον, just.*

According to the notation of the Greek word, the virtue or grace here intended is a general virtue, whereby is given to every one his due, whether it be to God or man. See more hereof, my *Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 14, Treat. 2, Part 4, Sec. 1.

1. It is sometimes restrained to the eighth commandment, as opposed to deceitful and wrong dealing with men; and in this restraint it is used, Tit. i. 8.

2. It is used to set down the sum of the second table, and compriseth under it all the duties we owe to man. Thus largely it is taken, when it is joined with another general word, which compriseth under it all the duties of the first table, as Mark vi. 20.

3. It is extended to the whole, and compriseth under it all duties that we owe to God or man; in this extent it is taken for the most part, when it is set alone, or joined with a word of perfection, as Gen. vi. 9. Or else is opposed to a general word that compriseth all manner of evil under it, as Ps. xxxvii. 12, Prov. iii. 33.

Here it is so set alone, and nothing added thereto to restrain it, as it must needs be taken in the largest extent, and so compriseth all manner of virtues and graces under it.

And it is taken as a property belonging to men while here they live: for it is distinguished from that heavenly qualification which followeth after this life, namely, to be made perfect, *q.d.*, ye are come to those divine spirits of men, who being truly, though imperfectly just, while they live on earth, are now made perfect in heaven. So that hence we may observe,

That men may be truly just in this world. Whereof see Chap. x. 38, Sec. 144.

Sec. 112. *Of the perfection of the souls of saints in heaven.*

The consummation of the spirits of just men is, in this word, *τετελειωμένων, made perfect.*

This sets out the estate of men's souls after they leave their bodies and ascend to heaven; they are then perfect—perfect I say, truly, and properly, and fully: not in part only, but in degrees also; not in the manner only of what they do, but in the measure also; not by imputation of another's perfection, or by a gracious acceptance of that which is not perfect for perfect, but by a full and complete performance of what they are bound unto; so as there is no defect at all therein, no, not in anything, nor at any time.

This perfection is a universal and perpetual perfection. This is it which is intended, 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 'When that which is perfect is come.'

Here he taketh it for granted, that there is a perfection to come.

That place, 1 Phil. iii. 15, may be taken of the future, thus, *δοτε ουν τεισιναι*, 'whosoever will be perfect;' and

this most fitly agreeth to the scope of the apostle (for he had before denied a present perfection in this world, ver. 12, 13). Thus the point is there also taken *pro concessa*, that there is a perfection to come.

This Christ seems to aim at, John xvii. 23, *ἵνα ὡς ἐπελυσμένοι*, 'that they may be perfect in one,' where the very word of the apostle here is used. That Christ prayeth for the future glory of such as believe in him, is evident in the following verse: 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.' The apostle, Eph. iv. 13, aimeth at this perfection. Most fully is this future perfection set out, Eph. v. 27.

It is set out,

1. Generally, in this word *glorious*.

2. Particularly, in the words following. And that privatively, by removing all blemish and defect ('a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle'); and positively, by expressing an especial perfection, which is to be holy; a property which most of all makes us like to God, Eph. iv. 24. Of a more distinct meaning of these words, see my *Domest. Duties*, Treat. 1, on Eph. v. 27, Secs. 50-52.

Take we a view of the distinct perfections of the several faculties of a glorious soul, and the complete perfection of the whole will better appear.

1. The understanding is endued with perfect knowledge. Whatsoever may any way make to the glory of God, or happiness of the creature, it perfectly understandeth. It is ignorant of nothing that it may, or must know, or is any way meet to be known. Neither doth it misconceive or know anything amiss. Nor ignorance, nor error is in it. This phrase, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, 'Then shall I know even as I am known,' importeth as much. For our knowledge is there compared to God's, though not in equality (for there is no proportion betwixt finite and infinite) yet in similitude of perfection, and that according to the extent of created capacity.

And that the comparison lieth in such a perfection, is evident by the opposition of this phrase to that which goeth immediately before, thus, 'Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known.'

2. The will is only and wholly in everything pliable to God's will, no reluctance at all against it. If the Lord should will it to go from heaven to earth, and again to dwell in the earthly tabernacle of the body, it would then readily yield to God's will. Instance the soul of Lazarus, that had been dead four days, and of others raised from the dead.

3. The memory never lets slip anything that is treasured up in it; and nothing is treasured up in it but that which is good, heavenly, and divine, and every way worth the keeping and fast holding.

4. The conscience is accessory to no evil that may any way disquiet or trouble it, but exceedingly cheer-

eth the soul by the witness it beareth to the good, perfect, and constant course which it taketh, and to God's approbation thereof, so as it is ever quiet, comfortable, and cheerful.

5. The heart is most pure, sincere, and entire. It is said, Rev. xiv. 5, that 'no guile is found in them.' They 'shine as the sun,' Mat. xiii. 43. They are transparent; they have no cover for hypocrisy. Such as 'make lies, or love lies,' are 'without,' Rev. xxi. 8, 27, and xxii. 15.

6. Their liking affections are wholly set upon the chiefest and highest good, from which no inferior good can draw them. So ravished they are with God, as in comparison of him, they desire, love, and delight in nothing else, at least in nothing more than in their sweet communion with him.

7. There is nothing in heaven to stir up in the souls there any disliking affections—as of fear, grief, anger, hatred. In this respect it is said that 'all tears are wiped from their eyes,' Rev. vii. 17, that is, all matter of grief; the like may be said of other disliking affections.

8. That use which souls have of senses—as of seeing, hearing, and the like—increaseth that admiration which they have of those excellent objects which they see and hear, and more ravisheth them therewith.

9. That utterance or expression which they make of their mind is most divine, tending only, wholly, continually, to the praise and honour of God. Note how in this respect they are set out, Rev. xix. 1, 6, 7.

10. Souls in heaven are every way so perfect, as they will be most fit to be united to glorified bodies, which shall be made 'like the glorious body of Christ,' Phil. iii. 21, which are said to 'shine as the firmament and the stars,' Dan. xii. 3, yea, 'as the sun,' Mat. xiii. 43, which are incorruptible and spiritual, 1 Cor. xv. 42, 44—spiritual, I say,

(1.) In regard of their freedom from all dullness and heaviness.

(2.) In regard of their wonderful agility, activity, celerity, and other like properties.

(3.) In regard of their sustentation only by their spirits, without food, apparel, sleep, phisic, or any natural help.

By these forementioned particulars you may discern the perfection of glorified souls, which God is pleased to communicate unto them.

1. Thereby to give evidence of the perfect fulness of his goodness unto man. A great evidence was given at first in man's creation. A greater evidence, in man's renovation and regeneration. This the greatest, in regard of the absoluteness and unchangeableness of it.

2. To magnify the glory of the Son of God, the head of saints. Note 2 Thess. i. 10, where it is said that Christ 'shall be glorified in his saints.' The perfection of saints verifieth and gives proof of the

fulness of the merit and virtue of the things which Christ hath done and suffered for man's salvation.

3. To give proof of the victorious power of the regenerating Spirit in saints, for the perfection of saints gives demonstration of the Spirit's full conquest over the flesh, and all other enemies of the soul. The rest which Solomon had was a good evidence of the full conquest which David had got over all the enemies of Israel.

4. To satisfy the longing desires of saints, for all they in whom the good work of grace is once begun, most earnestly desire the perfection thereof. This they do,

(1.) Partly in regard of the flesh, which lieth heavy on their souls, as appeareth, Rom. vii. 24.

(2.) And chiefly in regard of their earnest desire to have as near a communion with God, and as full a participation of his image, as may be. Note Phil. iii. 13, 14, 'Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

1. This is a ground of comfort and consolation to such as are much troubled and perplexed at the manifold imperfections whereunto they are here subject in this world. Fitly may I apply in this case Isa. xl. 1, 2. The warfare of a righteous soul against the flesh, the world, and the devil is accomplished. As her iniquity is pardoned, so is it utterly subdued, and she made perfect.

An assured expectation hereof is the sweetest comfort that can be thought of against our present imperfections. Hereon, therefore, meditate while here you live. It is some comfort that imperfections are a common condition, and that men may be truly righteous, though imperfect; but this is a far greater, that their imperfections shall all be taken away, and they made perfect.

2. This may be a motive to set before us for a pattern the spirits in heaven, and that upon this ground, because they are made perfect. This is the main scope of the third petition in the Lord's Prayer. This is intended, Heb. vi. 12, where the apostle exhorteth us to be 'followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.'

3. This may afford ground of exultation and rejoicing upon evidences of the approach of our dissolution, because the time of our being made perfect then cometh.

Sec. 113. *Of the communion of saints on earth with saints in heaven.*

The principal point intended in these last words now followeth, intimated in this particle, *and*, which hath relation, as to other particulars precedent, so to that phrase, *προσκληθῆναι, ye are come, &c.*—

viz., by the gospel, *to the spirits of just men made perfect*; so that the apostle doth hereby give us to understand, that by the gospel saints on earth have communion with saints in heaven.

Here are two particulars—

1. The communion itself.

2. The means thereof—viz., the gospel.

1. For the first, that there is a communion betwixt saints on earth and in heaven, is evident from divers places of Scripture, as Eph. i. 10, Col. i. 20, especially Eph. ii. 19, where we are said to be *συνπολίταις τῶν ἁγίων*, 'fellow-citizens with the saints'—namely, of all the saints that having lived before on earth, were then glorified, as well as of those who then were or after should live on earth, and in their time be glorified. Now fellow-citizens have a mutual communion one with another, and are partakers of the same privileges.

That which is set down, Luke i. 17, for an evidence of the power of the Baptist's ministry, that he 'should turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' doth also prove the point; for by *fathers* he means the ancient Jews deceased and glorified, and by *sons*, such as living on earth were brought to believe in Christ. By turning their hearts to them, is meant an acknowledgment of them to be their genuine children, in that they be of their faith, as Gal. iii. 7, John viii. 39.

2. That the gospel is a means of this communion, whereby it comes to be a privilege of the new testament, is evident by the forementioned proofs of the point.

*Quest.* Was there not a communion betwixt saints on earth and in heaven before Christ was exhibited?

*Ans.* 1. Not so clearly and fully revealed. Now many things in sacred Scripture are appropriated to the gospel, not simply and exclusively, but comparatively, in regard of the perspicuous manifestation of them, as Heb. viii. 10, and ix. 8.

2. The gospel preached, in regard of the substance of it, was under the law, Heb. iv. 2. 'Unto us,' saith the apostle, 'was the gospel preached, as well as unto them.'

The first promise after man's fall, Gen. iii. 15, contained the substance of the gospel, and that was the substance of the New Testament, by virtue whereof saints of old had all the spiritual and celestial communion which they had.

3. The extent of this communion to all of all sorts (as Eph. i. 10, and Mat. viii. 11, 'from the east and west'), is proper to the Christian church after an especial manner.

The grounds of this mutual communion betwixt heaven and earth are these:

1. Their mutual relation to one father, Eph. iv. 6. 'One God and Father of all, who is above all,' saith the apostle. When saints depart out of this world, this relation ceaseth not, Exod. iii. 6. Now, children

of the same father have a mutual communion betwixt themselves.

2. Their mutual union with one head, which is Christ the Son of God, 1 Cor. xii. 12. That all saints in heaven and earth are united to him, is evident, Eph. i. 10, and iii. 15. And members of the same body have a mutual communion.

3. The mutual spiritual animation by the same Spirit. That Spirit which is in saints on earth accompanieth their spirits into heaven. That being ever one and the same Spirit, though in divers persons, draws all to a mutual communion, as the same soul animating many members.

*Quest.* In what particulars consisteth this communion?

*Ans.* 1. In God's bringing us together.

2. In our mutual affection.

1. God, who hath chosen a set and certain number to life, in his time gathers them together into that general assembly (whereof before), the true catholic church, John x. 16. This he doth outwardly by the word, inwardly by the Spirit.

Thus as some are translated into the triumphant church, others are called into the militant church, which are but two parts of the catholic church. In this respect, all that on earth are called, come to the spirits of just ones made perfect.

2. The mutual affection of saints is manifested, both by that which saints in heaven do for saints on earth, and also by that which saints on earth do for saints in heaven.

No little is in Scripture recorded of the affections of saints in heaven towards saints on earth, as we have no warrant for any particular effects, only from the sympathy of fellow-members, and abundance of charity in them, we may very probably infer two generals—

1. Saints in heaven pray for them on earth, that God would support them, and deliver them out of all their miseries, and bring them to the rest and glory where they themselves are. Thus much is intended, Rev. vi. 10. But it is to be taken of their affection to the church in general, and not to particular members, which are unknown to them.

2. They rejoice at God's preservation of his church on earth, so as many of their fellow-soldiers are daily translated and crowned, whereby their blessed society is increased; for love abideth and aboundeth in heaven, 1 Cor. xiii. 8, and this is one special fruit of love.

On the other side, saints on earth,

1. Praise God for the rest and glory which they in heaven enjoy, and for their blessed departure out of this vale of misery. It is prescribed as a form of praise, Rev. xiv. 13, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,' &c.

2. They pray for the resurrection of the bodies of those spirits, that so they may be fully both in body

and soul consummate, which is the substance of the second petition in the Lord's Prayer.

3. They set them as a pattern before them, and tread in their steps, whereby they bring much honour to them.

4. They sigh, and earnestly long to be with them, as Phil. i. 23.

1. This may inform us of the blessedness of the time wherein we have been bred and brought up, which is the time of the gospel; wherein we Gentiles are brought to those blessed spirits; to be children of their Father, members under their head, guided with their Spirit, redeemed by their Saviour, co-heirs of their inheritance. Note Eph. iii. 12.

2. This may stir us up to acquaint ourselves with the histories of them recorded by the Holy Ghost, and to be provoked to a holy emulation and imitation of them, according to that exhortation of the apostle, Heb. vi. 12, to 'be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.'

Sec. 114. *Of Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.*

Ver. 24. *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.*

The apostle here returns to that excellent person who is the greatest glory of the new testament; access to whom is the greatest privilege of all.

He is set out before in his last function, *judge of all*: wherewith lest saints should be too much affrighted by reason of their manifold imperfections and transgressions, here he is set out a *mediator*, and after this a means of purging from sin. *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

For the name, *Ἰησοῦς*, *Jesus*, it is a Greek expression of *Joshua*, and signifieth a *saviour*, so that this title *Jesus* is a most honourable title, intimating that full salvation which he bringeth to his people. Of this name and title, *Jesus*, see more Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 73.

The next particular which followeth in the description of the person here, is his office, whereof is expressed,

1. The kind of it, *mediator*.

2. The object whereabout it is exercised, in this word, *covenant*, which is illustrated by the excellency of it, in this participle, *new*, 'And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.'

The word, *μεσίτης*, *mediator*, is derived from an adjective, *μέσος*, that signifieth *middle*, which sheweth Christ to be one that standeth as it were in the midst betwixt two at variance, in which respect this title is oft attributed to Christ, as standing betwixt God and man, as 1 Tim. ii. 5, Heb. viii. 6.

Of the nature of this office, the end thereof, the persons that were at variance, the person that inter-

posed betwixt them, the motive that stirred him up thereunto, &c., see Chap. viii. 6, Sec. 23.

The object whereabout this office of Christ is exercised, is said to be this, *διαθήκη, covenant*. Of the notation of the Hebrew and Greek words translated *covenant*, see Chap. vii. 22, Sec. 94.

Of the nature of a covenant, and the kinds of covenants mentioned in Scripture, see Chap. viii. 8, Secs. 39, 40.

The covenant whereof Christ is the mediator, is here styled by the apostle *new*, and that in four several respects, whereof see Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 35.

Sec. 115. *Of the excellency of the gospel above the law: and of the mediator of the gospel above the mediator of the law.*

The principal point intended in these words is intimated in this particle, *and*, which hath relation to the former privileges, so to that forementioned phrase, *ye are come*, viz., by the gospel, *unto Jesus the mediator of the new covenant*: so that the apostle doth hereby give us to understand that by the gospel we are brought to the mediator of the new covenant.

A prophet that lived under the law spake of it as of a thing to be accomplished under the gospel, Jer. xxxi. 31, 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.' And the apostle who lived under the gospel applyeth it to the time present, Heb. viii. 8. The covenant under the law is styled 'the old covenant,' Heb. viii. 13; so as the new must come in when the old is abrogated.

1. This doth set forth the excellency of the gospel above the law, and of our times above the times of the law. Well weigh the difference betwixt the mediator of the law and of the gospel, betwixt the old and new covenant, and the foresaid excellency will more clearly and fully be manifested.

(1.) The mediator of the law was a son of man, a mere man; whereas Christ, the mediator of the gospel, was the Son of God, and though a true man, yet not mere man, but God-man.

(2.) Moses, the mediator of the law, was a sinful man, once in danger to be killed for neglect of circumcision, Exod. iv. 24, 25, and after excluded out of Canaan for his incredulity, Num. xx. 12; whereas Christ, the mediator of the gospel, 'knew no sin,' 2 Cor. v. 21, but was 'holy, harmless, undefiled,' &c., Heb. vii. 26.

(3.) Moses, the mediator of the law, was not able himself to endure the delivery of that whereof he was a mediator, Heb. xii. 21. It is said, 'he exceedingly feared and quaked' at the delivery of the law; whereas Christ, the mediator of the gospel, was able to dwell with that 'devouring fire, and everlasting burnings,' mentioned Isa. xxxiii. 14. He stood in that bush which 'burned with fire, and was not consumed,' Exod. iii. 2.

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(4.) Moses was a mediator only, to deliver the law from God to the people, Deut. v. 27, 31, Acts vii. 38, Gal. iii. 19; whereas Christ, the mediator of the gospel, is our surety, who hath satisfied the law for us.

We therefore have beyond all comparison the better mediator, and in like manner the better covenant. So it is expressly called, Heb. viii. 6, 'Now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.'

It is better than the covenant of works, in the very substance of it.

It is better than the covenant of grace, as it was made with the Jews,

(1.) In the clear manifestation of it by the gospel, Eph. iii. 5.

(2.) In the sure ratification of it, by the death of Christ, Heb. ix. 15.

(3.) In the mighty operation of the Spirit in and by it, 2 Cor. iii. 6.

2. To stir us up to take due notice of the excellency of the times of the gospel, to bless God for reserving us thereto, and to endeavour with our uttermost ability to walk worthy thereof. This worthy walking is in particular expressed, 2 Cor. v. 17, Eph. iv. 24.

Sec. 116. *Of the sprinkling of Christ's blood.*

Ver. 24. *And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

The last privilege here noted, as it is a distinct privilege in itself, as the copulative, *and*, importeth, so it is an amplification of that which is immediately set before it. For it is one of the prime fruits of Christ's mediation.

Being our mediator, he shed his blood for us. His blood being the blood of a mediator, it proves a *blood of sprinkling*. Being a blood of sprinkling, it *speaks better*, &c.

To handle this as a distinct privilege, the meaning of the words is first to be opened.

By *blood* he means the death of the mediator before-mentioned; for man's life is in his blood, Gen. ix. 5. The shedding of a man's blood is the taking away of his life. Now Christ's blood was shed, as the blood of beasts under the law, for a sacrifice, for expiation of sin; and that God's people might have a more particular assurance of their cleansing by the blood of their sacrifices, it was wont, under the law, to be sprinkled upon them, Exod. xxiv. 8, and xxix. 21, Lev. xiv. 6, 7. Hereunto alludeth the apostle in this place. And by *blood of sprinkling*, by a figure, he means *blood sprinkled*, or (as Heb. xi. 28, 1 Pet. i. 2) '*sprinkling of blood*.'

*Sprinkling of blood* setteth out the application of the merit thereof to the particular persons that are sprinkled. Now Christ's blood is applied on his part by his Spirit, which inwardly persuades the soul of a right it hath to Christ, and to all that he hath done and



endured for man's redemption. And on our part by faith, which gives us to rest upon Christ for a particular benefit to ourselves of his obedience unto death : so as the mention of *blood* shews the ground of atonement ; *sprinkling*, the means of receiving benefit thereby. So that from the sprinkling of Christ's blood the apostle gives us to understand that Christ's blood is communicable, which is evident by the frequent sprinkling of that blood, and of that water, which, under the law, were types of Christ's blood.

For by the sprinkling thereof, things and persons were consecrated to a holy use, and unclean things and persons were cleansed.

To give some particular instances, the tabernacle (which was the place of the holy worship) was thus sprinkled, and all the ministering vessels therein, Heb. ix. 21 ; and the altar, Lev. i. 5 ; and the mercy-seat, Lev. xvi. 14 ; and the book of the covenant, Heb. ix. 19. So also the priests and their garments, Lev. viii. 30 ; and all the people, Exod. xxiv. 8. That sprinkling of blood was a rite of consecration, is evident, Lev. viii. 30.

*Quest.* Why should the forementioned things be consecrated by sprinkling of blood ?

*Ans.* All things are unclean to sinful man, till by Christ's blood, and faith therein, they are sanctified. So as hereby the contagion of man's natural pollution was set out.

Instances of cleansing unclean things by sprinkling of blood and water are these :

1. Such as ate any unclean thing, Lev. xi. 8. This being prohibited was a plain sin. So touching or any way meddling with unclean things wilfully.

2. Such as unawares touched any unclean thing, Lev. v. 2. This was a casualty.

3. Such as were infected with leprosy, running issue, or any like disease, Lev. xiii. and xv. So women, certain days after child-bearing. These were infirmities.

4. Such as buried their dead friends, or touched their corpse, Num. xix. 11, to typify the danger of having to do with such as are dead in sin. Like to this was the uncleanness of him who killed the red cow, who carried her out, who burnt her, who gathered up her ashes to make the sprinkling water withal. All these were duties commanded ; yet, because they were occasioned by sin, though they were about the means of purging from uncleanness, made the performers thereof unclean.

All these, and other like kinds of legal uncleanness, were purged with blood sprinkled on them, Num. xix. 17, 18, Heb. ix. 22. Thus purging virtue, arising from sprinkling of blood, evidently shews that Christ's blood is communicable, the virtue of it extends to others : for the legal purging was but a type of Christ's.

This is further manifest by the sacramental sprinkling of water in baptism, which is a sign of Christ's

blood, and by the communicating bread and wine in the Lord's supper.

Two especial respects there are, wherein Christ's blood may well be styled blood of sprinkling, and truly said to be communicable.

One in regard of the merit.

The other in regard of the virtue of it.

The merit, whereby the guilt and punishment of sin is taken away. The virtue, whereby the dominion and power of sin is abated and subdued.

The former was especially typified under the law ; for the sprinkling of the blood of beasts was for cleansing such as were unclean, whereby both the guilt and punishment of their uncleanness was taken away, as the uncleanness of the leper, Lev. xiv. 7, 8, and the uncleanness of him that touched a dead corpse, or were any other way unclean, Num. xix. 18, 19. Hereunto alludeth the apostle, Heb. ix. 19. In this respect, being cleansed with such sprinkling as the law enjoined, they might freely and boldly do service to God, otherwise it was death, Num. xix. 13, 20.

But the sprinkling of Christ's blood, that is, a right application thereof by the Spirit of Christ on his part, and by faith on our part, wrought by the said Spirit, doth every way cleanse from all sin,—taking away the guilt, and freeing from the punishment, in which respect the beloved disciple John saith, 1 John i. 7, 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.' Yea, also, it hath a virtue and power to subdue in us the power of sin, and to free us from the dominion thereof, in which respect Christ is said thereby (Heb. ix. 14) to 'purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God ;' and Heb. x. 22, we are said to be 'sprinkled in our hearts from an evil conscience.'

These phrases import a freedom from the power, as well as from the guilt of sin. In this respect (Acts. xv. 9), God is said to 'purify our hearts by faith ;' because faith applyeth Christ's blood to the soul.

1. This doth inform us of the means whereby Christ's blood is made useful and profitable to us. His blood is shed, and being shed, it is expiatory and satisfactory. But how may we be made partakers of the benefit of it, this legal rite sheweth, even by having it sprinkled upon our souls. Though the paschal lamb were slain, and the blood thereof poured into a basin, yet if it had not been sprinkled on the door, the destroyer would have entered in : so, though Christ's blood be shed and preached by the gospel, and represented in the sacraments, yet if it be not sprinkled on us, it doth us no good : we may be destroyed with the rest of the wicked. Our heart is as the door of the soul (Ps. xxiv. 7), if that be sprinkled with Christ's blood the destroyer dares not enter in. Therefore, as the apostle admonisheth, Heb. x. 22, 'Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled

from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

2. This may teach us how to have this blood sprinkled on our hearts. It is sprinkled by a particular application thereof to ourselves, which is done by faith; for by faith we apply unto ourselves in particular that which in the world is indefinitely revealed concerning Christ's death, and the benefit thereof. By faith we apply the merit thereof. By faith we draw a special virtue from thence. By faith we apply Christ's intercession, and there place all our confidence for acceptance.

Sec. 117. *Of the continual efficacy of Christ's sacrifice.*

This phrase, *καὶ ὁμιλεῖ*, *that speaketh*, is an elegant προσωποποιία, whereby the virtue and efficacy of Christ's blood is set out to the life. This phrase shews it to be so great, as if Christ, with all his wounds opened, and with all his blood in a vessel brought to his Father, should earnestly call and cry to his Father for pardon, he could not more prevail.

It hath respect to Christ's intercession, and importeth a perpetual efficacy of Christ's sacrifice; therefore, it is set down in the present tense participle, whereby the apostle giveth us to understand that Christ's sacrifice hath a continual efficacy.

Those principles of our Christian religion, and articles of our Christian faith, which are noted to follow hereupon, do prove as much—as resurrection, ascension, and intercession.

His resurrection shews Christ, he being sacrificed, was not as the legal sacrifices swallowed up of death, and utterly consumed, so as they were but for one only turn, and for the present use; but as he liveth after death, so he continueth to speak.

His ascension shews that he was not as the priests under the law, who, being dead, could no more enter into the holy place; but he, after death, entered into the true holy place. Herein the apostle makes a difference betwixt the typical priests and the true priest, Heb. vii. 23, 24.

His intercession sheweth the end of the two former. He rose and ascended into heaven, that he might continue the use, power, and efficacy of his sacrifice, which he doth by his intercession; so as hereby the point is evidently confirmed.

That these three followed upon his death, is evident, Rom. viii. 34. In regard of this continual efficacy of Christ's sacrifice, he is said, Heb. vii. 25, 'ever to live to make intercession for us.' Christ's continual intercession is that which is intended under this metaphor of *speaking*; for to intercede is to speak for one. This is attributed to Christ by way of resemblance. See more hereof, Chap. vii. 25, Sec. 106.

Sec. 118. *Of dead saints speaking.*

More fully to express the efficacy of Christ's blood,

the apostle sets out the matter thereof comparatively, thus, *καί τινα λαλοῦσι παρὰ τὸν Ἀβὲλ*, *better things than that of Abel*.

To understand the meaning thereof, we must search out what it is that Abel, or that his blood, speaketh.

Most Greek copies set down an article of the masculine gender, *παρὰ τὸν Ἀβὲλ*, and so refer it to the person. It seems that learned Erasmus met with some copies that have the article in the neuter gender, *παρὰ τὸ Ἀβὲλ*, and so refer it to, *αἷμα*, *blood*.

Our English so taketh it; for it saith *not than Abel*, but *than that of Abel*, viz., that blood. Now, we read of both, namely, of Abel himself, even his person, that 'he being dead, yet speaketh.' Heb. xi. 4; and also of his blood, that it being shed, 'the voice of it cried unto God from the earth,' Gen. iv. 10.

1. Abel himself speaketh, in that his faith, and the fruits thereof, being in everlasting records to all posterity, call upon all that read or hear them to be followers of him, as evidently as if his voice were heard.

2. Abel's blood speaketh, in that at first the shedding of it could not be concealed, and thereupon required judgment against his brother that slew him; yea, still it remaineth crying against all such fratricides and homicides as Cain was.

3. Both Abel himself, and also his blood, speaketh, in that his soul is among the souls of 'them that were slain,' who 'under the altar cry with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' as Rev. vi. 9, 10.

The apostle doth hereby give us to understand that dead saints speak, which is plainly expressed, Heb. xi. 4, where the apostle saith, thus Abel being dead, yet speaketh. In like manner, all that lived righteously, or suffered for righteousness' sake, and that have their life and death registered for posterity, do speak.

For they do as plainly and distinctly instruct us in the goodwill of God, in our duty to him, and in the way to life, yea, and in the extent of our obedience, how it ought to extend itself, not only to the doing of what God requireth, but also to the enduring of what he is pleased to lay upon us, as Heb. v. 8; they do, I say, as plainly instruct us therein, as if they were living, and with an audible voice spake unto us, and exhorted us to such obedience and such patience as they in their lifetime shewed. In this respect, saith the apostle, Rom. xv. 4, 'whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning.'

1. Which may serve for the refutation of that undue cavil which papists lay upon the Scripture, that it is a mute judge. If dead saints, because they are registered in the Scripture, may be said to speak, much more the Scripture, which registereth what they speak. But note the express phrases of Scripture against that

cavil, as Rom. iv. 3, *τί ἡ γὰρ ἀξία λέγει*, 'what saith (or speaketh) the Scripture?' and John xix. 37, 'another Scripture (*λέγει*) saith or speaketh;' and John vii. 12, 'saith not the Scripture?' therefore the Scripture is styled *ὁ λόγος*, *the word*, as 'the word of the prophets,' Heb. i. 1. If God should by an audible, intelligible, and distinct voice speak to us, we could not better know his mind than we may by the Scriptures. May not a friend as plainly declare his mind by a letter written, as by word of mouth? We read, 2 Chron. xxi. 12, of a writing that came from Elijah after he was translated (which letter questionless he had written whilst he was on earth, and left to be delivered to the king); did not that letter as plainly declare God's message, as if by a voice it had been uttered? So did that writing which Balaam wrote from Jeremiah's mouth, Jer. xxxvi. This phrase, 2 Cor. x. 11, 'such as we are by word in letter,' sheweth that Scripture hath its voice; therefore it is no mute judge.

2. Let us be exhorted to hearken to the voice of dead saints, as Micah vi. 9, 'hear the rod,' *i.e.*, by it learn God's mind. They who imitate dead saints hear them speak, and hearken to their instructions.

Sec. 119. *Of the excellency of Christ's blood above others.*

Christ's blood every way speaketh better things than Abel or his blood; for,

1. Abel speaks for imitation. Christ not only so, but for expiation, justification, and salvation, all which he hath merited.

2. Abel's blood speaks for revenge; Christ's for pardon, Luke xxiii. 34; therefore saith the apostle, Eph. i. 7, 'In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace.'

*Quest.* Why is the comparison betwixt the blood of Abel, and the blood of Christ?

*Ans.* Because Christ's blood, in regard of the plotting and practising of those that shed it, was as unjustly, as wrongfully, as maliciously shed as Abel's. Now, lest from that which is said of Abel's blood, Gen. iv. 10, and Mat. xxiii. 35, the like should be feared of Christ's, by this comparison he removeth that scruple.

The apostle doth hereby give us to understand that Christ's blood hath a more excellent virtue than others'. This is true of others' persons and others' blood.

1. The best that can be said of others' persons is, that they are an excellent pattern and example. Thereupon we are exhorted to 'be followers of them,' Heb. vi. 12. But Christ his person, his blood, is for our justification, sanctification, and salvation, 1 Cor. i. 30.

2. The best that can be said of others' blood is, that it is a ratification of the truth of that profession for which it was shed. In this respect the apostle

styleth his sufferings a 'confirmation of the gospel,' Phil. i. 7; and, ver. 12, saith that they 'turned to the furthering of the gospel;' but by Christ's blood, the covenant of peace, and reconciliation betwixt God and man, is made and confirmed, Heb. ix. 15, 16.

3. The blood of others unjustly shed crieth for revenge, Gen. iv. 10, Mat. xxiii. 35, Rev. vi. 10; but Christ's for pardon, Luke xxiii. 34, Eph. i. 7; yea, as it hath been formerly shewed and proved, we are redeemed, reconciled, justified, sanctified, and saved by Christ's blood.

Thus we see how Christ's blood hath every way a more excellent virtue than others'; and this appeareth,

1. From the dignity of his person. We Christians know that Christ was true God; that he assumed our nature into the unity of the Deity, so as God and man became one person. In this respect 'the word was made flesh,' John i. 14, and 'God was manifested in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iv. 16. By virtue of the hypostatical and personal union, that blood which was shed by the human nature is attributed to the divine nature, Acts xx. 28. In this respect it hath a divine and an infinite worth, dignity, merit, virtue, and efficacy, and therefore is better and more excellent than any others.

2. From the ends why Christ shed his blood.

(1.) To free man from sin, and from all that misery whereunto man by sin had brought himself, Gal. iii. 13.

(2.) To bring man to everlasting happiness, Eph. v. 25-27.

Can there be better things than these? Can any other blood effect these?

1. This demonstrateth the blasphemy of papists, who attribute the merit and virtue proper to Christ's blood to the blood of martyrs; for they teach that by the blood of martyrs sins are expiated; yea, they have a new device of mingling the milk of the mother with the blood of the Son—a Jesuitical blasphemy.

2. This serves for the aggravation of their impiety who trample on this blood of Christ, of which the apostle speaketh, Heb. x. 29. See Chap. x. Sec. 110.

3. This should stir us up highly to esteem the death and sacrifice of Christ, and that simply in, by, and for itself, for it is most 'precious,' 1 Pet. i. 19. Yea, also comparatively, above all other blood; for it 'speaks better things' than they. If the blood and death of God's servants be precious, as Ps. lxxii. 14, and Ps. cxvi. 15, how much more the blood of the Son of God? and that not only in the better worth, but also in the better effect. It speaketh better.

4. Let us be exhorted with strong confidence to trust to this blood, and to the efficacy thereof, and that by reason of the better things which it speaketh, namely, grace, mercy, pardon, reconciliation, acceptance, and salvation. Hereon we ought especially to meditate when our sins make clamours in our con-

sciences, and the cry of them may seem to ascend to heaven: then place thy confidence on the cry of Christ's blood, which speaketh all better things. Without controversy there is more ground of confidence in the cry of Christ's blood, than can be matter of despair in the cry of our sins.

Sec. 128. *Of the participation of Christ's blood, as it is a Christian privilege.*

Hitherto of the distinct points whence the last branch of Christians' privilege ariseth. The intimation of the privilege itself is in this copulative particle, *and*, which hath a reference to the first verb in ver. 22, *προσέχθητε, ye are come*, viz., by the gospel, *to the blood of sprinkling*. We are said to come to this blood under the new testament, because it is actually shed, and offered unto us in and by the preaching of the gospel, and participating of the sacraments, whereto, when we come, we come to this blood of sprinkling.

So that the apostle doth hereby give us to understand that participation of Christ's blood is a Christian's privilege. This is to be taken of the actual shedding of Christ's blood: for, Rev. xiii. 8, Christ is said to be 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' And to like purpose saith the apostle, Heb. xiii. 8, 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,' which phrase may be understood in these four respects:

1. In regard of the eternal decree of God the Father, who had decreed from the beginning that Christ should be that sacrifice that should expiate and do away the sins of the world.

2. In regard of God's promise which was made immediately after man's fall, Gen. iii. 15. As a seal of that promise sacrifices were offered, being types of Christ's blood, Gen. iv. 4.

3. In regard of the efficacy of Christ's blood. For after it was purposed and promised to be shed, it was to all purposes as effectual as after it was actually shed. Therefore saith our apostle, Heb. xiii. 8, 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'

4. In regard of the vigour and virtue of faith.

In these four respects all believers, even such as lived before Christ was actually exhibited, did partake of the benefits of Christ's blood, and were thereby redeemed out of their natural, miserable bondage, reconciled to God, purged from their sins, justified, sanctified, saved.

But the actual shedding of Christ's blood, whereupon all the forementioned benefits depended, was reserved to the time of the new testament, which is the time of the Christian church. In this respect it is styled 'the blood of the new testament,' Mat. xxvi. 28. And Christian Gentiles are said to be 'made nigh by the blood of Christ,' Eph. ii. 13. They were not made nigh by the types of his blood; those were a partition-wall, Eph. ii. 14.

1. This may inform us in the excellency of our times. They are the best times that ever the church had, better than the best times of the Jews, as accomplishments are better than purposes, and performances than promises, and substance than shadow, and truth than types. So much better are our days than theirs. Oh, the blindness of those who discern not the excellency of these times! 2 Cor. iv. 4. Oh, the ungratefulness of those who regard it not!

2. Let us be stirred up with strong confidence to trust to the sacrifice of Christ, and to that blood of sprinkling whereunto we are now brought. Note Heb. x. 19-22.

The types of this blood wrought much confidence in the believing Jews. How much more confidence ought this very blood itself, now actually shed, the blood of sprinkling whereunto we are come, work in us? Read Heb. ix. 11-14.

Sec. 121. *Of the resolution of Heb. xii. 18-24.*

Ver. 18. *For we are not come unto the mount which might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, darkness, and tempest,*

19. *And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they which heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:*

20. *For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:*

21. *And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:*

22. *But ye are come to mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,*

23. *To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*

24. *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

The sum of these verses is, 'the Christian's privileges.'

Whereof are these two general parts—

1. The kind of privileges.

2. The use thereof, ver. 25.

The kind thereof is set forth in the difference betwixt the law and the gospel.

In this difference we may observe—

1. The manner of setting down both.

2. The matter whereof each consisteth.

For the first—

1. The things of the law were earthly. This is principally intended, in this phrase, *the mount that might be touched*, because it was an earthly mountain, which might be felt and seen.

2. They were terrible, the terror whereof is set out—

1. By external signs.

2. By fearful effects.

The terrible signs which appeared at the delivery of the law were—

1. A mount touched.
2. Burning with fire.
3. Blackness and darkness.
4. Tempest.
5. Sound of trumpet.
6. Voice of words.
7. Stoning of beasts.

The effects concerned both men and beasts.

1. Beasts might not, yea, durst not, come near the mount.

2. Men, both of the common sort, and also the most eminent amongst them, even Moses himself, was afflicted at the delivery of the law.

Secondly, The privileges of the gospel are spiritual and heavenly. They consist of ten distinct branches, which may be brought to two heads—

1. The places whereunto under the gospel we are brought.

2. The persons to whom we are joined.

The places are described by three metaphors :

1. *Mount Zion*.
2. *The city of the living God*.
3. *Heavenly Jerusalem*.

The persons are,

1. Creatures, or,
2. Creator, and,
3. He that is betwixt both.

The creatures are,

1. *Angels*, amplified by their number, said to be *innumerable*.

2. Holy men.

And these are,

1. Generally propounded, in this phrase, *general assembly*.

2. Particularly exemplified,

(1.) By the name, *firstborn*.

(2.) By this phrase, *which are written in heaven*.

(3.) By this clause, *the spirits of just men made perfect*.

2. The Creator, set out by his jurisdiction, *judge of all* ; wherein we may observe,

(1.) The kind of function which he undertaketh, *judge*.

(2.) The extent thereof, in these words, *of all*.

3. The person that is between both is expressed, in these words, *and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant*. In which we may observe,

(1.) A description of the person from whom the privileges of the gospel arise, and that,

[1.] By his title, *Jesus*.

[2.] By his office, *mediator of the new covenant*. Wherein is expressed,

*First*, The kind of his office, in this word, *mediator*.

*Secondly*, The object whereabouts it is exercised,

in this word, *covenant* ; which is illustrated by the excellency thereof, in this word, *new*.

Sec. 122. *Of observations raised out of* Heb. xii. 18-21.

I. *The legal discipline is taken away from Christians*. See Sec. 98.

II. *The best things are reserved for the last times*. This ariseth from the comparison which the apostle useth, *for ye are not come unto the mount, &c. But ye are come to mount Zion*. See Sec. 98.

III. *The law, and the things thereof, were but earthly in comparison of the gospel*. This is principally intended, under this phrase, *the mount which might be touched*, meaning mount Sinai ; so called, because it was an earthly mountain, which might be felt and touched, opposed in Scripture to spiritual Zion. See Sec. 99.

IV. *The law is a terrible discipline*. The particular circumstances mentioned by the apostle concerning the delivery thereof, prove as much. See Sec. 99.

V. *Zion was a type of the Christian church*. See Sec. 100.

VI. *The church is a city*.

VII. *The church is a city of God*. Both these arise from the express words of the apostle, who calls the church *the city of God*. See Sec. 101.

VIII. *The number of angels is innumerable*. So much the apostle expressly affirmeth, by terming them an *innumerable company*. See Sec. 103.

IX. *The Christian church is a general assembly*. So it is expressly termed by the apostle. See Sec. 104.

X. *They who are of the true church are new born*. See Sec. 105.

XI. *They who are new born are God's firstborn*. The metaphor of *firstborn*, being applied to the members of God's church, importeth both these doctrines. See Sec. 106.

XII. *Under the gospel all Christians are made one with the Jews, and partake of their privileges*. So much ariseth from the metaphor, *firstborn*, being applied unto Christians, as well as unto Jews. See Sec. 107.

XIII. *The names of the elect are enrolled in heaven*. So much the apostle in plain terms expresseth. See Sec. 108.

XIV. *It is a prerogative of the new testament to have access to the supreme judge*. For this is here set down in the midst of other prerogatives under the gospel. See Sec. 109.

XV. *Men's souls are of a spiritual substance*. In which respect they are here called *spirits*, which are spiritual substances. See Sec. 110.

XVI. *Men may be truly just in this world*. For this title the apostle here giveth to saints. See Sec. 111.

XVII. *Saints' souls in heaven are perfect*. So much the apostle plainly expresseth. See Sec. 112.

XVIII. *By the gospel, saints on earth have communion with saints in heaven.* This is set down by the apostle, as one special prerogative of the gospel. See Sec. 113.

XIX. *By the gospel, we are brought to the mediator of the new covenant.* This is set down as another special prerogative of the gospel. See Sec. 115.

XX. *Christ's blood is communicable.* For it is blood sprinkled. See Sec. 116.

XXI. *Christ's sacrifice hath a continual efficacy.* For his blood is said still to continue speaking. See Sec. 117.

XXII. *Dead saints speak.* This ariseth from the apostle's bringing in Abel speaking after his death. See Sec. 118.

XXIII. *Christ's blood hath a more excellent virtue than others.* So much the apostle expressly noteth, where he saith, that Christ's blood *speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.* See Sec. 119.

XXIV. *Participation of Christ's blood is a Christian's privilege.* This is set down by the apostle, as one special privilege of the gospel. See Sec. 120.

Sec. 123. *Of circumspection about God's word.*

Ver. 25. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.*

26. *Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more shake I not the earth only, but also heaven.*

27. *And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

29. *For our God is a consuming fire.*

The general use of the forementioned privileges here follows. It is first propounded, in these words, *see that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*

Secondly, It is confirmed in the words following.

The word, *βλέπετε*, translated *see*, is a word of circumspection, and hath here an especial emphasis; much more than if he had barely said, 'Refuse not him that speaketh.'

He puts hereby into their hearts care and fear; care in observing what he said; fear of some ill effect, if they neglect it.

The next word, *παραισέσθε*, translated *refuse*, cometh of a verb, *παραισέμαι*, which properly signifieth to *pray against*. The simple verb, *αἰτέω*, signifieth *earnestly to pray*; but this compound used by the apostle signifieth to *pray against a thing*, which is an earnest kind of refusal, as where we say, God forbid that I should do this! or, Far be it from me! Whereby is implied, that refusing of the gospel is

commonly joined with indignation. For the gospel is worthy of all acceptance, that it cannot be refused but with much indignation. His heart must needs be set against the gospel, that refuseth it; therefore many judicious expositors translate it, *ne asperneminus, despise not*, and so was our former English translation.

The next words, *τὸν λαλοῦντα*, *him that speaketh*, hath relation to the *blood that speaketh* in the foregoing verse. Indeed, that is of the neuter gender, having relation to *blood*. But because it is Christ who speaketh by his blood, the apostle most fitly changeth the gender, and intendeth the person himself, Christ Jesus, who speaketh; whereupon he had good cause to infer the words following, 'For if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.'

The apostle's manner of expressing the duty here, in this word, *βλέπετε*, *see*, which implies great circumspection, gives us to understand that circumspection about God's word is very requisite. This was required of Moses, in regard of God's direction about legal types, Exod. xxv. 40; and of the Jews, in regard of their observation of the law, Deut. v. 1; as also of Solomon's proverbs, Prov. v. 1, 2; and of the prophesies of prophets, as their vehement rhetorical apostrophes to senseless and lifeless creatures demonstrate, Isa. i. 2, Micah vi. 1, 2. Much more ought circumspection to be used about the gospel: therefore saith our Saviour, Mark iv. 3, 'Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow;' and ver. 24, Christ said, 'Take heed what ye hear;' so likewise Luke viii. 18, Rev. ii. 7.

The grounds and reasons thereof may be taken,

1. From the excellency of it. As God himself is without question the most excellent of all, so his word. See a commendation hereof, Ps. xix. 7-9, Prov. viii. 6, &c.

2. From Satan's malicious endeavour to steal it from us, that so it should do us no good. In that respect he is resembled to fowls which pick up the seed that is sown, Mat. xiii. 4, 19.

3. From our own indisposition thereto. The more divine, heavenly, and excellent anything is, the more dull and heavy we are thereto by nature; our hearts being naturally earthly and sensual. And, therefore, saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iii. 5, 'We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.' It is God that must open the heart, as he did the heart of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14, before we can attend unto the word of God. This reason is rendered why the Jews received not the word, Mat. xi. 25, and xiii. 11.

1. This may inform us in the reason of that small profit which by many is made of God's word. God's word is in itself a word of great price and worth, Ps. xix. 10. Yea, it is sweet and comfortable. It hath

also a great power and efficacy in it, Rom. i. 16, Heb. iv. 12. It is an excellent light and guide, Ps. cxix. 24, 105. How is it then that it is no more regarded? Surely by reason of men's supine negligency and carelessness: they do not see to this matter; they do not heed it; they do not consider the worth, the benefit, the comfort of it, and the need wherein we stand of it. If they did more advisedly and seriously see to and consider this matter, they would have the word in more high esteem, and reap more benefit by it.

2. How should this stir us up to give diligent heed to God's word, unto that which above all other things is to be regarded. See to it, that it be not any way slighted. It is the most excellent, Prov. iii. 11, 15, the most comfortable, Ps. cxix. 50, and every way most profitable, 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Sec. 124. *Of Christ's speaking to us in the gospel.*

The matter whereof the inhibition consisteth follows, wherein,

1. One thing is implied.

2. Another expressed.

1. The thing implied is, that in the ministry of the gospel Christ speaketh to his church. This is here presupposed, and taken for granted; for if Christ speak not, he could not be refused.

2. The thing expressed by way of inhibition, is to refuse Christ speaking.

From the former we may observe, that Christ speaketh to us in the gospel. That which is spoken of the Revelation, Rev. i. 1, where it is called 'the Revelation of Jesus Christ,' may be applied to the whole gospel, and to all the mysteries thereof. It is therefore oft styled 'the gospel of Jesus Christ,' Mark i. 1, Rom. i. 16, 2 Cor. iv. 4, Gal. i. 7, 2 Thess. i. 8, because Christ is the revealer of, as well as the subject-matter of it.

*Obj.* 1. Christ delivered the law. The angel mentioned, Acts vii. 38, was the 'angel of the covenant,' Jesus Christ so styled, Mal. iii. 1. Thereupon it is said, Exod. xx. 1, 'God spake all these words,' and ver. 2, 'I am (Jehovah) the Lord thy God.' For that angel was Jehovah, true God. And by him the Father always made known his mind to the church, in which respect he is styled the Word, John i. 1, yea, 'the Word of God,' Rev. xix. 13.

*Ans.* What is spoken of Christ's revealing his Father's will before his exhibition in the flesh, is intended of him as the Son of God, the second person in sacred Trinity: so as true God he spake by his divine Spirit, as 1 Pet. iii. 19. But the gospel was revealed by him, as Emmanuel, God with us, Mat. i. 23; 'the Word was made flesh,' John i. 14. And so 'God manifested in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16.

*Obj.* 2. Rom. ii. 16, the gospel is termed the gospel of Paul; so likewise in Rom. xvi. 25, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 1 Thess. i. 5, 2 Thess. ii. 14.

*Ans.* A thing is said to be a man's own, many ways.

1. As he is the author and original cause of it, Luke vi. 41.

2. As he hath a just right and title unto it, Mat. xx. 15, Prov. v. 17.

3. As the care and custody of it is committed to his charge, Num. xvii. 9, 2 Tim. iv. 5.

In this last sense the gospel is said to be Paul's and other ministers', Rom. i. 1, and xv. 16, 1 Thess. ii. 4, 1 Pet. i. 12. But in the two former respects it is the gospel of Christ; yea, also as Christ is the subject-matter of it.

But distinctly to explain the point. In five several respects Christ is said to speak in and by the gospel, and the ministry thereof.

1. Before the time of the gospel Christ incarnate spake not, but upon the revelation of it, being incarnate, he spake visibly, audibly with his own voice. In this sense the apostle, Heb. i. 1, 2, 'God who in times past spake unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.'

2. Christ incarnate made known the gospel, and all the mysteries thereof, to his apostles, John xv. 15, Acts i. 3. And whereas St Paul had heard nothing out of Christ's mouth while he lived on earth, being called to be an apostle, he was rapt into heaven, and there by Christ himself was instructed in the mysteries of the gospel, Gal. i. 12, Acts xxvi. 16, 2 Cor. xii. 2. Hence is it St Paul and others prefix this title before their epistles, 'an apostle of Jesus Christ.'

3. Christ, after he had ascended from earth to heaven, sent his Spirit further to instruct his apostles, and to bring to their minds all that he had revealed to them before, John xiv. 26.

4. Other ministers living in the apostles' times declared what the apostles had revealed to them from Christ, 2 Tim. ii. 2, Heb. ii. 3.

5. Ministers succeeding the apostles age after age preach the mysteries which are by evangelists and apostles written and recorded from Christ himself. If any do otherwise he is pronounced accursed, Gal. i. 8, Rev. xxii. 18.

Thus we see how Christ still speaketh to his church under the gospel.

The reasons proving Christ to speak unto us in the gospel may be,

1. The profundity of the mysteries in themselves. They are such as 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man,' &c.

2. The excellency of them, 1 Tim. iii. 16. None but the Son of God was fit to reveal them, Rev. v. 1, 5.

3. The kind of mysteries of the gospel. They all concern the free grace and rich mercy of God to man in Christ Jesus. The sum of all is this, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,' John iii. 16. Who now should first make this known, but he himself whom it so much concerneth?

4. The honour of the gospel. It adds much to the honour of an embassy to have it sent and delivered by a man of note and name, for birth, for dignity, for estate, for parts and abilities. But the Son is the most eminent and excellent of all, every manner of way, Phil. ii. 9. Note Heb. i. 5, &c.

1. This may inform us of the difference betwixt the time of the gospel and the time of the law. This difference in this very respect is expressly noted, Heb. i. 1. It appears to be a point worthy due observation, in that he beginneth with it, and so largely insisteth upon it as he doth in the first chapter.

The difference between them, in this very kind that Jesus is the author of the gospel, is the ground of that life and efficacy which the apostle attributes to the gospel above the law, 2 Cor. iii. 6, &c.

Other excellencies of the gospel are here laid down by the apostle in the words following, whereof more in order: here let this groundwork of them, that *Christ speaketh*, be well weighed.

#### Sec. 125. Of receiving the word of Christ.

The main thing here expressed by the apostle is, that Christ's word ought in no case to be rejected, which is implied, under this phrase, *ἡν παραισῶντες τὸν λαόν, &c.*, see that ye refuse not him that speaketh.

As there are negative inhibitions for this, as Deut. xviii. 19, Heb. iii. 8, so affirmative injunctions, Acts vii. 37, Mat. xvii. 5. The penalties denounced against such, and inflicted on such (whereof hereafter), do further enforce the point. So Christ's complaints, Mat. xi. 16, &c.

The ground of the point may be,

1. The worth and value of Christ's word in itself. This is that treasure and pearl whereof our Saviour speaketh, Mat. xiii. 44, 46, Prov. iii. 14, 15. Will a wise man refuse that which is of worth and price?

2. The need wherein we stand of it. Light is not more needful for and useful to such as are in darkness, than the gospel to us. We all by nature sit in darkness, Eph. v. 8. Yea, we are blind, Rev. iii. 17. But the gospel, as it is light, so it hath an enlightening virtue, Luke iv. 18, Acts xxvi. 18. Will a blind man refuse that which can give him sight and light? Note Mark x. 51.

3. The heinousness of the sin, manifested by the notation of the word, *παραισῶντες*, whereof see Sec. 123.

1. This may inform us of the many ways of refusing Christ's speaking, as,

(1.) They that lived in Christ's time, and would not hear him. Nicodemus coming by night, John iii. 2, shews that many were afraid or ashamed to come unto him.

(2.) They that came to hear, but believed not what they heard, John xii. 37, 38.

(3.) They that took offence at what he spake, Mat. xv. 12.

(4.) They who perverted his words, John vi. 52.

(5.) They who for a while heard him, but afterwards left him, John vi. 66.

(6.) They who desired him to depart from them, Mark v. 17.

(7.) They who cunningly sought to ensnare him, Luke xx. 20.

(8.) They who openly spake against that he uttered and preached, John vii. 12.

(9.) They who blasphemed his word and works, Mark iii. 30.

(10.) They who persecuted him for his doctrine, John viii. 40.

Now that Christ is taken from us, he is refused by such as,

(1.) Read not what he hath caused to be written, as 1 Tim. iv. 13.

(2.) Come not to the church, Mat. xxiii. 37.

(3.) Believe nothing that they hear, Acts xxviii. 24.

(4.) Come to catch, as Jer. xx. 10.

(5.) Come to mock, as Acts xvii. 32.

(6.) Seek to silence the preachers of the gospel, as Acts iv. 18, 1 Thes. ii. 16.

(7.) Persecute them, as 1 Thes. ii. 15.

2. How doth this aggravate that light esteem which many have of the gospel of Jesus Christ! The occasions thereof are these:

(1.) Some on mere ignorance, not knowing the need and worth of the gospel, as the cock in the fable refused the pearl on the dunghill. See Jer. v. 3, 4.

(2.) Or self-conceit, thinking that they have enough of themselves, and that they need not the gospel. Christ styles such *whole, righteous*, Mat. ix. 12, 13. Such a one was the angel of the church of Laodicea, Rev. iii. 17.

(3.) Misconceit of the over-strictness of the gospel, terming it *cords, bonds*, as Ps. ii. 3: or misinterpreting or misapplying it, as John vi. 60, 66.

(4.) Or a too high esteem of the world, and the things thereof, as Mark v. 17, Luke xiv. 18, &c., 2 Tim. iv. 10.

(5.) Or fear of danger and damage for the profession thereof, John xii. 42, 2 Tim. iv. 16.

(6.) Or a prepossessed mind with other doctrines contrary to the gospel, Gal. i. 6, and iii. 1. Or a mind infected with idolatry and superstition, as Jer. xlv. 16, 17. Such are papists.

(7.) Or an impious profane mind, caring for no religion, but wholly given to satisfy their carnal appetite. These are the swine intended, Mat. vii. 6.

(8.) Or hatred of the ministers of the word, 1 Kings xxii. 8, John xv. 18, 19.

(9.) Or hatred of God himself, because they know he will judge them, John xv. 18, Luke xix. 14.

(10.) Or a malicious spite against the Spirit of grace, Heb. x. 29, Acts vii. 51. This is the highest pitch of impiety that can be; this is that unpardonable sin, Mark iii. 29, 30.



3. To admonish us to take heed of all means and occasions that may any way alienate our hearts from the gospel, and bring us to refuse the same.

(1.) Take heed of winking, or any way closing our eyes against the gospel; thence will the devil take occasion to blind our minds. Note 2 Cor. iv. 4.

(2.) Be not over-conceited of thine own sufficiency and fulness; this provokes God to send men empty away, Luke i. 53. Rather acquaint thyself with thine own emptiness and insufficiency. Note 1 Cor. iv. 7, and 2 Cor. iii. 5.

(3.) Be well informed in the liberty of the gospel. Never any word nor profession brought men to more sweet and comfortable liberty, than the gospel of Jesus Christ, Luke iv. 18. The apostle styles it 'the glorious liberty of the sons of God,' Rom. viii. 21. Note John viii. 36. They that know and believe this will not count the gospel a bond.

(4.) Take off thine heart from the world, and all the vanities thereof; it is of a bewitching nature. It intoxicated Judas and Demas, and so it doth many thousands. Note Mat. xiii. 22. Such a contrariety there is betwixt the gospel and the world, as James iv. 4.

(5.) Purge all base, slavish fear out of thine heart. Fear not men, nor anything that man can do, Mat. x. 26, 28, 31. Place thy fear upon a more excellent and powerful object, even God himself. Note Luke xii. 4, 5.

Withal cast off the cloak of shame; be not ashamed of Christ, or of his gospel. Note Rom. i. 16, Heb. xii. 2.

Fear and shame turn many from a holy, zealous profession of the gospel.

(6.) Be well instructed in the mysteries of the gospel, and thoroughly informed and persuaded of the orthodox truth thereof, Col. ii. 7, Heb. xiii. 9. Thus shalt thou be kept from all false doctrines; yea, from heresy, idolatry, superstition, and all error.

(7.) Cast off the old man, which is corrupt through deceivable lusts, Eph. iv. 22; and mortify all the members of the flesh, Col. iii. 5. So long as they bear sway in us they will make us incapable of receiving benefit by the word. Noisome weeds must be weeded out of a field, or else the seed sown therein can bring forth no good crop.

(8.) Know God's ministers, such as are set over you, 1 Thes. v. 12, 13. If they 'labour in the word, count them worthy of double honour,' 1 Tim. v. 17. Due esteem of the ministers of the gospel is a means to have the gospel itself in higher account.

(9.) Acquaint thyself with God's love to man, as in giving his Son, so in affording his gospel, whereby the evidences of his love in Christ are clearly and distinctly made known. This will raise up thine heart aloft, to work in thee a high esteem of him and of his gospel.

(10.) Entertain every good motion of the divine

Spirit, especially when it is wrought in thee, at and by the ministry of the word, as Acts ii. 37. Be so far from resisting and spiting the Spirit of grace, as no way to grieve him, Eph. iv. 30.

Sec. 126. *Of Christ's speaking from heaven.*

Hitherto of the duty; the motive follows, which is set down under a comparison of unequals, urged from the less to the greater, in these words: *For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.*

The causal particle, *γὰρ*, for, sheweth that this is added as a motive to keep them from refusing to hear Christ. The motive is drawn from the danger and damage which is like to ensue upon such refusal.

Which danger is set down negatively, *they shall not escape; i.e.*, they shall assuredly pay for it.

This is ratified by God's former dealing with such as refused Moses's law: *they escaped not.*

The argument is enforced by the less to the greater. *If they who refused him who spake on earth escaped not, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.*

This phrase, *τὸν ἐν τῇ γῆι ὑψῆς ὑψῆς ὑψῆς ὑψῆς*, him that spake on earth, is meant of Moses, who is said, *ὑψῆς ὑψῆς*, to speak by divine inspiration, or to declare what is revealed by God. So did Moses, as Heb. viii. 5. In this sense the word is used several times, as Mat. ii. 12, 22, Luke ii. 26, Acts x. 22, Heb. viii. 5, xi. 7, and xii. 25.

This, therefore, commends the ministry of Moses; yet hereof it is here said he was, *ἐν τῇ γῆι ὑψῆς*, on earth. Moses himself, as all other mere men, coming of the first Adam, was, as 1 Cor. xv. 47, 'of the earth earthy.'

1. In regard of the mould whence he came.

2. In regard of the place where he was when he received and delivered his laws, on earth, Acts vii. 38.

3. In regard of the nature and kind of oracles which he delivered; comparatively to Christ's oracles, they were, as Heb. vii. 16, 'carnal.'

In opposition hereto, of Christ it is here said, *τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανόθεν*, him from heaven.

The verb is not expressed; therefore some understand the verb substantive, him, *ὅσα*, that is from heaven, in which sense the words are clear; for Christ is 'the Lord from heaven,' 1 Cor. xv. 47. Heaven is his glorious palace where he dwells, and heaven is the place whence, being incarnate, he came, John iii. 13, Eph. iii. 9.

Others here repeat the word, *λαλοῦντα*, speaking.

*Quest.* Hence a question may arise, Did not Christ speak on earth, as well as Moses?

*Ans.* 1. He was not a teacher from earth, as Moses, but from above, John viii. 23.

2. He received not his gospel on earth, as Moses did, but in the bosom of his Father, John i. 18.

3. His doctrine was not carnal, as Moses's, but 'spirit and life,' John vi. 63, and iii. 12. Note John i. 17.

4. Though Christ were on earth, and on earth preached, yet, being in heaven, from heaven also he received his Father's will. This he did before his incarnation, 1 Pet. iii. 19.

All that is written of God's speaking from heaven to the fathers, is in special to be applied to the second person in sacred Trinity, the Son of God, that *Word* by whom the Father spake; for as by the Son the Father made all things, Heb. i. 2, John i. 3, and ordered all things, Gen. xix. 24, so by him he revealed his will from time to time.

It was the Son of God, styled 'the angel of God,' Gen. xxi. 17, that spake to Hagar out of heaven. This was Jehovah that stood upon the top of that ladder which reached up to heaven, and from thence spake to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 13. This also was Jehovah who answered David from heaven, 1 Chron. xxi. 26. It was his voice that came down from heaven to Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. 31. He from heaven made known his Father's will to all the prophets of God age after age. He in his human nature from heaven spake to Paul, Acts ix. 4, xxii. 18, and xxiii. 11. So he spake to Ananias, Acts ix. 10. Finally, he, being in heaven, spake in his apostles, and still speaketh in all his faithful ministers. Note 2 Cor. xiii. 3, Luke x. 16, John xiii. 20.

Not hearkening to, or not obeying Christ, is here styled a *turning away from him*. The word in the Greek, ἀποστρέφειν, is used of such as in heart are alienated from a thing, as 2 Tim. i. 15, and iv. 4, and Titus i. 14, whereby he sheweth what kind of persons they be that regard not the gospel, even such as have their hearts alienated from it; otherwise they could not but have it in high account.

Some make the difference here intended to be betwixt God's manner of delivering the law and the gospel. In delivering the law, God spake on earth, after an earthly manner; but in delivering the gospel, he spake from heaven, after a heavenly manner.

From the different manner of giving the law and the gospel, the apostle giveth us to understand, that as the law was given on earth, so the gospel from heaven.

These phrases which Christ useth of the gospel, 'my doctrine is his that sent me,' John vii. 16; and ver. 17, 'it is God's;' do shew that it is from heaven. St Paul further cleareth the point, Gal. i. 11, 12. In this respect it is styled 'a mystery,' Eph. vi. 19; 'a great mystery,' 1 Tim. iii. 16.

1. Which may inform us in the excellency of the gospel. Things from heaven are most excellent things. The excellency of the bread of life is this, that 'it is from heaven,' John vi. 32; so likewise of angels, Gal. i. 8; of the Spirit, John i. 32; of Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 47; of the Father, Mat. vi. 9. As heaven itself is

most excellent, so the things which are in heaven. For men on earth to have a doctrine from heaven, how excellent must it needs be!

2. Which may stir us up to have it in high esteem, and to give the more diligent heed thereto. On such a ground saith the apostle, Heb. ii. 1, 'Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard,' &c. Shall God vouchsafe to speak to us from heaven, and shall not we on earth regard it? Surely such shew themselves worse than swine, Mat. vii. 6. Meditate, therefore, on this circumstance. St Peter urgeth this circumstance to this very purpose, 2 Pet. i. 17.

3. Be exhorted, therefore, to have a heavenly disposition and conversation, as Phil. iii. 20. This is to 'walk as becometh the gospel,' Phil. i. 27, and to be 'cast into the mould thereof.'

#### Sec. 127. Of the punishment of transgressors of the law.

The apostle, in setting down the penalty of the transgressors both of the law and the gospel, first shews that there was an agreement in the general, viz., that neither the transgressor of the one nor yet of the other escaped. Secondly, that there was a certainty and severity of the latter, which are both expressed in these words, *If they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven*. Whereby the apostle giveth us plainly to understand two things:

1. That transgressors of the law were surely punished.

2. That despisers of the gospel shall be most surely and sorely punished.

For the former, that transgressors of the law were surely punished, appeareth,

1. From the many penalties enjoined, Exod. xxi. 12, &c., and xxii. 1, &c., Lev. xx. 2, &c.

2. From many threatenings in the Scripture, Gen. xvii. 14, Exod. xii. 15, Lev. xxvi. 16, &c., Dent. xxvii. 15, &c., and xxviii. 15, &c.

3. From the manifold executions of God's wrath against the transgressors of his law, whereof see a catalogue in 1 Cor. x. 5, &c.

1. Which should admonish us to take heed of offending God, and transgressing his law.

2. It should direct us to acquaint ourselves with God's former courses. Consider what befell Adam, Cain, the old world, Sodom, the Egyptians, Canaanites, and others, for their sins and transgressions, that so we may be the more watchful over ourselves against those sins, knowing that God is still the same God.

For the latter, that despisers of the gospel shall be most surely and sorely punished, the apostle plainly expresseth, under these words, *πολλοὶ ἀποστρέψαντες*, much more; 'For if they escaped not who refused him that

spake on earth, *much more* shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.' See hereof, Chap. ii. 3, Sec. 21, and Chap. x. 29, Sec. 197.

Sec. 128. *Of the meaning of ver. 26.*

Ver. 26. *Whose voice then shook the earth, but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.*

The apostle proceedeth to aggravate the terror of turning from Christ, and that comparatively, by another argument from the less to the greater.

The former comparison was betwixt persons, Moses and Christ; this is betwixt majesty and majesty, or power and power. It may be thus framed. If he that shaketh the earth be to be feared, much more he that shaketh both earth and heaven too.

Whereas the apostle saith, *ὃς ἡ φωνή, whose voice; this is meant of Christ's voice in delivering the law.* Thereunto hath the particle, *τότε, then,* reference; for then mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, and the whole mount quaked greatly, Exod. xix. 18. *But now (ὡς ἄ) hath relation to the time of the gospel.* And because that which he intendeth is a glorious and joyous matter, the apostle expresseth it in the words of a prophet (viz., Hag. ii. 6), and styleth it a promise, in this word, *ἐγγεγραται, hath promised.*

In quoting the prophet the apostle hath more respect to the sense than to the words. Translators must hold close to the words, but relaters or quoters of texts are not so strictly bound thereto; it is enough if they faithfully deliver so much of the sense as is pertinent to their purpose. Now that we may see how the apostle doth this, let us consider the scope which the prophet aimed at, and apply it to the apostle's purpose.

The scope of the prophet was to comfort the faithful Jews, who had, after forty years' disturbance, built a new temple, but far inferior to that which Solomon had built before, and were thereupon much troubled in their minds, for at the sight of the foundation thereof many of them wept, Ezra iii. 12. To comfort them, he tells them that the glory of this latter shall be greater than of the former, Hag. ii. 9. The reason is in this text, taken from the majesty and power of the Lord that should come into this temple, who thus saith of himself, 'I will shake the heavens and the earth'—namely, at the exhibition of this Lord in the flesh, while this temple stood.

His argument in general thus standeth.

At giving the law the earth only was shaken;

But at bringing in the gospel earth and heaven too were shaken. Therefore the gospel is the more glorious; and therefore the gospel is with more diligence and reverence to be heard.

Only the latter part of the argument, concerning the shaking of earth and heaven too, is here proved.

Quest. 1. When were these shaken?

Ans. At the beginning and progress of the gospel. This is evident, both by the main scope of the apostle in this place, which is to magnify the glory of the gospel above the law.

Quest. 2. How were they both shaken?

1. By evident signs.

2. By powerful effects.

The signs are these:

(1.) The extraordinary light that shined about the shepherds at Christ's birth, Luke ii. 9.

(2.) The extraordinary star, Mat. ii. 2.

(3.) The opening of heaven at his baptism, Mat. iii. 17, and transfiguration, Mat. xvii. 5.

(4.) The voice from heaven that was thought to be thunder, John xii. 28, 29.

(5.) The darkness of the sun, the rending of the veil of the temple, the earthquakes, the cleaving of stones, opening of graves, raising of bodies out of the graves at Christ's death and resurrection, Mat. xxvii. 45, 51–53, and xxviii. 2.

(6.) Christ's entering with his body into heaven, Acts i. 9, 10.

(7.) The sound which suddenly came from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and the cloven tongues, like as of fire, Acts ii. 3.

(8.) The shaking of the place where the apostles prayed together, Acts iv. 31.

(9.) The opening of heaven, when Stephen saw Christ, Acts vii. 55, 56.

(10.) The transcendent light and voice from heaven which astonished Saul, Acts ix. 3, 4.

(11.) The opening of the prison-doors and iron-gates, Acts v. 19, and xii. 10.

(12.) The great earthquake, Acts xvi. 26.

Before I set down particular effects, I will first shew that acts and effects, both of grief or trouble, and also of joy or rejoicing, are set out, under this metaphor of *being moved*.

For when strange, unexpected, and admirable things fall out, such as are troubled, or such as rejoice thereat, are said to be moved, as Ruth i. 19, 'the whole city was moved,' *i.e.*, all the inhabitants were astonished, and much rejoiced. So Mat. xxi. 10; and contrariwise, Isa. vii. 2, Jer. xlix. 21, Acts xxi. 30.

Thus we see, that when the inhabitants of a place give any expressions of grief or joy, the place is said to be moved.

Thus were both earth and heaven moved and shaken at bringing in the gospel, as appeareth by these effects.

(1.) The appearing of angels, Luke i. 11, 26, and ii. 9, 13; so in the wilderness, as Mark i. 13; in Christ's agony, Luke xxiii. 4; at his resurrection, Luke xxiv. 5; and at his ascension, Acts i. 10, 11.

(2.) The shepherds' relating what they had seen and heard, Luke ii. 17, 18.

(3.) The wise men coming from the east, and the trouble following, Mat. ii. 1, &c.

(4.) The prophecies of Simeon and Anna, and the effects thereupon, Luke ii. 25, &c.

(5.) Christ's disputing at twelve years old to astonishment, Luke ii. 46.

(6.) His preaching, and people wondering thereat, Luke iv. 22, Mat. vii. 28, John vii. 46.

(7.) His miracles, and people's amazement, Mark i. 27, Luke v. 26, John xii. 19.

(8.) The astonishment of people at his death, Mat. xxvii. 54.

(9.) The watchmen's astonishment at his resurrection, Mat. xxviii. 4.

(10.) His disciples' amazement at his ascension, Acts i. 11.

(11.) His disciples' powerful preaching, Acts ii., and their miracles.

(12.) The conversion of nations, and constancy of martyrs.

Of this phrase, *ἔτι ἄρα, yet once more*, we shall speak more on the following verse.

Sec. 129. *Of Christ's delivering the law, together with the uses of the law.*

In the foregoing section I shewed, that by 'the voice that shook the earth,' is meant the voice of Christ in the delivery of the law upon mount Sinai. So that the apostle by those words points out two things unto us :

1. That Christ delivered the law.

2. That the delivery of the law was terrible.

1. The first is farther evident by the title 'angel,' which being applied to Jehovah, sets out the second person in sacred Trinity, even 'the angel of the covenant,' Mal. iii. 1. That this angel was Jehovah is evident, Exod. iii. 2, 4, 6, and xiv. 19, 24. It was the Son that was sent of the Father, and by whom the Father declared his mind, John iii. 34, and therefore styled an angel.

*Obj.* 1. 'The law was ordained by angels,' in the plural number, many of them, Gal. iii. 19.

*Ans.* Many angels accompanied this archangel.

*Obj.* 2. 'The law was given by Moses,' John i. 17.

*Ans.* As a minister and mediator, Gal. iii. 19. Moses did not first utter it on the mount, Deut. v. 22, 27.

*Obj.* 3. Christ, in opposition to the law, is made author of the gospel, John i. 17, Heb. xii. 25, and ii. 2, 3.

*Ans.* Christ, as God, gave the law, but as Emmanuel he gave the gospel, oft called the 'gospel of Jesus Christ.' Thus, Heb. i. 2.

The reasons why the law was delivered by Christ, were,

1. That the church might be the more assured of the infallible verity and certainty thereof, Prov. viii. 7-9, Ps. xix. 7, &c.

2. To work in people a better and higher esteem thereof, and a more careful and conscionable observance thereof, Exod. xx. 1, Deut. iv. 6-8, and vi. 1-3.

1. This doth inform us of one main ground whereby David and others were moved so highly to account the law as they did. They preferred it before the most precious things that were. No question but the very matter of the law being so true, so large, so perfect a rule as it was, made it worthy of all esteem; but yet the author thereof added much thereto.

2. Which doth exceedingly aggravate their contempt of the law, who make a null of it. If we rightly distinguish, in many respects it is indeed abrogated, as I have shewed on Chap. vii. 12, Secs. 67, 68. But yet in sundry respects it is worthy of all high account.

3. Let us learn wisely to weigh in what respect the law may yet be of use unto us, and for the author's sake, to have it in higher account.

Briefly to shew you the use of the law:—

There was a double use of the law, one before the fall, the other after.

The use of the law before the fall was to be a platform of the covenant between God and man.

On God's part, what he required, and what he promised.

1. God required obedience.

(1.) Personal, Rom. x. 5.

(2.) Perfect, Deut. v. 32, 33, Mat. xxii. 37, 39, James ii. 10.

(3.) Perpetual, Deut. v. 29, Ps. cxix. 112.

(4.) In the whole man, 1 Cor. vi. 20.

2. God promised life upon obedience, Lev. xviii. 5. On man's part.

1. To perform what God required, as God required, Luke x. 27.

2. To be justified thereby, Rom. iv. 4.

3. To be blessed, Deut. xi. 26, 27.

The use of the law after the fall, is either common, or proper; and that to the regenerate or to the unregenerate.

Common.

1. To instruct us in the will of God, Isa. viii. 20, which is an everlasting rule, as Mat. v. 18.

2. To inform men in every duty, Micah vi. 8.

3. To declare sin, Rom. iii. 20, and vii. 7.

4. To restrain from sin, Rom. ii. 9, and iv. 15.

5. To be a directory for examination.

6. To convince of the impossibility of justification by the law, Gal. iii. 10.

7. To work humiliation, 2 Kings xxii. 11.

8. To cause abnegation, Rom. iii. 19.

9. To stir us up to inquire after another remedy, Rom. vii. 24.

The use of the law proper to the regenerate.

1. To bring them to Christ, Gal. iii. 24.

2. To quicken them to more thankfulness, for, Christ's fulfilling the law for them, and enduring the curse of the law, Rom. vii. 25, Luke i. 68, &c.

*Obj.* Rom. vi. 14, 'Ye are not under the law, but under grace,' and again, 1 Tim. i. 9.

*Ans.* The law is abrogated to the regenerate,

1. As a covenant of works, Heb. vii. 8, 13.

2. In case of justification, Acts xiii. 39.

3. In the exactness of it, Rom. x. 5-9.

4. In regard of the exciting power of it, Rom. vii. 8, 13.

5. In regard of the curse, Gal. iii. 13, Rom. viii. 1. The use of the law to the unregenerate, which are all by consequence.

1. To irritate corrupt nature, Rom. vii. 8.

2. To aggravate sin, Rom. iv. 15.

3. To leave them inexcusable, Rom. ii. 1, 15.

4. To make them accursed, Gal. iii. 10.

Of the other point here noted by the apostle, namely, the terrible delivery of the law, see Ver. 18, Sec. 99.

Sec. 130. *Of the shaking of heaven and earth upon the coming in of the gospel.*

The apostle, in setting down the difference betwixt the law and the gospel, having shewed that at the delivery of the law the earth was shaken, he now sheweth that at the delivery of the gospel both earth and heaven were shaken; whereby the apostle giveth us to understand, that upon bringing in the gospel, heaven and earth were moved, meaning the inhabitants therein.

For the Lord of heaven was made an inhabitant on earth: 'God was manifest in the flesh,' 1 Tim. iii. 16. He that was far above all heavens descended into the lowest parts of the earth. Heaven was moved at his departure out of it, and earth at his coming to it.

1. Aggravation of their spiritual senselessness, and obdurate hearts, who are no whit at all moved at this coming of the Lord of heaven to earth, and at this voice, this sound of the gospel which shakes heaven and earth.

The gospel makes no offer of Christ incarnate to angels (but saith, 'he took not the nature of angels,' Heb. ii. 16); yet were the angels in heaven moved; and should not man much more? The wise men that lived among pagans were moved, Mat. ii. 1; and shall not we Christians?

How fitly may I apply that of our Saviour concerning the men of Nineveh, and the queen of the south, mentioned Mat. xii. 41, 42. How ought we to be humbled for this our senselessness!

2. Exhortation, to take notice of those particular excellencies whereby the Holy Ghost doth set out and commend unto us the excellency of the gospel; as that the Lord from heaven delivered it, that it is a heavenly doctrine come from heaven, that at the coming of it heaven and earth was shaken.

Do not only take notice hereof for the informing your judgments in the excellency and efficacy of the gospel, but also thereby to work upon your hearts and affections, that ye may be enamoured with the gospel, that ye may give the more diligent heed thereto, and make the more high account thereof, and conform yourselves more conscientiously thereunto. These are the ends which the apostle aimeth at in setting forth the excellencies of the gospel; and, therefore, special uses of the point.

Sec. 131. *Of the meaning of ver. 27.*

Ver. 27. *And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

A consequence is here noted by the apostle out of the forementioned prophecy, which maketh much to the main scope, which is the excellency of the gospel above the law.

The consequence is, that the law is alterable: the gospel most firm and stable. This consequence is gathered out of this phrase, *ἔτι ἄρα*, *yet once more*.

The particle, *ἔτι*, *yet*, having relation to the verb, *σεισά*, *shake* or *move*, importeth a moveable and transitory condition of things.

The other particle, *ἄρα*, *once*, taken exclusively for *only once*, *once for all*, *once and but once*, *once and no more*, importeth an immovable and permanent condition, never to be abrogated or altered.

The word in the original, *ἀρδής*, translated here a *removing*, is as much as *ἀφαιρέσις*, a *dismantling* or *taking away*, whereof we read chap. vii. 18.

By *σείωνται*, *things shaken*, he means all the legal types and rites which were in their very nature alterable, and in their end to be abrogated, by the accomplishment of them in their substance; and therefore, by way of explanation, and more clear expression of his meaning, he addeth, *ὡς πεποιηται*, *as of things made*.

The particle, *ὡς*, *as*, is not here used for a note of similitude, as if they were only like to things made, but as a causal particle, shewing the reason why they were alterable, and subject to be shaken, even because they were, *πεποιηται*, *things made*, viz., by the hand of man, as the tabernacle, tables, altars, ark, candlesticks, &c.

Herein things spiritual and celestial are opposed to legal and terrestrial things. They are said 'not to be made with hands,' as 'spiritual,' Col. ii. 11, and 'celestial,' 2 Cor. v. 1. But these to be 'made with hands,' as 'legal,' Eph. ii. 11, and 'terrestrial,' Acts xix. 26. To shew the end of removing those legal types, he addeth, *ὅτι μὴ τὰ μὴ σείωνται*, *that the things which cannot be shaken may remain*.

By the things which cannot be shaken, he means the substances and truths of the legal types, which are Christ himself, the offices which he undertook, and

things which he did and endured for us, the merit and efficacy of them all, the gospel whereby they are made known unto us, the benefits which come to us thereby, and those heavenly mansions and glory which Christ hath purchased for us.

These are said, *μένειν*, to remain, and that firm and stable, inviolable, and immutable. In this sense is this word oft used, as 1 John iii. 9. It is therefore opposed to 'perishing,' Heb. i. 11, 1 Pet. i. 24, 25; and everlastingness is joined with it, Heb. vii. 3, 24.

This is the privilege of the gospel, and of the good things revealed thereby. They remain.

So that in this verse is set down a third difference betwixt the law and the gospel, namely, in respect of continuance, the law being alterable, and the gospel unchangeable: whereby the apostle giveth us to understand two points.

1. The alterableness of the law, that the law was alterable.

2. The unchangeableness of the gospel, that the gospel is unchangeable.

Of the alterableness of the law, see Chap. vii. 12, Secs. 67, 68, &c. Before I come to shew the unchangeableness of the gospel, we may from the apostle's expression here observe, that that which is made by man is subject to decay. The apostle here renders it as a reason why the things of the law were alterable, because they were made, viz., by man.

If, *ὡς*, as, be taken as a resemblance, it also proves the point. Thus Jer. x. 9, 11, the prophet proveth that the idols of the Gentiles shall perish, because they are the work of men. And the apostle, in 2 Cor. v. 1, rendereth this as the reason why our habitation in heaven is eternal, namely, because it is 'not made with hands;' doth he not thence infer that that which is made with hands cannot be eternal?

Experience proves as much. Where is that tower which anon after the flood, all the world conspired to build? was it not justly styled *Babel*? Gen. xi. 9. Where is Noah's ark? Where is Solomon's temple? or Zerubbabel's temple? Where are the sepulchres of David and other kings of Judah and Israel? Indeed, some things made by men are of longer continuance than others: but yet all, without exception of any, are subject to decay. The most lasting materials, whereof they make their most durable things, are none of them everlasting: not marbles, nor iron, brass, silver, gold, and other metal; some subject to mouldering, some to rust, some to melt; all as framed, fashioned, and set out by men, to be defaced, destroyed, and brought to nought.

1. This may inform us in a main difference betwixt the things of God and man. As there is a difference between the divine and human essence; so betwixt their works. The divine essence is eternal and immutable; but human, mutable and momentary. So the counsel and work of God stands for ever; but man's alterable, tending to decay. This difference is

oft noted and much pressed in sacred Scripture, Prov. xix. 21, Acts v. 38, and vii. 48.

2. This may instruct us in the difference betwixt things earthly and heavenly. They are made by man's hands, these without hands, 2 Cor. v. 1, Heb. ix. 24. So betwixt corporal and spiritual, Eph. ii. 11, Col. ii. 11; yea, and betwixt legal and evangelical, Heb. viii. 2. So in this text.

By this difference the excellency of the ministry of the gospel is clearly set forth. For as things heavenly are more excellent than earthly; as spiritual than corporal; as things made by God than things made by man: so the ministry of the gospel than the ministry of the law.

3. This discovers the folly of many who too much doat on things made by man, or invented by him. See more hereof, Chap. ix. 24, Sec. 121.

4. Pray for wisdom, whereby you may approve of those things which are most excellent, duly distinguishing the things that differ, and 'choose that good part which shall not be taken away,' Luke x. 42.

#### Sec. 132. Of the unchangeableness of the gospel.

Hitherto of the alterableness of the law, and of the reason thereof.

The unchangeableness of the gospel follows, expressed in this phrase, *ἡ αἰὶν καὶ μὴ σαλευθήσεται*, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. Whereby is evidently demonstrated, that the gospel is unchangeable.

In this respect the new covenant is said to be 'established,' never to be removed, Heb. viii. 6, and x. 9. In this respect it is called 'an everlasting covenant,' Heb. xiii. 20; 'an everlasting gospel,' Rom. xiv. 6.

For there is not, there cannot be a better covenant, a better gospel. If there be an alteration, it must be to the better. Therefore was the first altered, that a better might come in the room thereof.

1. This very much tends to the setting forth of the excellency of the gospel. And surely it is a great commendation, to be so excellent, as a more excellent cannot be. That is unalterable, because there is no better to come in the room thereof; no better covenant, no better word, no better sacraments, no better ordinances ever to be expected.

2. This may stir us up to have the gospel in high account. If saints under the law had that which was alterable in so high account, how much more ought we highly to esteem what is unalterable.

Consider therefore what is written of their esteem of the law, and thereupon reason with thyself, and say, Shall I less respect that which is unchangeable, which is so excellent as no better can be expected to succeed in the room thereof, than the Jews did that which was alterable, and had a better to succeed in the room thereof? This is the main end of making known this difference betwixt the law and the gospel.

The inference which the apostle maketh from 'the removing of those things that are shaken,' namely,

'that the things which cannot be shaken may remain,' sheweth the end of God's substituting the gospel in the room of the law; thereby is evidently demonstrated, that God's change is to the better. See my *Sermon preached before the House of Lords*, September 1645, styled, *The Progress of Divine Providence*, on Ezek. xxxvi. 11.

Sec. 133. *Of receiving the kingdom from God.*

Ver. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

In these words, the apostle maketh the use of that large and long commendation which he hath given to the gospel, and the ministry thereof, viz., that we who live under it should have an especial care of serving God, and approving ourselves to him. For our better encouragement therunto, the apostle setteth down the blessing which we do enjoy under the gospel, and that is a *kingdom*; whereby is meant God's special kingdom, whereby he governeth his church and elect people, which is begun here in this world, and in that respect called the kingdom of grace; and perfected in the world to come, in which sense it is called the kingdom of glory. So that hereby the apostle giveth us to understand, that the church of Christ is a kingdom, under which title it is oft set out both in the Old and New Testament. See hereof, Chap. i. 8, Sec. 112.

The means whereby we come to enjoy this kingdom, is in this word, *παράλαβόντες*, *receiving*, which implieth that we have it not of ourselves; we have it of another; so much the word *receiving* implies. That other can be none but God, for it is 'the kingdom of God,' he hath the ordering and disposing of it. So that it is not of a man's self to be of the kingdom of God, or to have it; therefore it is said to be 'prepared' for us, Mat. xxv. 34; and we are said to be 'chosen heirs of this kingdom,' as James ii. 5; yea, to be 'called' therunto, as 1 Thes. ii. 12; and 'translated into it,' Col. i. 13.

The truth whereof doth clearly appear, both from the excellency of the kingdom itself, and from our own disability.

1. Such is the excellency of this kingdom (which in that respect is styled the 'kingdom of God,' the 'kingdom of heaven'), as by all the men and means in the world, it cannot be obtained. What is said of the redemption of souls, Ps. xlix. 7, 8, may be applied to the possession of this kingdom; It is more worth than the whole world and all things therein.

2. On the other side, such is man's disability, as he hath nor power, nor means, nor mind to get it.

(1.) He hath no power to get it, 2 Cor. iii. 5.

(2.) Nor means, 1 Cor. iv. 7, Rom. xi. 35, 36, 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12, &c.

(3.) Nor mind, Rom. viii. 5, 7, 1 Cor. ii. 11, Mat. xxiii. 37, Prov. i. 20, Luke xiv. 18.

1. This may inform us in the difference betwixt this and other kingdoms.

Other kingdoms may be by men sundry ways obtained, as,

(1.) Many are born heirs of kingdoms, as kings' eldest sons; yea, all the children of free subjects are members of the kingdom.

(2.) A right to the privileges of an earthly kingdom may be purchased by money, Acts xxii. 28.

(3.) Such a right may be obtained by favour and friendship of men. So Herod became king of Galilee. So many are made free denizens.

(4.) Such as by conquest obtain it; as sundry kings of Israel, and their followers; as William the Conqueror, and his followers.

By none of these means, nor any other like them, can the kingdom of God, or any right thereto, be obtained; it must be given of God, and so received.

2. This should stir us up to seek this kingdom of him from whom only it can be received. Note John iv. 10. Plead and press his promise, Mat. vii. 7. And to strengthen thy faith, remember Luke xii. 32. See more hereof, my *Guide to go to God*, Sec. 46.

3. How should we bless God for this kingdom amongst us; we have received it, we ought therefore to be grateful and thankful for it, Rom. xi. 36. The more free a gift is, the more worthy of thanks, especially so great, so useful, so beneficial a gift, as it is not vouchsafed to all.

Of the property belonging to this kingdom, in these words, *ἀτάκτοτος*, *which cannot be shaken*, we have formerly spoken.

Sect. 134. *Of serving God.*

The apostle here in setting down the kind of duty, first notes the spring thereof, in these words, *ἐκ χάριτος*, *let us have grace*.

Some difference there is in copies, for some read it, *ἐκ χάριτος*, as if it were of the indicative present tense, *we have*, which importeth an effect of receiving the kingdom, which is, grace to serve God.

But most copies read it, *ἐκ χάριτος*, in the subjunctive mood, and so it implies a duty. The reason taken from God's terror in ver. 29, shews that this is laid down as a duty.

By *grace*, then, must here needs be meant, a free gift of God, whereby we are enabled to do what is acceptable to him.

*Quest.* How can this be pressed as a duty on our part, if it be a gift of God?

*Ans.* Because God, in his unsearchable wisdom, hath sanctified means on our part to be used, for enabling us to accomplish that which by his grace he enableth us to do. He gives the gift, but so as we put out that ability which he giveth us.

The stream that is here noted to flow from grace follows. The matter whereof is to *serve God*, which

is thus expressed by the evangelist, *οὗ ἔξ λατρεύουσιν*, *whereby we may serve God*.

The word, *λατρεύειν*, to *serve*, sets forth the duty of him that is in subjection, and to another. In Hebrew and Latin it hath relation, as to God, so also to man. But this Greek word in the New Testament is appropriated to God, or to such as are (though falsely) accounted God, as Acts vii. 42, 'He gave them up to serve (*λατρεύειν*) the host of heaven,' and Rom. i. 25, *ἐλάτρευσαν τῷ πνεύματι*. Here it is expressly applied unto God. In this sense,

1. It is restrained to external service, as when it is joined with another word that sets out the inward service, as Deut. vi. 13.

2. It is restrained to the inward man, when a word of restriction is added thereto, as Phil. iii. 3, 'For we are the circumcision, *πνεύματι Θεῷ λατρεύοντες*, which worship God in the spirit.'

And sometimes it is extended to all that service we owe to God, whether inward or outward, as where it is set alone, and not limited to any particular, as Luke i. 74, Acts xxvii. 23. So here.

Thus it contains the sum of the first table, which is here fitly premised, for in the next chapter sundry duties of the second table are set down.

So that, in the general, the apostle hereby giveth us to understand that God is to be served.

If express precepts, pithy exhortations, precious promises, approved patterns, high commendations, gracious acceptance, bountiful remunerations, be of force to enforce a duty, there want not enforcements to enforce this of serving God.

The Lawgiver gives this in express charge, Exod. xxiii. 25, Ps. ii. 11. The sweet singer of Israel sweetly exhorts hereunto, Ps. c. 2. For promises (to omit many in the law which may seem to be of temporal good things) note what a precious one the evangelical prophet makes, Isa. lvi. 6; yea, and Christ himself, John xii. 26.

Take for an approved pattern, Josh. xxiv. 15, and Paul, Acts xxvii. 23.

Mark the commendation given to Daniel in this respect, Dan. vi. 20.

See an evidence of God's gracious accepting such as served him, Judges x. 16.

Behold, what a bountiful remuneration is given to faithful service, Mat. xxv. 21.

To these may be added judgments on such as did not serve God, Neh. ix. 35, Dent. xxviii. 47, 48, 2 Chron. xii. 8.

1. It makes much to God's honour to serve him, and that in these two respects—

(1.) It is an acknowledgment of his high supreme sovereignty. For all use to serve him whom they acknowledge their sovereign. Hereby the sovereignty of Solomon over the nations round about him was testified, 1 Kings iv. 21.

(2.) It is an evidence both of fear and love, both

which make much to God's honour. For proof of that, that it is an evidence of them two, we may oft find it joined to them both, as Deut. x. 20, and xi. 13.

2. It is a good evidence of that right we have to the foresaid kingdom. True subjects of a kingdom will do due service to the king thereof. Though subjects of earthly kingdoms may be rebellious, yet there is such a spirit infused into such as are of this kingdom, and such grace they receive from the King thereof, as they will serve him, Ps. xxii. 28, 30, and cx. 3.

1. This may serve for demonstration of that undue and unprofitable respect which many, who lay claim to the forementioned kingdom, bear and shew to the King thereof. They have no grace to serve him. We heard that they cannot be accounted true subjects of this kingdom, who serve not the King thereof. Service is the best and surest evidence of subjects that can be. But he that yieldeth not due subjection, may not be accounted a true subject of this kingdom, though he may have a name that he is: like Sardis, that had 'a name that she lived, but was dead,' Rev. iii. 1. Of this sort are such as follow:

(1.) Atheists, who, according to the notation of the word, are *without God*, and so are in our English translated, Eph. ii. 12. These serve no God at all.

(2.) Idolaters, who, though they do service, yet they observe not the apostle's rule; for they do not serve God, namely the true God; for 'an idol is nothing,' 1 Cor. viii. 4. It hath no deity at all in it. Such were Baalim and Ashtaroth whom the Israelites served, Judges ii. 13.

(3.) Epicures, who make their belly their god, Phil. iii. 19. They do so give themselves over to satisfy their delights, and so glut themselves in their pleasures, as they have neither time nor mind to serve God.

(4.) All sorts of worldlings, who so subject themselves to the world, as they make it their master, and in serving it cannot serve God.

(5.) Politicians, who serve the time, called in that respect *time-servers*.

(6.) Flatterers, who addict themselves wholly to serve men, called *man-pleasers*, Eph. vi. 6. Of these note, Gal. i. 10. The like may be said of time-servers.

(7.) Profane persons. Profaneness is the great sin of the first table, which compriseth all the rest. But to serve God is the sum of all the duties of the first table; therefore profane persons must needs be far from serving God.

(8.) Hypocrites. These make a great show of serving God, but in truth are as far from it as the former. Such show of service is abominable in the sight of God, Isa. i. 13, 14. Note Isa. lxvi. 3.

(9.) Superstitious persons, who think to serve God by other men's traditions, which is no other than that will-worship, expressly condemned, Col. ii. 23;



ver. 18, he calls it 'voluntary humility.' Note Mat. xv. 9.

2. Let us be exhorted to two points.

(1.) To be well instructed in this duty of serving God.

(2.) To be quickened thereto.

For the former, note Rom. xii. 2, Eph. v. 17. By the word of God mayest thou be fully instructed therein, 2 Tim. iii. 15-17.

In this respect it is styled 'a lamp,' 'a light,' Ps. cxix. 105, to show us the way, and 'a counsellor,' ver. 24, to advise us thereabouts. We ought the rather to use this help, because without it all our own or others' inventions will be in vain, Mat. xv. 9. None can tell what service is to be done to God, but God himself.

For the latter, which is to quicken up our spirits to serve God, we have great need thereof, because we are by nature exceeding dull hereunto. The more excellent a duty is, the more heavenly, the more divine, the more nearly it concerneth God, the more dull and backward we are thereto. Yea, and Satan will be the more busy to hinder us. We ought, therefore, to quicken up our spirits therunto, by a due, serious, frequent meditation on the excellency, necessity, utility, equity, and other like commendations of the duty.

What work in the kind of it can be imagined to be more excellent than to serve God? To what can we be more bound? what more just and equal? To what are there more precious and gracious promises made? From what can there be expected a greater reward? God's service consisteth in keeping his commandments, and therein is great reward, Ps. xix. 11. Reason with your souls hereabouts, and say, as the psalmist in other cases, O our souls! why are ye so dull and heavy to such a duty? Awake, awake our spirits, rise up and make no longer delay: enter upon the work speedily, cheerfully. Thus may we put life into our spirits, and bring them to do what is here required of them to do.

Sec. 135. *Of serving God reverently.*

The next word, *εὐλαβίας*, translated *acceptably*, notes out the manner, and that in general.

1. That is said to be done acceptably which is so done as God is well pleased therewith; for the word, *εὐλαβία*, *God*, in the Greek is so placed after both the matter and the manner, as it may have fit relation to both, thus, *κατεύθυνεν εὐλαβίᾳ τῷ Θεῷ, whereby we may perform service acceptably to God*. This importeth, as knowledge of God's will, so a conscientious care to conform all that we do in and about our serving of God, to his will. Hereby is evidently demonstrated unto us, that our service of God must be so ordered, as it may be pleasing unto him. Hereof see Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 17.

For further explanation of his mind herein, the

apostle adds two particular properties, which must always accompany our serving of God, if we will do it acceptably.

1. *Reverence*.

2. *Godly fear*.

The Greek word, *αἰδώς*, translated *reverence*, signifieth such an awful respect, as works a high esteem of him whom they serve, and keeps them from unseemly thoughts, words, or deeds against him.

By this special property added to our serving of God, the apostle giveth us to understand that God is to be served with due reverence. See Ps. ii. 11, xcv. 6, and cxxxii. 7.

The ancient gesture of bowing down in the worship and service of God, proveth as much, as Gen. xxiv. 26, and xlvii. 31, Neh. viii. 6. So kneeling, 2 Chron. vi. 12, Dan. vi. 10, Luke xxii. 41, Acts ix. 40, and xx. 36, Eph. iii. 14. Yea, standing, as Neh. ix. 2, Luke xlvii. 13, Mark xii. 25. And prostrating, John vii. 6, Ezra x. 1, Mat. xxvi. 39.

1. It importeth a high esteem of God, and due respect to his glorious majesty. Subjects by their reverence testify their good and dutiful respect to their earthly sovereign, Gen. xli. 43. How much more should we testify it every way that we can to our heavenly Sovereign, the King of kings?

2. It gaineth a good esteem in God of them, who so reverence him, and a gracious respect towards them, Ps. cxli. 1, &c. Mark how Jacob's reverence wrought upon Esau, Gen. xxxiii. 3, 4; and the sons of Jacob on their brother Joseph, Gen. i. 18, 19. Now if men that are hard-hearted can be so moved, how much more the pitiful, merciful, and gracious Lord, and that when their reverence is sincere and hearty? Note Luke xi. 13.

1. This may serve for the taxation of sundry misdemeanours about God's service.

(1.) Such as have no care of preparation beforehand, but suddenly and rashly come to serve God, their minds being stuffed with many by-worldly matters, if not with sinful and abominable trash. How is it possible that such should serve God with reverence; such a one was he that came without his wedding garment. Note his doom, Mat. xxii. 11-13.

(2.) Such as in serving of God, suffer their thoughts to rove abroad, and are not attentive upon the work they are about. Can that be reverently done which is not attentively thought upon while it is in doing? Can he pray reverently that minds not what he prayeth? Can he hear reverently that heeds not what is preached? Can he receive reverently that hath not his head and heart upon the mysteries set out in the holy sacrament?

(3.) Such as openly proclaim their want of reverence, by their outward irreverent unbecoming gestures, which are stately coming into the assembly of God's people, even when they are serving of God, with their hats on their heads, sitting at prayer, cast-

ing their eyes this way, and that way, on pictures, and sometimes on church walls, on such as are in brave apparel, on proper and comely personages, on beautiful faces, and other like objects; or talking one with another, or reading books.

These and other like by-gestures are open testifications of much want of reverence. These are like the fool that layeth out his folly, Prov. xiii. 16, and telleth to all that he is a fool, Eccles. x. 3.

2. This may direct us how to serve God, namely, *reverently*. We have had sufficient motive to incite us to be willing and desirous to do what is here required. It remaineth therefore to declare the way and means, how such may indeed attain to that which they are desirous and willing to do. Let such duly observe these two rules, one concerning God, another concerning ourselves.

(1.) Duly weigh and advisedly consider his excellency whom thou servest. This, if anything, will strike thine heart with reverence. When Jacob, by the vision which he saw of God, and by hearing God speak to him, was put in mind of God's glorious presence, then did he most reverently carry himself before God, Gen. xxviii. 16, 17; so did Isaiah, chap. vi. 5; so Ezekiel, chap. i. 29; so Daniel, chap. x. 11; yea, the angels, Isa. vi. 2, 3. See my *Guide to go to God*, Sec. 4.

(2.) Be well informed in thine own nakedness, emptiness, nothingness, and unworthiness. So was Abraham, Gen. xviii. 27; Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 10; Job, chap. xlii. 6; David, Ps. xxii. 6, cxliii. 2; Isaiah, chap. vi. 5; Paul, 1 Tim. i. 15; and others.

This will much amplify our esteem of God.

#### Sec. 136. Of serving God with a holy fear.

The second special property of our service to God is *godly fear*. The word in the original, *εὐλάβεια*, signifieth a good or religious circumspection, which moves men cautiously or warily to enterprise what they do; in that respect it is translated *fear*.

The word here translated *godly fear*, is compounded of a verb, *λαμβάνω*, that signifieth to *take*, and an adverb, *εὖ*, that signifieth *well*, so as according to the notation of the word it implieth *well to take*, or apprehend a thing; thence followeth a wary circumspection and a godly fear. They who are circumspect and wary about the things which concern God's worship, are expressed, under this word, *εὐλαβέες*, which our English translate 'devout,' Luke ii. 25.

It is a grace in man that bath relation and respect to God, in which respect this epithet *godly* is here applied to it, thus, *godly fear*. This kind of word is seven times used in the New Testament, as Luke ii. 25, Acts ii. 5, and viii. 2 (in these three places it is translated 'devout'), Heb. v. 7, and xi. 7, and here. In all these places it importeth a 'godly fear;' only once I find it used to set out a natural fear—viz., Acts xxiii. 10.

By this special property of our service to God, the apostle evidently demonstrateth that a holy fear is a special means of well ordering the service we do to God. The grounds whereof may be—

1. That goodness and kindness which in God is mixed with greatness, and majesty, and power, and justice. He is truly that which the heathen unduly styled their Jupiter, *Optimus Maximus*. In like manner doth God proclaim his own name, Exod. xxxiv. 6; and his Son sets him forth, Mat. xi. 25, and vi. 9. Now as his greatness requires fear, Jer. x. 7, Mal. i. 6, so his goodness requires that it be, *εὐλάβεια*, a good and godly fear.

2. That alteration of our nature which is wrought by the powerful work of God's Spirit. True it is that the flesh remaineth in all, while they remain in this flesh, Rom. vii. 23, 24, Gal. v. 17. In this respect God gives to his, even to the best of his, a 'spirit of fear.' Note 2 Cor. v. 11, Acts v. 11.

But, with this flesh, there is also the Spirit in such as are regenerate. This sanctifying Spirit makes that fear in them to be a good and godly fear. Such a fear was Noah's, Heb. xi. 7. For the Spirit works love in the souls of men, Gal. v. 22, 2 Tim. i. 7. Now love mixed with fear makes it to be a godly fear.

1. This may inform us in the condition of regenerate persons. It is a kind of middle condition betwixt man's entire estate, wherein God at first created man, and that corrupt estate wherinto man fell. In his entire estate he needed nothing but love; in his corrupt estate nothing works on him but a servile, slavish fear, such a fear as Adam had in the garden, Gen. iii. 8, 10, and Cain, Gen. iv. 13, and Pharaoh, Exod. xii. 31; such a fear casts out love, 1 John iv. 18; but the regenerate estate is mixed of both, and that by reason of that double principle which is in man, flesh and spirit, fear arising from the flesh, love from the spirit. But, by this mixture of love, servile fear is made a godly fear, which is ever accompanied with love, and therefore in sacred Scripture oft joined together, as Deut. x. 12. Of this kind of fear, see my *Domestical Duties*, Treat. 1, Sec. 4.

2. This demonstrates unto us the extremes whereunto most are given; some in the defect, some in the excess. The defect is of such as have no fear at all; such commonly are the most impudent and audacious sinners, like unbroken and unbridled horses, which run headlong to their own and their riders' destruction. These will be held from no sin that they have power and opportunity to commit. Note Gen. xx. 11, Rom. iii. 18.

The excess of such fear is nothing but wrath and vengeance. This is a plain, servile, slavish fear, which is so far from being accompanied with love, as by perfect love it is cast out, 1 John iv. 18. It is joined with hatred. It hath two violent effects:

(1.) It oft casts men into strange ecstasies, as Dan.

v. 6, and makes them despair, Gen. iv. 13; it is a plain diabolical fear, James ii. 19.

(2.) It puts strange desires into men's heads, and makes them wish there were no death, no judgment, no hell, no judge, no God.

The godly fear here mentioned is as a virtue in the mean betwixt these two extremes.

3. Upon the foresaid ground, let us be exhorted to possess our souls with this godly fear, when we draw near to God to worship and serve him. Such an exhortation Christ giveth about patience, Luke xxi. 19. This will be a special means to make thee serve God acceptably; for godly fear ariseth from faith, as I have shewed in my *Domestical Duties*, Treat. 1, Sec. 4.

4. Direction how to get this godly fear.

(1.) Acquaint thyself with God, as Eliphaz adviseth, Job xxii. 21, and be well instructed in his divine properties and excellencies, as in his supreme sovereignty, &c. Of which see *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 11, Sec. 43.

Ignorance of the excellency of a thing makes it to be disesteemed; but true knowledge thereof works a high esteem and due respect, 2 Chron. xviii. 9. Hereby God wrought in Job a godly fear, Job xlii. 2, 3.

(2.) Get all the evidences that thou canst of God's fatherly respect to thee. Call to mind his offers of grace revealed in his word. Observe his gracious dealing with thee: how long he hath borne with thee, wherein he hath dealt better with thee than with many others. Well observe what fruits of his sanctifying Spirit are wrought in thee. These give evidence that God is our father, and will make us thereupon desirous to please him.

(3.) Set this God always before thee, and remember that 'the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,' as Prov. xv. 3. This also will work a godly fear, for it will make thee to do all things as in his presence. Note Gen. xxxix. 9.

(4.) Be well informed in the horrible nature of sin; how contrary it is to God, and that in his chiefest excellency, which is his purity and holiness. Nothing more contrary to another, not darkness to light, nor death to life. Nothing makes a creature so loathsome in God's sight as sin. Sin only incenseth God's wrath. Sin causeth all judgments. Sin makes the devil so terrible as he is. Sin puts a sting into death. Sin excludes from heaven, and plungeth into hell. Were this thoroughly known, it would make us more fearful of committing sin, than of pulling vengeance on our iniquities, which fear is the true godly fear.

(5.) Able to weigh thine own weakness, and disability to standing thyself, and withal thine own proneness to wander, and the right way. In regard of our own weakness, as, as little children, ready to stumble at every step, viii. 5, slip at every smooth, slippery place. further explain proneness to wander, we are

as sheep, so saith the psalmist, Ps. cxix. 176. A due consideration hereof will work in us this godly fear. Note Rom. xi. 20.

(6.) Take due notice of Satan's subtlety and sedulity. In regard of his subtlety, he is resembled to an 'old serpent,' Rev. xii. 9, and xx. 2. In regard of his sedulity, he is resembled to a 'roaring lion, walking about seeking whom he may devour,' 1 Pet. v. 8. Withal take notice of the deceitfulness of sin, Heb. iii. 13, together with the many temptations whereunto we are subject. These cannot but work a fear, yea, and a godly fear, lest we should be overtaken.

Sec. 137. *Of the terribleness of God's wrath being incensed.*

Ver. 29. *For our God is a consuming fire.*

In this verse is added a motive to enforce the forementioned manner of serving of God, taken from the terror of God.

And to move them to whom he wrote, and others like to them, partakers of the heavenly calling, he setteth out God in that special and particular relation he hath to his church, to such as profess the true Christian faith. For under this relative, *καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν*, our, which is of the first person and plural number, the apostle compriseth himself, and such as himself was, at least in profession of the true Christian faith. And questionless he here especially intendeth him that is to be judge of all, the Son of God, made Son of man, the second person in sacred Trinity, true God, he whom the apostles do oft style 'God our Saviour,' as 1 Tim. i. 1, 2 Pet. i. 1, Jude 25.

The apostle, in giving this title *God unto Christ*, thereby giveth proof that Christ is true God. Whereof see Chap. i. 8, Sec. 107, and Ver. 10, Sec. 128.

And in adding this relative particle, *our*, unto God, giveth us to understand that Christ is in special the God of his church. See *The Saint's Sacrifice*, Sec. 31.

Even this our God, in and through whom the free grace and rich mercy of God is set forth, he is a *consuming fire*. By what resemblance could terror be more set forth to the life, than by this? for of all creatures fire is most terrible; therefore the caseless and merciless torment of hell is hereby set out. Mat. xviii. 9.

But because fire hath light and warmth in it, whereby it giveth light, and quickeneth and cheriseth, this epithet, *καταναλίσκων*, *consuming*, is applied thereto. The rather because God hath sometimes appeared in fire that did not consume, as in the bush, Exod. iii. 2, and in the pillar, Exod. xiii. 21. So as the fire here meant is a most terrible fire, and great terror is set out thereby. Whereby the apostle giveth us to understand that God incensed is terrible, being here styled *πῦρ καταναλίσκων*, *consuming fire*. In this very respect doth Moses so style God, Deut. iv. 24, and ix. 3. In this respect also fire is said to be 'kindled

by the breath of the Lord,' Isa. xxx. 33; to 'go out of his mouth,' Ps. xviii. 8; to 'come from' him, Lev. x. 2; to 'go before' him, Ps. xevii. 2. And he is said to 'judge with fire.' Read how the terror of the Lord is set out, Deut. xix. 20, &c.

For everything in God is infinite—justice, power, jealousy, wrath. Now infiniteness added to wrath and vengeance, makes it exceeding terrible, even intolerable.

1. This doth demonstrate unto us their folly, who by their impudency in sinning, and impenitency, incense this fire of God's wrath, and cast themselves into the midst thereof. Will any one that is in his right wits cast himself into a flaming fire? Indeed, Mat. xvii. 15, it is said of one, that 'oft he falleth into the fire.' But who was that one? A very lunatic, who knew not what he did. And what made him do it? The devil who possessed him cast him in, Mark ix. 22. And he must needs go whom the devil drives. Assuredly the devil drives on every one that casts himself into the fire here mentioned by the apostle.

2. Let us be admonished to take heed of offending this God; offences provoke his wrath. His wrath being incensed, he becomes such a fire as is here intended.

That this may be the more nearly applied, I will give you a brief view of such sins as in Scripture are noted to kindle and inflame this fire, as,

1. Idolatry, Deut. xxxii. 18, 21, 22.
2. Profaning God's ordinances, Lev. x. 2, Num. xvi. 35.
3. Murmuring against God's providence, Num. xi. 1, and xxi. 6.
4. Abominable pollutions, Gen. xix. 24.
5. Attempting the deaths of God's prophets, 2 Kings i. 10, Dan. iii. 22.
6. Haters of God, Ps. xxi. 8, 9.
7. Revoltors and apostates, Heb. x. 27.
8. Antichristians, Rev. xiv. 9, 10.
9. False teachers and seducers, Rev. xix. 20.
10. All reprobates and impenitents, Rev. xx. 15.

Sec. 138. *Of the resolution of Heb. xii. 25-29.*

Ver. 25. *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:*

26. *Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.*

27. *And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:*

29. *For our God is a consuming fire.*

The sum of these words is, the general use of the forementioned divine privileges; which is,

1. Propounded, in these words, *see that ye refuse not him that speaketh.*

2. Confirmed, in the words following.

The confirmation is raised from the danger and damage of neglecting his admonition. Which damage is amplified comparatively, vers. 25, 26, &c.

The comparison is of unequals, enforced from the less to the greater, wherein is noted,

1. The substance of them, ver. 25-27.

2. An inference thence raised, vers. 28, 29.

In the comparison, two sorts, or kinds of unequals, are noted:

1. One of the person, ver. 25.

2. The other of the privileges, vers. 26, 27. This latter is,

(1.) Propounded, ver. 26.

(2.) Expounded, ver. 27.

In the substance of the comparison we may observe,

1. The duty enjoined.

2. The reason whereby it is enforced.

In the expressing of the duty, note,

1. The manner, in this word, *see*, which implies great circumspection.

2. The matter, set down negatively, *see that ye refuse not him that speaketh.* Where we may observe,

1. The act forbidden, *refuse not.*

2. The object, *him that speaketh.*

In the reason whereby it is enforced, there is a fourfold difference noted betwixt the law and the gospel.

1. One, in a different dignity.

2. The second, in a different penalty.

3. The third, in a different power.

4. The fourth, in a different continuance.

1. The difference in dignity is manifested by the different persons that declared the one and the other.

(1.) He that declared the law, *spoke on earth.*

(2.) He that delivered the gospel, *spoke from heaven.*

2. In setting down the penalty, there is,

(1.) An agreement in the general, that neither the transgressors of the one nor of the other escaped.

(2.) The difference is in the certainty and severity of the latter, expressed in these words, *much more shall not we escape, if we turn away, &c.*

3. The different power of the law and gospel was manifested by the different effects.

The effect at the delivery of the law, was *shaking of the earth*, amplified by the cause thereof, viz., *the voice of Christ.*

The effect at the delivery of the gospel, was the *shaking both of earth and heaven.*

The power of the gospel is,

1. Propounded, ver. 26.

2. Expounded, ver. 27.

In the proposition, we may observe—

1. The proof, in these words, *he that promised.*

2. The point or thing promised, wherein,

(1.) The extent of power, in that upon coming in of the gospel, *heaven and earth were moved.*

(2.) The time when, manifested in these words, *not once more.*

4. The fourth difference betwixt the law and the gospel is in respect of continuance.

1. The law was alterable.

2. The gospel was firm and stable, and so unchangeable.

The alterableness of the law is implied, in this word, *removing*, which is ratified by the cause thereof, they were *things made*, viz., by the hands of men.

The unchangeableness of the gospel is expressed, in these words, *that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.* In which we may observe—

1. The main substance of the point, in this phrase, *things which cannot be shaken.*

2. The inference, in the words following.

The inference which the apostle maketh upon the difference between the law and the gospel is expressed, vers. 28, 29.

Whereof we may observe—

1. The matter thereof, ver. 28.

2. The motive, ver. 29.

In the matter, note—

1. The ground of duty.

2. The kind of duty.

In the ground, observe—

1. The subject, what we have.

2. The means how we have it.

The subject is—

1. Expressed in the excellency of it, *kingdom.*

2. Amplified by the stability of it, *a kingdom which cannot be moved.*

In the kind of duty, note—

1. The spring whence it ariseth, viz., *grace.*

2. The stream that flows from thence, where note—

1. The matter.

2. The manner.

The matter is, to *serve God.*

The manner—

1. *Acceptably.*

2. *With reverence.*

3. *With godly fear.*

In the motive we may observe—

1. The substance, in these words, *our God is a consuming fire.*

2. An inference, in this particle, *for.*

In the substance the motive is double—

1. Implied.

2. Expressed.

The implied motive is taken from the relation between God and the church, in these words, *our God.*

The expressed motive is taken from the terror of God, which is—

1. Propounded in a metaphor, *fire.*

2. Aggravated by an effect, *consuming.*

The inference is in this particle *for*; *for our God is a consuming fire.*

See. 139. *Observations raised out of Heb. xii. 25-29.*

I. *Circumspection about Christ's word is requisite.* This ariseth from the manner of expressing the duty, in this word, *see*, which is a word of circumspection, and hath an especial emphasis. See Sec. 123.

II. *Christ speaketh to us in the gospel.* This is here implied, in these words, *see that ye refuse not him that speaketh.* Where the apostle takes it for granted that in the ministry of the gospel Christ speaketh to his church; for if Christ speak not, he cannot be refused. See Sec. 124.

III. *Christ's word is in no case to be rejected.* This the apostle plainly expresseth. See Sec. 125.

IV. *As the law was given on earth, so the gospel from heaven.* This ariseth from the different manner of giving the law and the gospel, expressed by the apostle in ver. 25. See Sec. 126.

V. *Transgressors of the law were surely punished.* Which the apostle implieth where he saith that *they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth.* See Sec. 127.

VI. *Despisers of the gospel shall be most surely and sorely punished.* Which the apostle expresseth in these words, *much more.* See Sec. 127.

VII. *Christ delivered the law.* Which the apostle expresseth, in these words, *whose voice then shook the earth*, meaning the voice of Christ in the delivery of the law. See Sec. 129.

VIII. *The delivery of the law was terrible.* Which is implied by the shaking of the earth at the delivery thereof, which the apostle here expresseth. See Sec. 129.

IX. *Upon bringing in the gospel, heaven and earth were moved.* So much the apostle plainly expresseth in opposition to the law, and the delivery thereof, when only earth was shaken. See Sec. 130.

X. *The law was alterable.* Which the apostle expresseth in the word *removing.* See Sec. 131.

XI. *The gospel is unchangeable.* Which the apostle implieth, in this phrase, *things that cannot be shaken.* See Sec. 132.

XII. *That which is made by man is subject to decay.* This ariseth from the apostle's bringing it in as a reason why the things of the law were alterable, namely, because they were made, viz., by men. See Sec. 131.

XIII. *God's change is to the better.* This ariseth from the apostle's inference, whereby is shewed the end of God's substituting the gospel in the room of the law. See Sec. 132.

XIV. *Christ's church is a kingdom.* So it is here expressly called. See Sec. 133.

XV. *God is to be served.* Which ariseth from the apostle's exhortation thereunto. See Sec. 135.

XVI. *Our serving of God must be so ordered as it may be pleasing to him.* So much the apostle ex-

presseth in his general direction for the manner of our serving God, in this word, *acceptably*. See Sec. 135.

XVII. *God is to be served with due reverence*. So much the apostle doth in plain terms express; for in setting down the manner of our serving God, he adds, *with reverence*. See Sec. 135.

XVIII. *A holy fear is a special means of well ordering the service we do to God*. So much the apostle expresseth. See Sec. 136.

XIX. *Christ is true God*. This plainly ariseth from the title *God*, here given unto Christ. See Sec. 137.

XX. *Christ is in special the God of his church*. This ariseth from the relative particle *our*, added unto *God, our God*. See Sec. 137.

XXI. *God incensed is terrible*. Which the apostle expresseth by terming him a *consuming fire*. *Our God is a consuming fire*. See Sec. 137.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Sec. 1. *Of the resolution of the whole 13th chapter.*

In this chapter the apostle prosecuteth his exhortation unto such Christian duties, as tend to a worthy walking of their holy profession. This he doth till he come to the very close of this epistle, even to the 20th verse.

There are<sup>1</sup> two general parts of the chapter:

1. A direction to behave themselves as becomes Christians, to ver. 20.

2. The conclusion of the epistle, in the six last verses.

In his direction, duties of three sorts are prescribed:

1. Concerning others.
2. Concerning themselves.
3. Concerning God, ver. 15.

Duties concerning others may be reduced to five considerations.

1. As they are professors of the true faith, *let brotherly love continue*, ver. 1.
2. As they are strangers, *be not forgetful to entertain strangers, &c.*, ver. 2.
3. As they are afflicted, *remember them that are in bonds, &c.*, ver. 3.
4. As they are ministers, vers. 7, 17.
5. As they are in want, ver. 16.

The first of these contains the sum of the second table, so far as it concerns professors of the faith.

The second, third, and fifth are branches of the sixth commandment.

The fourth is a branch of the fifth commandment.

Duties concerning themselves have a threefold respect,

1. To their bodies. Of these there are two sorts: One, to use the means of chastity, which is marriage, ver. 4.

The other, to avoid uncleanness contrary thereunto, ver. 4.

These two appertain to the seventh commandment.

2. To their estates. About which,
  - (1.) Covetousness is forbidden.
  - (2.) Contentedness is commanded.

<sup>1</sup> Circa hoc duo facit: Primo hortatur eos ad bonum. Secundo orat pro iis.—*Thom. Aquin.*

These two are comprised under the eighth commandment.

To enforce the one and the other, God's promise of sufficient provision is alleged, ver. 5; and an inference of confidence on God is thereupon made, ver. 6.

Duties to ministers have a double hint,

1. In reference to such as were departed. About these,

(1.) The duty itself is expressed, both generally, *remember*; and also particularly, *whose faith follow*.

(2.) It is enforced by an argument taken from Christ's immutability, ver. 8.

3. Duties concerning their souls are of two kinds: (1.) That they take heed of strange doctrines.

(2.) That they forbear to join legal ceremonies with the word of grace, ver. 9.

This latter is pressed by the damage which may thence follow.

This is loss of right to Christ.

This damage is,

1. Propounded, under a metaphor taken from the legal rites, *we have an altar, &c.*, ver. 10.

2. It is further confirmed by other like rites.

In this confirmation are set down,

1. The types, *for the bodies of those beasts, &c.*, ver. 11.

2. The application of the truth thereunto, *wherefore Jesus, &c.*, ver. 12.

3. Two inferences made thereupon.

One, to abandon the world, *let us go forth, &c.*, ver. 13. This is enforced by a Christian's condition in this world, *for here, &c.*, ver. 14.

The other inference is to make a right use of Christ the true altar. This is, to *offer up sacrifices* on him.

These sacrifices are of two sorts:

1. Praise to God, ver. 15.
2. Beneficence to the poor, ver. 16.

Duties to ministers which were yet present among them, are of two sorts.

One, that in general concerns all. This is,

1. Propounded, *obey them*.
2. Pressed, by their ministers' charge over them, *they watch, &c.*, ver. 17.

Another, that in particular concerns the apostle himself. This also is,

1. Propounded, *pray for us*.

2. Pressed by a double motive.

One, his integrity, ver. 18.

The other, his desire to be restored to them, ver. 19.

The conclusion of this epistle is in the last six verses thereof.

It consisteth of five distinct parts :

1. Intercession for them. Herein is,

(1.) A description of him to whom he makes his intercession, ver. 20.

(2.) A declaration of the matter for which he intercedeth, ver. 21.

2. Petition to them, well to accept his epistle, ver. 22.

3. Information of two points :

(1.) Of Timothy's deliverance.

(2.) Of his purpose to come with Timothy to them, ver. 23.

4. Salutations. These are of two sorts :

(1.) Of them whom they should salute.

(2.) Of those that saluted them, ver. 24.

5. His apostolical benediction, ver. 25.

Sec. 2. *Of love : what it is.*

Ver. 1. *Let brotherly love continue.*

The apostle having prescribed sundry duties to be performed to God in the latter end of the former chapter, in the beginning of this chapter he setteth down several duties to be performed to men.

He beginneth with that which is the sum and substance of all the rest ; and which will set all other duties to man on work. This is *brotherly love*.

These two words are the interpretation of one Greek word, *φιλadelphία*, but a compound one, which compriseth under it *love* and *brother*. Our English word also may be so joined together as to make one ; and so it every way answereth the Greek.

About it I will endeavour to clear these five points following :

1. The nature of brotherly love.

2. The difference betwixt it and love.

3. The special grounds thereof.

4. Rules for abounding therein.

5. Motives to induce us to labour after it.

That we may the better find out the full nature of brotherly love, I will briefly shew,

1. What *love* is.

2. What kind of *brother* is here meant.

Love is a liking, uniting affection.

1. It is reckoned among the *affections*, in that it is neither simply a virtue, nor simply a vice. But as it is placed upon a right object, which is good, and well ordered in preferring good things according to their excellency, it hath the general nature of virtue. Contrarily, being placed upon a wrong object, which is evil ; or disordered, by preferring the meaner good

before the greater, as man before God, it hath the general nature of a vice.

2. It is a *liking* affection, in that the proper object thereof is good. Philosophers distinguish affections into concupiscible and irascible. These, for plainness sake, we call liking and disliking. The proper object of the former is good, and of the latter evil.

It is *uniting* ; for herein lieth the very form of love ; whereby it is differenced from other liking affections, as from desire and delight. Love knitteth the heart that loveth to the object loved. Thus Jonathan's love to David is expressed, ' The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David,' 1 Sam. xviii. 1. And Christians are said to be knit together in love, Col. ii. 2. In this respect love is styled a bond ; yea, a ' bond of perfectness,' Col. iii. 14, whereby things are close knit and fast bound.

Sec. 3. *Of the divers acceptations of ' brother ' and of ' brotherly love.'*

*Brother* in Scripture is divers ways used.

1. In a civil respect.

2. In a sacred respect.

The civil respect is natural, or political.

Natural is proper or common.

Brothers in a natural, proper respect are—first, near, as *uterine*, children of the same mother, as Cain and Abel, Gen. iv. 2 ; secondly, remote, as *consanguine*, of the same blood, as Abraham and Lot, Gen. xiii. 8 ; or *affines*, by marriage, as Ruth and Orpah, Ruth i. 1, 15.

Brothers in a common natural respect are such as descend from the first stock, namely, Adam, 1 John ii. 15 ; or from the head of the same nation, Exod. ii. 11.

The political respect, whereby any are called brothers, is of such as are of the same calling, as kings, 1 Kings xx. 32 ; captains, 2 Kings ix. 2, 5 ; priests, 2 Kings xxiii. 9.

The sacred respect is in reference to profession of the true faith, and that *spe* or *re*, according to the rule of charity (so all professors are brethren, Ps. xxii. 22, Mat. xviii. 15), or according to the rule of certainty, as the elect of God. Thus Ananias calls Saul, ' a chosen vessel,' brother, Acts ix. 15, 17 ; and Peter calls the same Paul, 2 Pet. iii. 15.

There is further a joint acceptation of this relative, *brother*, which is partly natural, partly mystical, or spiritual ; and that betwixt the Son of God and sons of men. Hereof see Chap. ii. Sec. 106.

The word *brother* is here to be taken in the sacred or spiritual respect ; and that according to the rule of charity.

Brotherly love then here required is, such a liking affection as knits the hearts of professors of the true faith one to another. In this respect professors are said to be ' of one heart,' Acts iv. 32. And they are exhorted to be ' perfectly joined together in the same

mind, and in the same judgment,' 1 Cor. i. 10. And God hath promised to give unto his 'one heart,' Jer. xxxii. 39, Ezek. xi. 19.

Sec. 4. *Of the difference betwixt love and brotherly love.*

The difference betwixt love and brotherly love consisteth in three things especially, 1. The object; 2. The subject-matter; 3. The bond.

1. The object of love is of a larger extent than the object of brotherly love. That extendeth itself to all (not aliens or enemies excepted), Mat. v. 44: this only to those that profess the faith; as the word *brother* implieth.

2. The subject-matter containeth the duties that the one or the other requireth. In this respect the subject-matter of brotherly love is larger than of love. For there is no duty that love requireth to be performed of another, but brotherly love requireth the same to be performed to a brother. Yet brotherly love requireth many duties to be done to a brother, which love requireth not to be performed to all. For love requireth none to 'cast holy things to dogs, nor pearls before swine,' Mat. vii. 6. Where the apostle saith (1 Cor. v. 12), 'What have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within?' he plainly sheweth that many duties that are to be performed to a professor, are not to be performed to such as are without; that is, to such as profess not the gospel.

3. The bond, whereby brotherly love knits professors together, is stronger than the common bond of love. In this respect the apostle puts an emphasis upon doing good to the brotherhood, Gal. vi. 10, 'Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.' Thus Christ himself distinguisheth betwixt those that are within and without: for 'he is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe,' 1 Tim. iv. 10.

These differences shew that the excellency lieth upon brotherly love.

Sec. 5. *Of the grounds of love, and of brotherly love.*

The grounds of brotherly love are such as the grounds of love in general are: but in a far more excellent kind; which may be exemplified in six heads:

1. Participation of the same image. On this ground the sin of murder is aggravated, because 'in the image of God made he man,' Gen. ix. 6. Hence we may infer, that nothing against love must be done to another; but all duties of love must be performed to him, because we are all 'after the image of God.'

2. Communion in the same nature, which is flesh. Thereupon saith the Holy Ghost, 'Hide not thyself from thine own flesh,' Isa. lviii. 7.

3. Subjection to the same infirmities. For 'all

things come alike to all,' Eccles. ix. 2. This puts on love to bear others' infirmities, because they themselves are subject to the like. It is said of the high priest under the law, that 'he can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity,' Heb. v. 2.

4. The mutual need that one hath of another's help. This also puts on love to help such as need help, that, in case of need, help by others may be afforded unto them. In this respect saith the apostle, 'At this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, and their abundance also may be a supply for your want,' 2 Cor. viii. 14.

5. God's example. For Christ exhorteth us to perform duties of love, 'that we may be the children of our Father which is in heaven,' Mat. v. 45.

6. God's express precept: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' Lev. xix. 18.

These also are the very grounds of brotherly love; but in a far more excellent and transcendent manner; for,

1. That image of God, which natural men bear, is exceedingly defaced and impaired. It is a very obscure and almost worn-out stamp of that glorious image in which at first God made man. I may resemble it to a glowworm, or to certain fish-bones, which in the dark make a bright lustre, but give no true light, whereby we may discern one thing from another. So by that remainder of God's image, which is in natural men, none could ever discern how to do anything acceptably to God, or available to his own salvation. But in Christ, by the gospel, that glorious image is renewed in saints (who are the brethren he means); and they are not only exhorted to 'put on that new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth' (Eph. iv. 24), but are also said to be 'changed into the same image from glory to glory,' 2 Cor. i. 18.

2. That nature, whereof professors are made partakers, is not only a human nature, but, *θεῖα φύσις*, the divine nature, 2 Pet. ii. 4. For we are born again, and that of God, John i. 13. As natural men are all one flesh, so saints are all one spirit, Eph. iv.

4. As they are of the flesh, so these are of the Spirit, John iii. 6. Wherefore, as the divine nature is more excellent than the human, and the spirit than the flesh, so this ground of brotherly love is more excellent than the former ground of love.

3. Professors of the gospel are subject also to many infirmities and temptations. Satan most fiercely assaults them, Luke xxii. 31. For they are all kings, Rev. i. 6. The devil, therefore, useth the policy of the king of Syria, 1 Kings xxii. 31. They are also subject to many infirmities. In these respects there is great need of much brotherly love to bear with one another, Gal. vi. 2.

4. These also stand in much need of mutual help



for their spiritual good. This is evident by the manifold exhortations tending to that purpose, as Heb. iii. 13, and x. 24, 1 Thes. iv. 12, and v. 11. Brotherly love is needful in this respect also.

5. God's pattern is, in this kind, more excellently set forth; for, in relation to saints, he is said to love them, and hate others, Mal. i. 2. Saints are 'a peculiar treasure to him above all people,' Exod. xix. 5, Deut. x. 15. This example of God is much pressed upon this point of brotherly love, 1 John iv. 9-11. And for brotherly love, Christ's example, in giving himself for his church, is also pressed, Eph. v. 25, John xiii. 34.

6. The commandment for brotherly love is as express as for love, John xv. 12. Yea, it is called a 'new commandment,' John xiii. 34. Indeed, the apostle, where he styleth it a 'new commandment,' saith withal, that it is an 'old commandment,' 1 John ii. 1. In the substance of it, it is the *old* commandment; but in many circumstances a *new* one.

Sec. 6. *Of the respects wherein love is styled a new commandment.*

Love is styled a new commandment, in that,

1. It is renewed in the gospel by Christ and his apostles; and in that respect called 'the law of Christ,' Gal. vi. 2. Now an act renewed is counted a new act or statute.

2. It is as a new thing frequently and fervently pressed in the New Testament by Christ and his apostles, even more than by Moses and the prophets in the Old Testament.

3. It is cleared by Christ from many false glosses, which the ancient teachers of the Jews, called elders, had brought upon it; as this, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy,' Mat. v. 43, 44. As silver-plate cleared is counted new, so this commandment.

4. It is freed by the gospel from many burdensome rites, with which the law clogged it; and thus it is accounted a new commandment. It is said that the eagle's youth is renewed, Ps. ciii. 5, which is thus: the beak of an eagle in time grows so thick and hard, as she is not able to eat her meat; she, thereupon, with violence strikes her beak against a rock, and breaks it all to pieces. That which remains under the shell is counted a new beak. It is also said of a snake, that her skin grows so hard and rough, that she cannot well wind herself, and nimbly slide up and down. She useth, thereupon, to thrust herself through some narrow cleft, whereby that old skin is stripped off, and thus is she a new snake. Thus the law of love is new.

5. This is a new commandment in regard of the manner of delivering it; for it is by the gospel delivered with such life and power, as it makes men to yield to it, God's Spirit accompanying the ministry of the gospel, which is thereupon called 'the minis-

tration of the Spirit,' 2 Cor. iii. 8. And God is said by the gospel to 'put his laws into our minds, and to write them in our hearts,' Heb. viii. 10. Concerning this particular, the apostle saith that 'we are taught of God to love one another' (1 Thes. iv. 9); that is, God, by his gospel, effectually persuades us to love one another.

6. The commandment of brotherly love is ever fresh, like a new thing, as the shoes and apparel of the Israelites in the wilderness waxed not old, Deut. viii. 4, and xxix. 5. In this respect the prophet styleth the covenant of grace under the gospel, a 'new covenant,' Jer. xxxi. 31. It is so styled in opposition to the former, which 'waxed old,' Heb. viii. 13.

7. The object of brotherly love under the gospel is new, in regard of the extent of it. For of old, they of Israel only were counted brethren. In this respect it is said (Deut. xxiii. 10), 'unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but not unto thy brother,' by whom he means an Israelite. But now, under the gospel, 'they who were then afar off are made nigh,' and both Jew and Gentile are made one, Eph. iii. 13, 14. For 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, all are one in Christ Jesus,' Gal. iii. 28.

8. Under the gospel there is manifested a further extent of brotherly love, which may be accounted as a new rule. The law saith, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' Lev. xix. 18; but under the gospel it is said, 'We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,' 1 John iii. 16. Thereupon the apostle saith, 'I will very gladly spend and be spent for you,' 2 Cor. xii. 15; and again, 'If I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all,' Phil. ii. 17.

9. There is under the gospel a new pattern of brotherly love set before us, namely, of God's sending his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. 'Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another,' 1 John iv. 10, 11. We have also a new pattern of Christ giving himself for his church, Eph. v. 25. Now we ought to love one another 'as Christ hath loved us,' John xv. 12.

10. It is called a new commandment by an excellency: as a 'new song' (Ps. cxlix. 1), that is, a most excellent song. And again, 'The Lord hath created a new thing' (Jer. xxxi. 22), that is, a wonderful thing. Thus, also, that which is called a 'better covenant' is said to be a 'new covenant,' Heb. viii. 6, 8.

Sec. 7. *Of rules for attaining to, and abounding in, brotherly love. Concerning opinion.*

The rules for attaining to, and abounding in, brotherly love, may be reduced into three heads:

1. Opinion. 2. Meditation. 3. Practice.

For opinion:

1. We must be well instructed in the truth of that religion which we, and others who are accounted brethren, do profess. Frequent reading of God's

word, diligent attending to the preaching thereof, serious meditating thereon, and mutual conference thereabout, are special means of instructing us in the true religion. Knowledge hereof, and faith herein, will knit our hearts to the profession of the same, and hold us close to them. Religion hath its notation, *à religando*,<sup>1</sup> from knitting close, and binding fast together. Nothing is of more force to that end than religion, especially the true religion. Idolatrous, heretical, and false religions knit the hearts of the professors thereof together; yet they want that spirit of life which accompanieth the true religion. True religion, therefore, must needs be of more force to knit men together.

2. We must have a good opinion, and be well persuaded, of the truth and soundness of our brother's profession. Otherwise, an external profession will be so far from uniting our hearts, as it will rather alienate them the more one from another. Hypocrites and dissemblers are detested of all. None will dare to trust them: none will care to be intimate with them. Now that we may have and retain a good opinion of professors, we must judge of them according to the rule of charity (for we cannot judge of them according to the rule of certainty. That is his prerogative who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins, Jer. xvii. 10, and to whose eyes all things are naked and opened, Heb. iv. 13). Charity judgeth not the hearts and consciences of men. It leaveth them to God: 'Charity believeth all things, and hopeth all things' (1 Cor. xiii. 7), that is, the best it can of all. It interpreteth all things in the better part. By this means is brotherly love established.

3. We must, as much as lieth in us, be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment, 1 Cor. i. 10. Union in mind and judgment is an effectual means of working and preserving union in heart and affection. They who continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine were 'of one heart and one soul,'<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 42, and iv. 32. Under the heart, the affections are comprised; under the soul, the mind. Unanimity is a great cause of brotherly love. Therefore we are oft exhorted to be of the same mind, Rom. xii. 16, 2 Cor. xiii. 11, Phil. ii. 2.

Quest. What if all that profess the same faith cannot be brought to be in all points of one opinion: so as there must needs be differences in that kind, as ever there were, and ever are like to be?

Ans. In such cases let us dissent in love, and wait till God reveal the truth to the one or to the other. Differences in judgment must not cause alienations of heart and affection: especially if the difference be about inferior and indifferent things, Rom. xiv. 2, 3.

4. We must be thoroughly informed about God's

love to us, and get all the evidences we can thereof. God's love is as fire; it heateth where it is harboured. As fire kindleth fire, so love kindleth and enflameth love; especially when the soul is persuaded thereof. Now they who truly love God, will undoubtedly love such as bear the image of God; which professors of the true faith do, 1 John iv. 20, 21, and v. 1. Apprehension of God's love to us, will the more enforce us to love the brethren, if withal we be persuaded of their love to us; as we ought to be, unless we see apparent evidences of the contrary.

Thus far of the rules concerning opinion.

Sec. 8. *Of rules for brotherly love. Concerning meditation.*

For meditation: 1. We must advisedly meditate on the excellency of this grace of brotherly love. All the excellencies of love have an eminency in brotherly love.

Now love is set out by the apostle as the most excellent of all graces. Where he exhorts to 'covet earnestly the best gifts,' he adds this clause, 'yet shew I unto you a more excellent way,' 1 Cor. xii. 31. That way is, to season all with love. And having reckoned up sundry singular properties and effects of love, he layeth faith, hope, and love together, and concludes, that 'of them love is the greatest,' 1 Cor. xiii. 13, greatest in use, greatest in continuance.

In use, because all practical graces are set on work by love; and love extends itself to the good of others; it 'seeketh not her own' only; whereas faith and hope are as hands clasped, fast holding that which makes to one's own good, love is as a hand opened, dispersing that it hath to the good of others.

In continuance, love is greater than faith or hope, because these end with this present life; but love continueth in the life to come, and is most perfect in heaven.

Besides, there is no grace wherein a creature may more resemble his Creator than love. God assumeth to himself this title Love, and that by a kind of property, thus, 'God is love,' 1 John iv. 8, 16. This doth in a high transcendent manner commend the excellency of love; and due meditation on the excellency of a thing, is an especial means of seeking after it, and laying hold on it.

2. We must duly consider the worth of a brother. Brothers here meant are saints by calling. Whatsoever their outward condition be in this world, they are most precious persons. They are styled 'precious in God's sight, and honourable,' Isa. xliii. 4; 'excellent,' Ps. xvi. 3; 'God's jewels,' Mal. iii. 17. They are 'a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people,' 1 Pet. ii. 9. Comparatively, 'the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour,' Prov. xii. 26; that is, than any other man not righteous: and that in his birth, for he is 'born of

<sup>1</sup> A religando religio duci creditur.—*Aug. de Vera Relig.*, cap. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Cordis et anime unius nominibus intelligitur summa tum in doctrina, tum in voluntatibus consensio.—*Beza in loc.*

God,' John i. 13. In his life, he 'liveth by faith,' Hab. ii. 4, Gal. ii. 20. In his death, 'precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints,' Ps. cxvi. 15; 'blessed are the dead that die in the Lord,' Rev. xiv. 13. This made Balaam to wish that he might die the death of the righteous, Num. xxiii. 10. God set his love on them before the world was. He so dearly loved them, as he spared not his dear and only Son, but gave him to death for them, Rom. viii. 32. He hath given his Holy Spirit to quicken them, to beautify them, to make them amiable before God and men. He hath given his angels a charge over them, Ps. xci. 11. The angels are ministering spirits for their sakes, Heb. i. 14. The whole world is preserved for them: and they are reserved to glory. Who should not, who would not, be kindly affectioned to them in brotherly love?

3. We must seriously think upon the good that may be reaped by them and from them: the good is both temporal and spiritual. Laban 'learned by experience that the Lord had blessed him for Jacob's sake,' Gen. xxx. 27. And Potiphar 'saw that the Lord was with his servant Joseph, and that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand,' Gen. xxxix. 3. The good that those men received from Jacob and Joseph, who were both saints, was temporal. Much spiritual good may also be received from such, by their pious pattern, prudent counsel, pithy exhortations, powerful prayer, and other like means; yea, hereby also may our eternal salvation be promoted. Due consideration of these and other like benefits cannot but work brotherly love towards them.

4. We must diligently mark the prejudice that useth to arise from professors' alienation of their hearts one from another, and from dissensions following thereupon. God's blessed name is thereby blasphemed; the ministry of the gospel slandered; the holy profession disgraced; the faithful ones grieved; the guiltless mis-censured; the weak offended, and enemies made to insult. Surely they who duly consider these mischiefs, will for the preventing hereof, labour for this grace of brotherly love.

*Sec. 9. Of rules for brotherly love. Concerning practice.*

For practice, 1. We must remove such impediments as ordinarily keep men from this grace of brotherly love. One great and prime impediment is self-love. Nothing more hinders the love of others, especially the love of the brethren, than self-love. It is like the thorns among which good seed was sown. Thorns use to soak out the life and heart of the ground, so as good corn cannot there grow up to any maturity. Self-love and brotherly love are oft opposed, as 1 Cor. x. 24. Another great impediment is undue suspicion and unjust jealousy. This makes everything spoken or done to be misinterpreted, and taken in the worst part. The apostle, 1 Tim. vi. 4, reckoneth 'surmis-

ings' among other gross enormities, as 'envy, strife, railings,' which use to be occasions of great discord and fierce dissensions. He also gives this epithet, *evil*, to surmises: for they are evil in their nature, being brats of the old man; and evil in their effect: they hinder many good duties among friends: and cause many acts of injustice. Impediments which hinder the springing up or growing of a good thing, must be removed for obtaining that good thing, and abounding therein.

2. Communion, friendship, and familiarity must be kept with professors of the truth; that thereby we may the more freely open our hearts one to another, and communicate counsels; yea, and take notice of the gifts which God hath bestowed one upon another. This is and will be an especial means of working and increasing brotherly love.

3. We must take all opportunities of doing courtesies to the saints: and of receiving kindnesses from them. By doing courtesies we tie their hearts to us: and by receiving kindnesses, we make them the more willing to accept in the better part the courtesies we do to them. A generous mind will not continually receive courtesies, unless it may return courtesy for courtesy. By this mutual kindness, the entire affection of saints one towards another are the better discerned: which cannot but preserve brotherly love.

4. We must be instant in prayer, both singly for ourselves, and also mutually each for other. For ourselves, that God would be pleased to work our hearts, as to other sanctifying graces, so to this in special. That entire affection of love which God at first implanted in man's soul, when he created him after his own image, is exceedingly defaced by man's fall. To have it renewed requires a supernatural work, even a work of the divine Spirit. Now prayer is an especial means of obtaining the Holy Ghost. Our 'heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him,' Luke xi. 13. By this Spirit may this grace be wrought in our hearts. This duty also is to be performed in the behalf of others, that God who can dispose the hearts of all as it pleaseth him, would turn the hearts of the brethren to us. Thus shall we be 'kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love.' Their apprehension of our love to them, will kindle and inflame love in them to us; and our apprehension of their love to us, will kindle and inflame love in us to them.

Hitherto of the rules or means for brotherly love.

*Sec. 10. Of motives to brotherly love.*

Motives to stir us up after brotherly love, are such as follow:—

1. Brotherly love is a grace absolutely necessary. It is the 'groundwork or foundation whereon all duties that have relation to the brethren are erected. If they be not founded thereon, they cannot be well performed; and that performance which is made of

them cannot be acceptable to God or man. The apostle expressly cleareth this point, 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3; yea, it is a mother grace, which compriseth all other graces under it, Gal. v. 14, Rom. xv. 9.

2. Brotherly love is one of the fairest and most glorious flowers in the Christian garden. It makes men amiable before God and man. It sends forth a sweet fragrant savour wheresoever it is. It hath been before shewed that there is nothing wherein man more resembleth God, than in brotherly love. See Sec. 8.

3. Such is the life and vigour of brotherly love, as it puts on them in whom it is unto all duties. A stronger incitation and enforcement thereunto cannot be given. To this end doth Christ three times together put this question to Peter, 'Simon, lovest thou me?' John xxi. 15-17. Love moved God to give his Son to man, John iii. 16. Love moved Christ to give himself to his church, Eph. v. 25. Love constrained Paul to do what he did, 2 Cor. v. 14. We are therefore all enjoined to love God, Deut. vi. 5; and husbands to love their wives, Eph. v. 25; and wives, their husbands; and parents, their children, Titus ii. 4; professors, the brotherhood, 1 Pet. ii. 17; every one, one another, 1 John iii. 11. For love will make men give every one their due. Where love faileth, there is extreme backwardness to duty; where love aboundeth, there is great forwardness thereunto.

4. So violent and irresistible is the power of love, as it will pass through all difficulties, and overthrow all obstacles. It will not be hindered from doing the good it should do. The church doth with much emphasis set out the power of love, Cant. viii. 6, 7, where she affirms it to be 'as strong as death.' Who can stand before death? Death overcometh all. Love is also as a fire; hot, fervent, vehement; the flame thereof is 'the flame of the Lord;' a most ardent and violent flame. Other fires may be quenched with waters; but 'many waters cannot quench love.' No afflictions nor persecutions can put love out of a man's heart. 'I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved,' saith the apostle, 2 Cor. xii. 15. Read for this purpose, Rom. viii. 35, &c.

5. Love is as salt, which infuseth a savour and wholesome taste into such things as would otherwise be fresh and flashy. It is therefore joined with sundry other duties for this very purpose, even to season them. The apostle so far commends love in this kind, as he maketh all things unsavoury and unprofitable without it, 1 Cor. xiii. 1-3. He therefore giveth this general advice, 'Let all your things be done in love,' 1 Cor. xvi. 14.

6. Love hath a strong operation on others. It is as fire, which heateth the things that are near it. As apprehension of God's love to us, works love in us to God—'We love him, because he first loved us,' 1

John iv. 19;—so others' apprehension of our love to them, will make them love us. And as love puts us on to all kindness unto them; so their love of us will put them on to do all kindness unto us. The mutual love which David and Jonathan manifested each to other, put them on to do much one for another.

7. Love is one of the most comfortable graces that a man can have. It gives evidence to others, and brings assurance to a man's own soul, of the love of God to him, of his right to Jesus Christ, of the Spirit's abode in him, and of his right to the heavenly inheritance. Love of the brethren is an evidence also of his love of God. It is the main scope of St John's first epistle, to demonstrate all these evidences. Read in special for this purpose, 1 John ii. 10, and iii. 14, 18, 19, and iv. 7, 12, 16.

8. Love is an especial means of strengthening and establishing the kingdom of Christ. It unites the subjects and members of that kingdom in one; which is a means of great stability. Many weak wands fast and close bound together, cannot be easily broke asunder: kingdoms, cities, all manner of civil societies, are established by the mutual love of the members thereof. The kingdom of Satan and all evil societies are strengthened by this means: should not then the members of Christ's kingdom love one another? Nothing can be of more force to work union, than mutual love; and nothing of more force to strengthen a society, than union.

9. The nearest union that is betwixt any in this world is betwixt professors of the faith; and that in their mutual relation one to another, and in the joint relation that they all have to Christ. Resemblances of the nearest relation that be, are used to set this forth, as of a foundation and edifice, Eph. ii. 20, 21; of a vine and branches, John xv. 5; of a husband and wife, Eph. v. 32, 2 Cor. xi. 2; of a head and body, Eph. i. 22, 23. This near union should stir us up to brotherly love; for therein we love that body which is styled Christ, 1 Cor. xii. 12.

10. The world's hatred of saints should the more stir us up to love them. Christ enforceth this duty upon this ground, John xv. 17-19. The world most hateth saints, and that *hoc ipso nomine*, in this very respect, because they are saints. But brotherly love is a sovereign antidote against the poison of the world's hatred; and a precious cordial to revive and support the saints' spirits.

#### Sec. 11. Of the continuance of brotherly love.

Brotherly love being the fountain out of which all other Christian duties flow, and which is so needful and useful a duty, as hath been before shewed, well doth the apostle here require that it should, *μεινῶν, continue*. This being here required of Christians, implieth that an endeavour on our part must be used for the continuance thereof. To express this the more fully, the Syriac inserts this participle, *ἐν ᾧ, in us*.

Others, to make this yet more clearly to appear, thus express the nature of love in its therly love.

In that the apostle sets a limitation of time to his exhortation, but immediately saith, "For the things we continue, be given us, to understand that the continuance must be perpetual. It must never cease, but continue as long as the man himself continues in this world; it must it up, any occasion be interrupted, but it must be manifested in all things at all times according to that which the apostle saith of charity, "Let all your things be done with charity," 1 Cor. xiii. 14. The apostle that maketh this a link of the golden chain of Christian graces, 2 Pet. i. 7, sheweth that so long as there is any grace in a Christian, there must be also, his therly love. St. Paul, therefore, where he commended the Thessalonians for that he therly love they had shewed themselves, then to increase in grace and more, 1 Thes. iv. 9, 10. The phrases of "walking in love," Eph. v. 2, and "dwelling in love," 1 John iv. 16, import as much. For to walk is to go on; it is opposed to standing still or sitting down. To dwell, importeth a continual abode; opposed to sojourning or lodging for a while in a place.

God's love to us is "an everlasting love," Jer. xxxi. 3. Thence when Christ loved into the end, John xiii. 1, but we must be followers of God, and "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us," Eph. v. 1, 2. And that as in other circumstances, so in continuance.

Hereby the truth of our therly love will be manifested; for that grace which is true and sound will never decay.

They who in their younger years, or when first they began to feel a sweet reach in the communion of saints, seemed to have them in high account, and to have their hearts entirely set upon them, and thereupon were ready to do all good offices for them, but afterwards have their hearts alienated from them, and withdrawn themselves from communion with them—not fearing to speak evil, in company of some particular persons, but also of the whole brethren and people, and of the very good friends whom they surely never had the excellent ground of therly love well settled in them. Surely, they give too great cause to suspect and fear that that spirit which knit the members of Christ's mystical body together, was never in them.

It has such a command on who have this body are of therly love, and let it be a duty to blow it up. This metaphor is indispensably used, 2 Tim. i. 6, and may any be applied to the point in hand.

Rev. 12. *Of the manner of the phrase, "I ought not."*

Ver. 2. *Be not forgetful to do these things, for they are love, and have entered into you, and are in you.*

The general duty of therly love is exemplified in every part, where the first where it is hospitality.

The substance of the duty is comprised under this

negative, *ne obliviscaris, be not forgetful.* The Greek verb is a compound. The simple *hankisai*, signifies to forget. The compound *anankisai*, intensifies a negative emphasis; as *dein to forget*, or *utterly to forget, or away to forget.*

The phrase is *ne obliviscaris* of opposite terms. *Not to remember is to forget, not to forget is to remember.* Negative imperatives have an emphasis in them; they always bind to all times. There is no time wherein they may be forgotten.

To remember hath two things especially.

1. To keep and hold fast in mind and memory what is once known. In this respect M uses addeth the negative to the affirmative; that, "remember and forget not." Deut. iv. 7, which importeth that they will fast hold in, and not let it slip away.

2. To call again to mind and memory what was once known, but after forgotten. Thus Pharaoh's butler saith, "I do remember my faults this day," Gen. xli. 9. Under his fault, he compriseth all things that had passed betwixt his imprisonment for his fault, and his advancement again to his former office; among other things, Joseph, interpreting his dream, was an especial one. But it is said that he forgot Joseph, Gen. xli. 23. In that, therefore, he saith there, "I do remember," he meneth thereby a calling to mind again, that which he had forgotten.

In both these senses may this negative, *be not forgetful*, be taken, and imply these two things:

1. That in knowing this to be a Christian duty, they should be mindful of it, and careful to observe it, so often as occasion should be offered. In this sense, with the wise man, "forget not my law," Prov. iii. 1.

2. That they having formerly done the duty, but afterwards interrupted it, they should return to it again, and not forget their good beginnings. In this sense saith Moses, "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God," Deut. xiii. 11.

In the former sense, it is an indication to hold on in a good course.

In the latter sense, it is a secret taxation of neglect of duty, which the apostle more expressly thus sets down.

"I have forgotten the exhortation," Heb. x. 5. It is withal an admonition to return to the good course again. It is very likely that these Hebrews, having been spoiled of their goods, Heb. x. 34, thought themselves to be exempted from such duties of courtesy and charity as formerly they had been careful to perform. Hereupon the apostle calls upon them to return to it again, and not to forget it by intermitting it.

Men are prone to neglect strangers; as is evident by the many prohibitions thereof, as, "Thou shalt neither wax a stranger nor oppress him," Exod. xxiii. 21, and xxiii. 9, Lev. xix. 33, and by the many complaints which the prophets make thereof, as Ezek. xxxi. 7, 29; and Christ's doom against such, Mat. xxv. 43.

**B**rotherly love being the fountain out of which all other Christian duties flow, and which is so needfull and usefull a duty, as hath been before shewed, well doth the Apostle here require, that it should <sup>a</sup> continue. This being here required of Christians, implieth, that an endeavour on our part must be used for the continuance thereof. To expresse this the more fully, the Syriack inserts this particle, <sup>b</sup> in us. Others to make this yet more clearly to appear, thus expresse it, <sup>c</sup> continue in brotherly love.

<sup>a</sup> *משך*.

<sup>b</sup> *בנו*.

<sup>c</sup> *משך*.

Love must be  
perpetuall.

In that the Apostle sets no limitation of time to his exhortation, but indefinitely saith, *Let brotherly love continue*, he giveth us to understand that the continuance must be perpetuall. It must never clean fail, but continue so long as the man himself continueth in this world; nor must it upon any occasion be interrupted, but it must be manifested in all things at all times: according to that which the Apostle saith of charity, *Let all your things be done with charity*, 1 Cor. 16. 14. The Apostle that maketh this a link of the golden chain of Christian graces, (2 Pet. 1. 7.) sheweth that so long as there is any grace in a Christian, there must be also brotherly love. St Paul therefore where he commended the *Thessalonians* for that brotherly love they had shewed, beleecheth them to *increase more and more*, 1 Thess. 4. 9. 10. The phrases of *walking in love*, (Eph. 5. 2.) and *dwelling in love*, (1 Joh. 4. 16.) import as much. For to *walk* is to go on: It is opposed to standing still or sitting down. To *dwell*, implieth a continuall abode: opposed to sojourning or lodging for a while in a place.

Gods love to us is an *everlasting love*, Jer. 31. 3. Those whom Christ loved he loved unto the end, Joh. 13. 1. But we must be followers of God; and walk in love

as Christ also hath loved us, Eph. 5. 1, 2. And that as in other circumstances, so in continuance.

Hereby the truth of our brotherly love will be manifested: for that grace which is true and sound will never decay.

They who in their younger years, or when first they began to feel a sweet refreshment in the communion of Saints, seemed to have them in high account, and to have their hearts intirely set upon them, and thereupon were ready to do all good offices for them: but afterwards have their hearts alienated from them, and withdraw themselves from communion with them, not fearing to speak evil, not only of some particular persons, but also of the whole brotherhood, yea and of the very profession it self, they surely never had this excellent grace of brotherly love well settled in them. Surely they give too great cause to suspect and fear that that spirit which knit the members of Christs mysticall body together, was never in them.

It becometh us therefore who have this holy fire of brotherly love kindled in us, daily to blow it up. This metaphor is indefinitely used, 2 Tim. 1. 6, and may fitly be applied to the point in hand.

§. 12. Of the meaning of this phrase, Forget not.

Verse 2. Be not forgetfull to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained Angels unawares.

The generall duty of brotherly love is exemplified in sundry particulars. The first whereof is hospitality.

The substance of the duty is comprised under this negative, <sup>a</sup> Be not forgetfull. The Greek Verb is a compound. The <sup>b</sup> simple signifieth to forget. The <sup>c</sup> compound intendeth some speciall emphasis; as *clean to forget*, or *utterly to forget*, or *as may to forget*.

To forget and to remember are opposite terms. Not to remember is to forget. Not to forget is to remember. Negative injunctions have an emphasis in them: They alwaies binde to all times. There is no time wherein they may be forgotten.

To remember importeth two things especially.

1. To keep and hold fast in minde and memory what is once known. In this respect Moses addeth the negative to the affirmative, thus, Remember and forget not, Deut. 9. 7. Which intendeth that they would fast hold it, and not let it slip away.

2. To call again to minde and memory what was once known, but after forgotten. Thus Pharaohs butler saith, I do remember my faults this day, &c. Gen. 41. 9. Under his faults he compriseth all things that had passed betwixt his imprisonment for his faults and his advancement again to his former office: among other things Josephs interpreting his dream was an especiall one. But it is said that he forgot Joseph, Gen. 40. 23. In that therefore he saith thereof, I do remember, he meaneth thereby a calling to minde again, that which he had forgotten.

In both these senses may this negative, be not forgetfull, be taken, and imply these two things.

1. That knowing this to be a Christian duty they should be mindfull of it, and carefull to observe it, so oft as occasion should be offered In this sense saith the wise man, Forget not my law, Prov. 3. 1.

2. That they having formerly done the duty, but afterwards intermitted it, they should return to it again, and not forget their good beginnings. In this sense saith Moses, Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, Deut. 8. 11.

In the former sense it is an incitation to hold on in a good course.

In the later sense it is a secret taxation of neglect of duty: Which the Apostle more expressly thus sets down, Ye have forgotten the exhortation, Heb. 12. 5. It is withall an admonition to return to the good course again. It is very likely that these Hebrews having been spoyled of their goods, (Heb. 10. 34.) thought themselves to be exempted from such duties of courtesie and charity, as formerly they had been

carefull to perform. Hereupon the Apostle calls upon them to return to it again, and not to forget it by intermitting it.

Men are prone to neglect strangers as is evident by the many *prohibitions* thereabouts, (as, *Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppresse him*, Exod. 22. 21. & 23. 9. Lev. 19. 33.) and by the many *complaints* which the Prophets make thereabout, as Ezek. 22. 7, 29. And Christs *doom* against each, Mat. 25. 43.

There are no outward worldly motives to induce men to be kind to strangers; especially such strangers as are here intended. For strangers use to have no wealth or other like means to recompence such courtesies as are afforded unto them: and therefore they are oft joyned with such as are poor, and widows, and orphans, Lev. 19. 10. & 23. 22. Dent. 14. 29. Jer. 7. 6.



There are no outward worldly motives to induce men to be kind to strangers, especially such strangers as are here intended. For strangers use to have no wealth or other like means to recompense such courtesies as are afforded unto them, and therefore they are oft joined with such as are poor, and widows, and orphans, Lev. xix. 10, and xxiii. 22, Deut. xiv. 29, Jer. vii. 6.

Sec. 13. *Of the kind of entertainment to be given to a stranger.*

This phrase, to *entertain strangers*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, *εὐκοσμία*, to which we have an English word answerable, which is *hospitality*. This is taken from the Latin word, which is used by most of the Latin interpreters. Thus, word for word, it might have been translated, *forget not hospitality*. The Greek word here used is by our English translators turned *hospitality*; and a word of the same derivation and composition, translated 'given to hospitality,' 1 Tim. iii. 2, and a 'lover of hospitality,' Tit. i. 8.

The Greek word here used is a compound word (like to that which in the former verse was translated *brotherly love*). It is compounded of a *friend* and a *stranger*, or a *lover of a stranger*, to shew that he that performeth the duty here intended, must therein shew himself a friend to the stranger, and one that loveth him. Hereupon in the law the duty is thus expressed, 'Love ye the stranger,' and pressed by God's pattern even in the very manner itself, Deut. x. 18, 19, for he loves a cheerful giver, 2 Cor. ix. 7.

Thus, according to the notation of the word, it comprehends under it two things:

1. In regard of the *matter*, that all acts of courtesy and charity be extended to strangers: as to afford them lodging, meat, drink, counsel, protection, direction, consolation, and what other succour strangers may stand in need of.

2. In regard of the *manner*, that the courtesy and charity that is shewed to a stranger be so lovingly, kindly, and friendly performed, as the stranger may see he hath found a friend. Thus the two words compounded will appear fitly to be joined together, a *friend* and a *stranger*.

I find not this composition in any Greek authors before the apostles' time, so as it is probable that they were the first authors thereof. St Paul hath used it four times, as Rom. xii. 13, 1 Tim. iii. 2, Tit. i. 8, and in this place. It is also used, 1 Pet. iv. 9.

This friendly manner of doing good to strangers maketh it the more acceptable to God, who measures works of mercy according to the mind of him that doth them, Luke xxi. 3, 2 Cor. viii. 12.

Besides, such a manner of doing good doth much more work upon the heart of him to whom it is done. Abraham's servant was very much affected with that

ready, cheerful courtesy which Rebekah shewed to him, Gen. xxiv. 20-22. How was Ruth taken with the friendly manner of Boaz his entertaining of her, Ruth ii. 8, &c.

As no works of mercy, so nor this must be done grudgingly or of necessity, 2 Cor. ix. 7.

Sec. 14. *Of strangers, who they are.*

The word *stranger* is opposed to *one's own*, and it is used either in way of resemblance or in reality.

By way of resemblance, a *stranger* is so called in two respects:

1. Actively, when one carrieth himself as a stranger. Thus God is said to be 'as a stranger,' when he seems either to take no care of his people, or not to abide with them, Jer. xiv. 8.

2. Passively, when men that are no strangers, are dealt withal as strangers. Job complaineth that they who dwell in his house counted him for a stranger, Job xix. 15. The like complaint doth David make in regard of his brethren's carriage towards him, Ps. lxxix. 8.

In reality, strangers are so counted and called, in reference,

1. To a man's own person, in opposition to whom all other persons are strangers. In this large extent the wise man thus useth this word, 'Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips,' Prov. xxvii. 2. A *stranger* is the very same here that *another man* is.

2. To a man's wife. Thus every woman besides a man's own wife, is called a stranger, Prov. v. 20, 'Why wilt thou be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?'

3. To a man's function. Thus they who are of other functions to men of a select function are called strangers; as to the Levites all the Israelites of other tribes were strangers, Num. i. 51.

4. To stock from whence one doth descend. Thus they who descended not from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though they dwelt among the Israelites, were counted strangers, 2 Chron. ii. 17.

5. To the place of one's abode, and that in sundry respects:

(1.) All that dwell on earth are counted strangers, in reference to our eternal house in heaven. In this respect David, without any limitation, 'We are strangers, as were all our fathers,' 1 Chron. xxix. 15.

(2.) All that are of another house are counted strangers to one particular house. Thus doth Solomon oppose a man's own house and the house of a stranger one to another, Prov. v. 10.

(3.) All that are of another city, or company, or society, are counted strangers. Thus Ithai the Gittite was counted a stranger to them that were of Jerusalem, 2 Sam. xv. 19.

(4.) All that are of another country. In this sense is this phrase used, 'A stranger that is not of thy

people Israel, but cometh out of a far country; &c., 1 Kings viii. 41.

The word *stranger* in my text is used in this last respect especially. So as such an one as cometh from another country to a country where he hath no kindred nor friends, is by Christians to be entertained. This is the hospitality here intended.

Sec. 15. *Of entertaining strangers.*

How strangers are to be entertained hath been shewed, Sec. 13. The duty itself is much pressed both under the law and under the gospel. In both times negatively, Exod. xxii. 21, and here in this text; affirmatively, Deut. x. 19, Rom. xii. 13. The word whereby the apostle in that place presseth that duty hath great emphasis; we thus translate it, 'given to hospitality.' The Greek word is taken from hunters and hounds, who will not lose the game if possibly they can get it. It is used, Phil. iii. 12, 14, and translated to 'follow after,' and to 'press toward.' That very word is used to stir us up to pursue after peace and holiness, Heb. xii. 14; righteousness and faith, 1 Tim. vi. 11; love, 1 Cor. xiv. 1; and whatsoever is good, 1 Thes. v. 15. So as we must be given to hospitality, as much as to peace, holiness, righteousness, faith, love, and what else is good.

God hath herein set himself before us for a pattern. God's practice herein is expressly set down for this very end, that we should imitate him. 'God loveth the stranger; love ye therefore the stranger,' Deut. x. 18, 19.

The many ordinances which God made for relief of strangers give good proof of God's good respect to strangers, and special care of them; as,

1. The rest of the Sabbath, Exod. xxiii. 12.
  2. Gleanings of all manner of corn, and remainders of all kinds of fruits, Lev. xix. 9, 10.
  3. Tithes, Deut. xiv. 28, 29.
  4. Restraint of wrong, Exod. xxii. 21; yea, and of perverting their right, Deut. xxiv. 17.
  5. Making them as one with his people, Lev. xix. 34.
  6. Hearing their prayer, 1 Kings viii. 41, and ix. 3.
  7. God's promise of good to them, Isa. lvi. 6, 7; yea, and of good to such as are kind to them, Jer. xxii. 3, 4.
  8. The abundant reward given to them, Mat. xxv. of 35.
- This God's indignation against such as are injurious may fitly Ezek. xxii. 7, 29.

'r fearful doom, Mat. xxv. 41, 43.

Sec. 12. *Of the glimpse which the heathen had of God's Ver. 2. Be ye as, and care of them, their god was thereby some have count.*<sup>1</sup>

The general duty of *in* God's word registered commonly particulars, the first whol duty: as of Abraham, The substance of the duty is *co. Hospes*,—Ed.

Gen. xviii. 3, &c.; Lot, Gen. xix. 3, &c.; Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. 18, &c.; Laban, Gen. xxiv. 31, and xxix. 13; Joseph, Gen. xli. 57; the Israelites, Exod. xviii. 12; Rahab, Josh. ii. 1, &c.; the old man of Gibeah, Judges xix. 20; Boaz, Ruth ii. 8-10; Job, Job xxxi. 32; Ahimelech, 1 Sam. xxii. 6; Abigail, 1 Sam. xxv. 18; David, 1 Sam. xxx. 11, 12; Barzillai and others, 2 Sam. xvii. 27, and ix. 32; the widow of Zarephath, 1 Kings xvii. 15; Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 4; the Shunammite, 2 Kings iv. 8; Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 42; Nehemiah, Neh. v. 17.

Before I leave the history of the Old Testament, I think it meet to add to the former examples such practices of the heathen as are registered in the sacred Scriptures; as of the Hittites, Gen. xxiii. 4, &c.; Pharaoh and his people, Gen. xii. 16; Ahimelech and his people, Gen. xx. 1, and xxvi. 6, &c.; another Pharaoh, Gen. xiv. 17, and xvii. 6; Reuel, Exod. ii. 20; Egyptians, Exod. xii. 35, 36; the king of Moab, 1 Sam. xxii. 34; Achish, 1 Sam. xxvii. 3; the children of Ammon, 2 Sam. xvii. 27; Cyrus, Ezra i. 1, &c.; Darius, Ezra vi. 8, &c.; Artaxerxes, Ezra vii. 12, Neh. ii. 8.

Let me farther add to these out of the New Testament, the Samaritans, John iv. 40; the Roman centurion, Acts xxvii. 3; the barbarians, Acts xxviii. 2.

In the New Testament I may well begin with Christ, who took all opportunities of doing all manner of good to all manner of strangers: as to sundry sorts of Gentiles, to Samaritans, and others. In special, his plentiful entertainment of five thousand at one time, and four thousand at another, Mat. xiv. 21, and xv. 38.

Next to him we may produce the disciples, Luke xxiv. 29; Simon the tanner, Acts ix. 43; Cornelius, Acts x. 48; Lydia, Acts xvi. 15, 40; the jailer, Acts xvi. 34; Phoebe, Rom. xvi. 2; Philenon, ver. 7, 22; Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. i. 16, 17; Gaius, Rom. xvi. 23, 3 John 5, 6.

I might be copious in adding to these many more patterns out of ecclesiastical and heathen authors; but this cloud of approved witnesses is sufficient to such as are willing to be followers of saints.

Gratefulness to God for that plenty of all needful blessings which we in this our own country have long enjoyed, while others of our religion have been forced to wander up and down, should put us on the more to this duty. Yea, and requital for that kindness that was shewed to our countrymen that fled into other countries in Queen Mary's days. We also ourselves, who have long enjoyed the blessings of our country, may be forced from house and home, and brought to desire such succour as strangers stand in need of.

Sec. 16. *Of hospitality to be shewed by the meaner sort.*

The Hebrews were at this time in a low and mean

estate, for they had been persecuted and spoiled of their goods, Heb. x. 38, yet are they not exempted from this duty. The widow that is commended for entertaining Elijah, had but little left her, 1 Kings xvii. 12. The widow that was to be commended for lodging strangers, 1 Tim. v. 10, cannot be imagined to have been a rich widow; nor she of whom Christ testified that of her penury she cast in all the living that she had, Luke xxi. 4. The apostle testifieth of the churches of Macedonia, that in 'a great trial of affliction' they sent relief to the Jews that were strangers to them; and that their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality, 2 Cor. viii. 1, 2.

Hospitality is of so large an extent, as the poorest that be may do somewhat therein. Hospitality compriseth under it not only great gifts, liberal allowance, fair lodging, rich clothing, high honour, gainful offices, and such like courtesies, fit for great men to give; but also a cup of cold water, Mat. x. 42, guiding the blind, lifting up the lame, Job xxix. 15, yea, raising up a stranger's ox or ass, Deut. xxii. 4, directing them to places where they may be harboured, soliciting others for them, visiting, advising, admonishing, comforting them, carrying one's self familiarly with them, giving them good words, and sundry other courtesies, which the poorest may shew.

Besides, there are sundry privative duties, as forbearing to revile, to disgrace, to wrong, to vex, to oppress them, or to do any other unhospitable, discourteous, injurious act to them, Exod. xxii. 21, and xxiii. 9, Dent. xxiv. 17.

It is therefore, questionless, a most undue plea which many poor and mean persons make for neglecting strangers altogether. Many deal with strangers as they who are not minded to contribute anything when a charitable collection is moved; they inveigh against the matter and motion. But their poverty and meanness shall not excuse them before God, who well knows wherein they fail of what they might and should do.

#### Sec. 17. Of receiving angels unawares.

The reason which our apostle produceth to enforce the duty of hospitality is taken from the benefit that followed thereupon. The benefit is thus expressed, *thereby some have entertained angels unawares*. That this is here alleged as a reason, is evident, by this causal particle, *γὰρ*, for. The reason is a forcible reason; for it sheweth that they who performed this duty lost nothing thereby, but were much honoured, and received a great blessing. To have angels enter into one's house is an honour, and to bring such glad-some messages as they did was a blessing.

Attending down this recompense, the apostle hath an especial respect unto two instances; one of Abraham, Gen. xviii. 2, the other of Lot, Gen. xix. 1.

Angels came to both these in the appearance of men, whom they knew not, so as their hospitality was

on no by-respect, but only for the duty's sake. They saw such as they supposed to be men going on as in a journey, and thereupon entertained them.

The Greek word, *ἄδοι*, translated *unawares*, is oft attributed to such as know not those who do such and such a thing. It was at first concealed from Abraham and from Lot, that they who came to them were angels. Their act in entertaining such guests was like a fisherman's casting a net into the water for fish, and instead of fish drawing up pearls.

*Obj.* 1. It is said that Abraham 'bowed himself toward the ground before them,' Gen. xviii. 2. This was an act of divine worship; for so is divine worship set out. Thereupon it is inferred that he knew them to be more than men; for divine worship is not to be yielded to mere men, Acts x. 25, 26.

*Ans.* Civil obeisance is also set forth by that phrase, for Abraham 'bowed himself to the people of the land of Heth,' Gen. xxiii. 7; but that he did in testimony only of civil reverence.

*Obj.* 2. Abraham styleth one of them *Lord*, ver. 3.

*Ans.* It is probable that one of them appeared in a more eminent habit, and in greater majesty, than the others, so as he might take him for the chief, and thereupon in special direct his speech to him; but he doth also shew like courtesy to them all, vers. 4, 5. The title *lord* is in the Hebrew a title given to men frequently, as, ver. 12, it is applied to Abraham himself by his wife Sarah.

*Obj.* 3. The title *Jehovah* is given to one of them, ver. 13.

*Ans.* One of them might be, and indeed was, the Son of God, true Jehovah, the second person in sacred Trinity. But Abraham at first knew not so much. The other two were true angels, who afterward went to Lot; for there came but two to him, Gen. xix. 1. It is said that 'the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom, but Abraham stood yet before the Lord.' Those two men were two of those that came to Abraham, Gen. xviii. 2, and afterward went to Sodom, Gen. xix. 1. The third of those that came to Abraham was the Lord, the Son of God, before whom Abraham stood. At first Abraham knew them to be no other than men, nor yet Lot; yet afterward both of them knew them to be angels.

*Obj.* 4. This entertaining of these angels was extraordinary. We read not the like at any other time. What motive, then, can that be to us, that can expect no such thing?

*Ans.* 1. The apostle intends not that all should expect the same, for he saith not, *πάντες*, all entertained, but, *τινες*, some.

2. God can do the like again if he please; there is no restraint to the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Rhemists out of Joh. Diaconus tell us that Christ and angels came to St Gregory's table of hospitality in pilgrims' we all Believe it who will.

3. The argument follows from the greater to the less. If God sent such extraordinary guests, surely he can send such ordinary guests as will be worth entertaining. Such an argument an apostle useth to stir us up to pray in faith; for Elijah prayed that there might be no rain, and again that there might be rain, and he was heard in both; therefore we may believe that God will hear us in ordinary matters.

This instance giveth evidence of God's high account of this duty of entertaining strangers, in that once and again he sent angels to such as were ready to perform the duty. From [this] therefore we may infer, that God well liketh and approveth this duty, and that he will some way or other recompense the same. This is the main scope of the apostle.

Sec. 18. *Of the blessings which angels have brought to saints.*

Well may it be inferred, from the apostle's argument, that a friendly entertaining of strangers shall not be in vain. To prove this point the more fully, I will endeavour to clear two points.

1. That angels, when they came to saints, brought special blessings to them.

2. That hospitality hath been recompensed with many singular blessings.

For the first, 1. The angels that came to Abraham brought a most gladsome message to him, namely, that he should have a son by Sarah his wife, Gen. xviii. 10. There could not have been brought a more welcome message to him, as appeareth by the answer which he gave to God when he made an especial promise to him. His answer was this, 'What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?' Gen. xv. 2.

2. The angels that came to Lot delivered him from the destruction of Sodom, Gen. xix. 16.

3. The angel that came to Hagar brought a very gladsome message, Gen. xxi. 17, &c.; so to Moses, Exod. iii. 2; and to Gideon, Judges vi. 11; and to Manoah, Judges xiii. 2; and to Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 5; and to Daniel, Dan. vi. 22; and to Zechariah, Zech. i. 9; and to Zacharias and the Virgin Mary, Luke i. 11, 26; and to the shepherds, Luke ii. 9, 13; and to Joseph, Mat. ii. 13, 19; and to Christ, Luke xxii. 43; and to the apostles, Acts i. 10, and v. 19; and to Peter, Acts xii. 7; and to Cornelius, Acts x. 3; and to Paul, Acts xxvii. 23; and to John, Rev. i. 1. By all these it appeareth that this particular blessing noted by the apostle was no small one.

Sec. 19. *Of the recompense of hospitality.*

To amplify the apostle's motive taken from the entertaining of angels, it will not be amiss to add other special recompenses of hospitality registered in sacred Scripture.

1. Rebekah's hospitality was rewarded with precious gifts, and a good husband, Gen. xxiv. 22, 19.

2. Laban's hospitality was recompense—[with] a good

servant for himself, and a good husband for both his daughters, Gen. xxix. 27, and xxx. 27.

3. Reuel's, with a good servant for himself, and a good husband for his daughter, Exod. ii. 21.

4. Rahab's, with preservation of herself and kindred from a common destruction, and with a great marriage, Josh. vi. 22, Mat. i. 5.

5. Boaz's, with a good wife, Ruth iii. 2, &c.

6. Abigail's, with a good husband, 1 Sam. xxv. 39.

7. David's, with a discovery of his enemies, 1 Sam. xxx. 11.

8. The widow of Zarephath, with preserving and increasing her meal and oil in a great dearth: and restoring her son to life, 1 Kings xvii. 16, 23.

9. The Shunammite's, with giving her her son, and restoring him to life, 2 Kings iv. 17, 36.

10. The disciples', with entertaining Christ, Luke xxiv. 32.

11. Lydia's and the jailer's, with the salvation that was brought to their house, Acts xvi. 15, 33.

12. Gaius's, with an honourable testimony, Rom. xvi. 23, 3 John i. 5, 6.

13. Onesiphorus's, with Paul's prayer, 2 Tim. i. 18.

14. The barbarians', with cure of their sick bodies and souls, Acts xxviii. 9.

15. The greatest recompense of all is that recompense which Christ giveth at the day of judgment, Mat. xxv. 34, 35.

All these give evidence of the notice which God taketh of those which set themselves to do what he requires, and of his approbation thereof.

He also gives proof of the goodness, kindness, bounty, and other like gracious properties of God, in not suffering good things to pass away without a recompense, Ps. lxxii. 12.

Hereupon the apostle saith that 'whatsoever good thing any man doth, the same he shall receive of the Lord,' Eph. vi. 8.

It is therefore a strange conceit of men to think that all that is bestowed on strangers is lost; and thereupon omit many fair opportunities of bringing manifold blessings to themselves.

For our parts we have just cause to judge, that as in other works of mercy, so in this, what is given is as seed sown, which will bring forth in due season a plentiful crop.

Sec. 20. *Of God's giving more than expected.*

That which the apostle says of their receiving this blessing unawares, gives us to understand that men in the good things which they do, oft receive more from the Lord than they looked for. Whereas it is said that 'the king asked life of God,' it is added that 'God gave it him, even length of days, and that for ever and ever,' Ps. xxi. 4. And where Solomon asked wisdom of God sufficient to govern his people, God gave him so wise a heart that there was none like him before him nor after him: yea, he gave him

also that which he asked not, both riches and honour, &c., 1 Kings iii. 12, 13. So where Hannah desired a son of God, God gave her three sons and two daughters. Ruth accompanieth her poor mother-in-law for the true religion's sake, and unawares she meeteth with a great prince of the tribe of Judah to be her husband: so as from her, though an alien, descended the Messiah, Ruth i. 16, 17, and iv. 13, Mat. i. 5. Saul goeth to a seer to inquire after his father's asses, and unawares heareth news of a kingdom intended to him, 1 Sam. ix. 6, 7, and x. 1. But to give a proof parallel to this of my text, yea, far exceeding it, the disciples that constrained a stranger, as they thought, to abide with them, entertained the Lord Jesus unawares, Luke xxiv. 29.

God doth thus exceed in his remuneration, to give evidence of his free grace and bountiful mind. To give what is not so much as thought on, argueth free grace. To give above expectation, argueth bounty.

What an encouragement is this for a Christian cheerfully to do his duty, and constantly to go on therein, referring the issue to God. He may do more than is desired or expected, yea, or thought on. For 'he is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think,' Eph. iii. 20.

Sec. 21. *Of applying to ourselves rewards given to others.*

Concerning the persons that unawares were thus recompensed, they are thus set down, *some*. Hereby the apostle himself infers that every one who performed that duty received not that particular recompense; yet he sets it down as a motive unto all. For all may be encouraged by that recompense which is given to some only.

This kind of argument is oft and much pressed in the New Testament; in the inference which this apostle makes in the beginning of the sixth verse of this chapter. Concerning God's imputing righteousness unto Abraham, who believed, the apostle infers that it was not written for his sake alone, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe, Rom. iv. 23, 24.

From God's delivering Lot out of Sodom, when it was consumed with fire, the apostle maketh this conclusion, 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly,' &c., 2 Pet. ii. 9.

This apostle having set down the many great rewards which God gave to the faith of his servants in the 11th chapter of this epistle, maketh this inference, 'Wherefore let us run with patience,' Heb. xii. 1.

On this ground saints of old pleaded for themselves God's former dealings with others: as Ps. xxii. 4, 5, 2 Chron. xx. 7, Neh. ix. 10. God's blessings on some are evidences of his good-will; of what is pleasing to him, and what he approves. For did he not approve such and such things, and were he not well pleased with them, certainly he would not bestow blessings on the

performers thereof, in reference to the doing of them. Now God is ever of the same mind, Job xxii. 13, Mal. iii. 6: what once he approveth he will ever approve; and what he approveth he will assuredly recompense.

This assuredly is the best and most proper use that we can make of God's former gracious dealing with saints registered in sacred Scripture—namely, to apply them to ourselves, and to be encouraged thereby to go on in such courses as they did: resting on this, that God approves us therein, and that he will recompense us some way or other.

They who read the acts of saints, and God's goodness to them, as mere histories of things done in former times, and apply them not to themselves, fail of the best use to be made thereof.

Wherefore to make a right use of the Scriptures, observe these few rules:

1. Exercise thyself in God's word, by reading and hearing it frequently, diligently: that thou mayest be well acquainted with the very letter and history of the Scripture.

2. Use all means to get understanding of the true sense and meaning thereof. For this end, prayer, meditation, conference, and diligent attending upon the public ministry, are good helps.

3. Believe what thou conceivest to be the true sense and intent thereof.

4. Apply it to thyself, so far as thou conceivest it any way belonging to thee: for whatsoever things were written before time, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope, Rom. xv. 4. This is a great point of prudence. The life, the power, the profit of the word consisteth herein.

5. Be a follower of those who are therein approved, so far as that which they did may concern thee.

6. For thy further encouragement, well observe all the effects and fruits that followed upon God's approving them.

Sec. 22. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 2.*

The sum of this verse is, a Christian's respect to strangers.

Two points are considerable hereabouts.

1. The inference of this verse upon the former; for it is a particular exemplification of the former, both in the duty of *love*, and also in the person, *brothers*.

2. The substance of the duty.

Herein two points are to be noted.

1. The manner of propounding the duty, in this phrase, *forget not*.

2. The matter whereof it consisteth.

About the matter is set down,

1. The duty itself.

2. A motive to enforce it.

About the duty,

1. The persons to whom it is enjoined are implied, namely, all to whom he wrote.

2. The kind of duty. Herein observe,

1. The persons to whom it is to be performed, *strangers*.

2. The manner of performing it, with *friendliness*.

The motive is,

1. Generally intended, in this particle, *for*.

2. Particularly exemplified; wherein is expressed,

1. The kind of recompense, *angels* came to them.

2. The ground thereof, God's special providence, *unaware*.

3. The persons recompensed, *some*.

Sec. 23. *Of the instructions raised out of Heb. xiii. 2.*

I. *Generals are to be exemplified by particulars.* The apostle exemplifieth that general rule of brotherly love by this particular of hospitality.

II. *Strangers are brethren.* The apostle giveth this instance of strangers to shew who are to be accounted brethren, and to whom brotherly love is to be shewed.

III. *Men are prone to neglect strangers.* The manner of setting forth the duty, under this phrase, *forget not*, implieth as much.

IV. *Strangers are to be regarded.* This is the very substance of the duty here enjoined.

V. *Hospitality is a bounden duty.* This is to *entertain* strangers.

VI. *Friendliness to be manifested to strangers.* The notation of the Greek word declareth as much.

VII. *The meekest may and must shew courtesy to strangers.* This I gather from the persons to whom he enjoins this duty.

VIII. *Hospitality shall be recompensed.* This particle *for* intends a recompense.

IX. *Angels come to saints with a blessing.* To this end mention is here made of angels coming to saints of old.

X. *God's remuneration exceeds man's expectation.* Those saints to whom angels came did not think of such guests. They entertained them *unawares*.

XI. *Rewards given to some are encouragements to all.* For this very end doth the apostle produce a recompense which was made to *some*.

Sec. 24. *Of remembering others' affliction.*

Ver. 3. *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.*

Another exemplification of that general grace of brotherly love, is compassion towards such as are in affliction.

Before this the apostle premiseth such an item as he did before the former, ver. 2, only that was negative, *forget not*; this affirmative, *remember*. Both import one and the same thing. See Secs. 12 and 90. See also Chap. ii. Sec. 55.

The word here, *μνησθεσθαι*, *remember*, compriseth under it all kinds of duties that are to be performed to such as are in any affliction; as to pray for them, to visit them, to comfort and encourage them, to relieve them, to do what we can for their ease, release, and liberty, to stir up others to do them good.

This word *remember* is here the more fitly used, in that remembrance of one's misery stirs up bowels of compassion, and puts men on to afford all manner of succour.

This is laid down as the ground of the compassion which God sheweth, where it is said that God 'had compassion' of his people. The ground thereof is thus set down, 'For he remembered that they were but flesh,' Ps. lxxviii. 38, 39. And again, 'The Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he remembereth that we are dust,' Ps. ciii. 13, 14. This is spoken of God after the manner of man.

On this ground saints call on God to remember them: 'Oh, remember that my life is wind,' Job vii. 7; 'Remember that thou hast made me as the clay,' Job x. 9; 'Lord, remember David and all his afflictions,' Ps. cxxxii. 1. This is most properly true of man. When the Israelites remembered Zion in her affliction, then they prayed for her, Ps. cxxxvii. 1, &c., Lam. iii. 19, 20. Hereupon the apostle, being in prison, calls upon those to whom he wrote to 'remember his bonds,' Col. iv. 18.

Remembrance of a thing brings to our mind an idea thereof, and doth set before us a kind of present view and sight thereof, which cannot but work upon the affection, and cause compassion. Titus his inward affection was the more abundant towards the Corinthians, whilst he remembered them, 2 Cor. vii. 15. Remembrance of a case causeth a more serious consideration thereof. But that which is not remembered is as not known, and so not heeded nor regarded at all: *ignoti nulla cupido*.

Surely this shews a main reason of men's neglect of such as are in any distress, and so remain in places whither they who neglect them use not to come. Though, it may be, they formerly knew or heard that they were in such and such distresses; yet not remembering that they are so, they clean neglect them: out of sight out of mind. Hence it comes to pass that clamorous and impudent beggars, who put men in mind of their miserable cases (though perhaps merely feigned), get more relief than such as are imprisoned, or otherwise more miserably afflicted, but out of sight.

It doth, without question, become Christians to be mindful of such as they have formerly known to be in any distress. For this end they ought,

I. To be inquisitive after the state and cases of such as they have cause to fear or surmise that they are in any distress. When Hanani came from Judah to the place where Nehemiah was, Nehemiah was inquisitive concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, Nch. i. 2; and being in-

formed of their great misery, he put himself on to do the good that he did for them.

2. To visit such as they hear to be sick, in prison, or any other like distress. This is commended in Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. i. 16, 17.

3. Oft to relieve those that are in distress. Not to think it enough that they have once relieved them, if at least they long continue in their distress. Frequent doing of a thing will keep the occasion of it in mind and memory. Paul commendeth the Philippians, that they had 'sent once and again unto his necessity,' Phil. iv. 16. And he exhorteth Christians not to be 'weary in well-doing,' 2 Thes. iii. 13, Gal. vi. 9. The foresaid Onesiphorus 'oft refreshed' Paul, 2 Tim. i. 16.

4. To be daily mindful of such in their prayers. This is an especial means to keep them in mind and memory, and to take opportunities of affording what needful succour they can unto them. St Paul testifieth, that without ceasing he made mention of the churches always in his prayers, Rom. i. 9, so 2 Tim. i. 3.

#### Sec. 25. Of professors being bound as malefactors.

They whom the apostle here exhorteth us to remember, are said to be *in bonds*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἀσπίων*, which setteth out such as are fast bound by cords, chains, manacles, fetters, or any other like means.

It doth here comprise under it all such as are for the gospel's sake restrained of liberty, as are,

1. Such as are imprisoned, as the apostles were, Acts v. 18.

2. Such as are put into the stocks, as a prophet was, Jer. xx. 2.

3. They that are both imprisoned and also put into the stocks, as Paul and Silas were, Acts xvi. 24.

4. Such as are manacled and fettered in prison, as Peter was, Acts xii. 6, 7.

5. Such as are cast into a dungeon, as the prophet was, Jer. xxxviii. 6.

6. Such as are committed to a soldier or other officer to be kept safe, Acts xxviii. 16, or such as are any other way restrained.

These cannot help themselves, therefore succour ought the rather to be afforded to them.

They whom the apostle here especially meaneth, were preachers and professors of the gospel, and for the gospel's sake so bound.

Malefactors use to be so dealt withal. They are kept fast that they might not make an escape, but be brought forth in due time to receive condign punishment. The preachers and professors of the gospel deserved no such matter, neither was there any fear of their making any escape unduly, yet were they dealt withal as malefactors. This hath been more fully cleared on Heb. xi. 36.

#### Sec. 26. Of succouring such as cannot seek it.

The apostle doth the rather put those to whom he wrote in mind of such as were bound, and would have them to be remembered, because, being so bound, they were not able to come themselves to make their case known to others.

All duties enjoined for their sakes who are restrained of liberty, are so many proofs of the equity of this point: as to visit the sick, James v. 14, or [such as] are in a prison, in a dungeon, or any other place of restraint, or such as are lame, impotent, or any way unable to seek succour themselves.

Christ takes special notice of this kind of kindness, to recompense the same, Mat. xxv. 36.

For our direction and encouragement hereunto, we have set before us,

1. The pattern of God himself. He offers and affords succour to such as seek it not, Isa. lxv. 1, Rom. ix. 30. This is set forth to the life in a parable of a young child cast out and left succourless, Ezek. xvi. 4, &c. Woe had it been with all mankind if God had not sought to man before man sought to God. Man was so far from first seeking to God, as when God first sought to man, man fled from him, Gen. iii. 8; but we must be followers of God, Eph. v. 1.

2. The example of the Son of God, who in the same manner doth good as his Father doth; freely of himself, before it be sought of him, even to such as neither did nor could seek it. 'When we were yet without strength,' 'while we were yet sinners,' 'when we were enemies,' 'when we were dead in sins,' Christ shewed mercy unto us, Rom. v. 6, 8, 10, Eph. ii. 1, 5. Christ professeth of himself that he 'came to seek and to save that which was lost,' Luke xix. 10. This he exemplifieth in divers parables, Luke xv. 4, &c. He first came to a people that sat in darkness, Mat. iv. 16. In the days of his flesh he went unto such as could not come to him, Mat. viii. 14, and offered relief before it was sought, Mat. iv. 32, John v. 6; but the same mind must be in us that was in Christ, Phil. ii. 15.

3. We have also the examples of such as have herein been guided by the Spirit of God. When Abraham heard that Lot was taken captive, he used means to rescue him, though no mediation were used unto him for that purpose, Gen. xiv. 14. When Nehemiah heard of the great affliction and reproach wherein the Jews were, of his own accord he went to them, and did great things for them, Neh. i. 4, &c. When Ebed-melech heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon, he used means to get him out, Jer. xxxviii. 7, &c. Job was 'eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame,' Job xxix. 15. The Samaritan, when he saw a man wounded and half dead, he succoured him, Luke x. 30, 33, 34. Now we must be followers of them that follow Christ, I Cor. xi. 1.

If we be not thus minded, many may perish for want of succour.

Jeremiah might have perished if Ebed melech had not of his own accord first afforded him succour.

This manner of being good giveth evidence that a spirit of goodness is in us, and that we do good for goodness' sake.

What may we now think of such as turn their eyes, ears, and hearts from such as come to them, make known their cases to them, call and cry to them for help and succour? Job maketh a great complaint of the hard-heartedness of his friends to him in such a case, Job xix. 14, 15, &c. Such are worse than he that is said neither to fear God nor regard man, and yet was moved by the importunity of a distressed widow to succour her. The doom of such is expressly set down, Prov. xxi. 13, and James ii. 13, 'They shall not be heard when they cry, but shall have judgment without mercy.'

Surely their mercy is too too scanty, who extend it to none but to such as by importunate clamours do in a manner force it from them. Such mercy may seem rather to be for their own ease, quiet, praise, or self-respect, some way or other, than for the Lord's sake, their brother's sake, or pity, mercy, and goodness' sake. What approbation, what remuneration can such look for from the Lord?

It will be our wisdom, and it is our duty, to take notice of this extent of mercy, and thereupon to be ready to hearken to such motions as shall be made unto us for such as are far off, or for such as are in hold, or any way bound, or such as are sick, or maimed, or lame, or any way so distressed as they cannot come to us. Yea, we ought to inquire after the estate of God's church and people, and go to prisons, and visit the sick, and such as are any way impotent.

#### Sec. 27. Of making others' distresses our own.

Both to incite and direct the Hebrews about that duty of remembering them that are in bonds, the apostle addeth this clause, *συσχεσµένων, as bound with them*. This also is the interpretation of one Greek compound word.

As an incitation, it implieth a due consideration of our own condition, which is subject to the like case. For though at one time we be at liberty, and not bound, yet at another time we may be bound and restrained of liberty; yea, at that time wherein others are in bonds, we also might have been in their case. We, therefore, being by the divine providence free, ought the rather to succour them that are not free.

As it is a direction, it importeth a sympathy and fellow-feeling of others' distresses, and that such a one as if we ourselves were in the like distress, and thereupon so pitifully and compassionately to deal with them and for them as it may be discerned that we could not be otherwise affected in our own case, nor could do or desire more to be done for ourselves.

Thus it setteth forth the manner and measure of succouring others, according to the tenor of the law

thus set down, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' Lev. xix. 18.

This point of succouring others, as if we ourselves were in their case, is much pressed in Scripture, as in these phrases: 'Bear ye one another's burden,' Gal. vi. 2; 'Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one towards another,' Rom. xii. 15, 16. So did he that said, 'I am as one that comforteth the mourners,' Job xxx. 25; and he that said, 'When they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth; I humbled my soul with fasting,' Ps. xxxv. 13; and another that said, 'Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?' 2 Cor. xi. 29. In this respect it is said to these Hebrews, 'Ye became companions of them that were so used,' Heb. x. 33.

God, though he be not capable of any distress, yet setteth himself forth so affected and so afflicted with the distresses of his church and children, as if he were in the like distress; for it is said of him that 'his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel,' Judges x. 16; and that his 'bowels were troubled,' Jer. xxxi. 20.

Such a mind worketh compassion. So much this apostle observeth, Heb. x. 33, 34. And compassion puts on to afford all the succour that is needful. The compassion of Pharaoh's daughter to do what she did to Moses, that was cast out, Exod. ii. 6. And the Samaritan, to do what he did to the man whom he found half dead, Luke x. 33. It is oft noted that Christ was hereby moved to afford that succour which, on all occasions, he afforded, as Mark i. 41, Mat. xiv. 14, Luke vii. 13. Yea, God himself is hereby said to be moved (but after the manner of man). 'He being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not,' Ps. lxxviii. 38. So 2 Kings xiii. 23, Dent. xxx. 3.

Surely they who forget those that are in bonds, in prison, in danger, in captivity, or any other way restrained, do not consider that their own case might be such a case. They think another's distress concerns not them at all. They neglect them, because they forget them. They forget, because they are not duly affected with their distress, as if it were their own.

Philosophers observe two extremes contrary to the duty here required.

One is, want of grief, or want of passion. This was their fault of whom the prophet thus saith, 'They are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph,' Amos vi. 6. The church thus complaineth of such, 'Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by?' Lam. i. 12.

The other is, rejoicing at others' distress. Of such Job thus complaineth, 'Now am I their song; yea, I am their byword,' Job xxx. 9. And David thus, 'I was the song of the drunkards,' Ps. lxxix. 12. And the church in her affliction thus, 'I was their song all the day,' Lam. iii. 11.



Against both these, severe judgments are denounced.

Against the former, this, 'Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive,' Amos vi. 7.

Against the latter, this, 'Because thou hast clapped thine hands and stamped with thy feet, and rejoiced in heart, with all thy despite against the house of Israel, behold, therefore, I will stretch out my hand upon thee,' &c., Ezek. xxv. 6, 7, and xxxv. 15.

The latter, of rejoicing at others' miseries, is, of the two, the worst. The psalmist maketh a direful imprecation against them, Ps. xxxv. 26. This was an evidence of sure and sore vengeance. For by an extraordinary and prophetic spirit he did it, and thereby declared what would fall upon them. So heinous a vice this is, as Job maketh an imprecation against himself, if he were guilty thereof, Job xxxi. 29, &c. It is expressly said by the wise man, that 'he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished,' Prov. xvii. 5.

It becometh us, as we see or hear of any distresses of others, near or far off, to lay them to heart, as if they were our own case, and answerably to do what we can for their good.

#### Sec. 28. Of the extent of charity.

To the former particular object of mercy, such as are *in bonds*, the apostle addeth a more general object, *κατασφραγισμένων*, thus translated, *them which suffer adversity*. This also is the interpretation of one Greek word, which properly signifieth *to be evil treated or afflicted*.

This compriseth under it all kind of afflictions, whether they come immediately from God, as grievous sicknesses, torturing diseases, troubles of conscience, hardness of heart, or any other such sore afflictions; or mediately arise from man, as mockings, scourgings, divers kinds of death, concerning which this very word is used, and translated 'tormented,' Heb. xi. 37.

All of both kinds require pity, compassion, and succour.

This general is fitly added to the former particular, to shew that mercy must be extended to all kind of misery.

To this tends that indefinite charge, 'Give to him that asketh,' Mat. v. 42, which is set out by another evangelist with a general particle, thus, 'Give to every one that asketh,' Luke vi. 30; and, 'Do good to all men,' Gal. vi. 10. These generals, as they include all persons, so all cases. So likewise doth the general object of mercy, expressed under these words, 'flesh,' 'neighbour,' 'brother.' 'Hide not thyself from thine own flesh' (Isa. lixii. 7), that is, from any that is compassed about with mortal, frail, corruptible flesh as thou art. The wounded man that lay in the highway was a 'neighbour' to the Samaritan (though he knew not whence he was), and thereupon he succoured him, Luke x. 33, &c. More expressly is this extent of mercy set down by the

number of 'seven and eight;' that is, all that need and are brought to our knowledge, Eccles. xi. 2. That number of seven and eight is synecdochically put for all of all sorts; and likewise by the express distinction of persons that are to be succoured, as the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, the widow, Deut. xxvi. 13; and by the several kinds of works whereby mercy is manifested, as to give meat to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; to take in a stranger, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, to go to them that are in prison, Mat. xxv. 35, 36. The object of mercy is not restrained to one kind of misery, need, or distress, but to all kinds.

The rule of charity is in three branches:

1. Our brother's necessity. In this respect it is said that Christ 'healed them that had need of healing,' Luke ix. 11.

2. Our own ability. On this ground Christ adviseth to 'give alms of such things as we have,' Luke xi. 41.

3. God's opportunity; that is, when God by his providence bringeth to my sight or knowledge such and such a distress, as in the case of the Samaritan, implied under this word, *κατὰ συγκυρίαν*, *by chance*, which noteth out God's secret providence, Luke x. 31.

All these three branches concerning the rule of charity, are thus joined together, 'Whoso hath this world's good' (this shews a man's ability), 'and seeth' (this pointeth at God's providence) 'his brother hath need' (this manifesteth a brother's necessity), 1 John iii. 17.

We may from hence infer, that the mercy which by many is very highly esteemed, cometh short of the true extent of mercy, and is too too scanty.

Some particular instances hereof are such as follow:

1. Some having a mind to build alms-houses, hospitals, or other like places of charity or piety, will do nothing to any in their distress, upon conceit that that is enough for them to do. Such works rightly done are warrantable and commendable, but yet such as so carry the matter may seem to be more vain-glorious than truly charitable.

2. The like may be said of such, as intending to leave a liberal legacy to some college or hospital, to maintain poor scholars and impotent persons, neglect all other opportunities of shewing mercy.

3. There be some that will be content to contribute some money to help those that are in distress; but utterly refuse to visit the sick, to go to prisoners, to take any pains about relieving others. Though the former ought to be done, yet the latter should not be neglected. Their charity is too lazy a kind of charity.

4. On the other side, there be others will take great pains in visiting prisoners, and sick folks, and with wholesome words will seek to comfort them that are in distress, but will not part with a penny to relieve any. This is too covetous a charity.

5. There be that will much solicit others to be

charitable, but do nothing themselves. This is a self-condemning charity.

6. Of a contrary disposition are others, who will profess to do what they can themselves for relief of the distressed; but they will not stir up any others. This is an unneighbourly kind of charity. If they think it a good duty for themselves to do, why do they not also provoke others to do good, and to partake of the reward? Besides, this kind of charity may prove too scanty, in that one alone cannot to purpose do that which by the help of many may be done. Many hands will lift up a heavy burden.

7. There may be that say they will pray for such as are in distress, but that is all which they will do. This is a disgraceful kind of charity, it bringeth a reproach upon the profession.

8. Many that are bountiful to friends and kindred will do nothing at all to such as are strangers. This kind of charity savoureth too much of self-love.

Thus some fail one way, some another, and thereby lose the glory of that which in part is well done; like the king of Israel, who, smiting his arrows on the ground thrice, and then stayed, lost that full conquest over his enemies, which otherwise he might have got, 2 Kings xiii. 18, 19.

Let us that are charitably minded extend our charity to all sorts of persons, to all kind of cases, according to the rule of charity before mentioned. Thus shall we do the more good to others, and receive the more comfort to our own souls: neither will failing in one needful point take away the glory of all. Therefore as an apostle adviseth to add grace to grace, 2 Pet. i. 5-7; so I advise in this case to join to brotherly love hospitality, to the succouring such as are restrained by sickness, imprisonment, bonds, or any other way; to these join distribution to the necessity of the saints; hereunto intercession for the oppressed, consolation to the troubled in conscience, and finally prayer for all. For he that said of one work of charity, 'Do this, said also of other works, Do this, and this also, 'What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder,' Mat. xix. 6.

Sec. 29. *Of the meaning of this phrase, 'as being yourselves also in the body.'*

As an incitation and direction to the forementioned extent of mercy, the apostle addeth this clause, *as being yourselves also in the body.* This is translated word for word, as it is in the original.

Some<sup>1</sup> take it in the very same sense as the former clause was, *as bound with them*, and understand the principal verb, as repeated in this clause, thus, 'remember them that are afflicted, as if ye yourselves also were afflicted in the body.' In this sense they take the word *body* synecdochically for the *person*: as if he had thus said, 'as if you yourselves also were afflicted in your own person.'

<sup>1</sup> Beza, Genevesens, aliqui.

This is a sense agreeable to the apostle's words, but not fully expressing the extent of the apostle's intent, and emphasis of his phrase.

2. Others by this phrase, *being in the body*, take a man's common natural condition to be meant, even a frail, weak, changeable estate, subject to all kind of miseries, as others are, and thereupon thus set out the sense of the phrase, 'as being in the body of those that are afflicted.'

3. There be<sup>1</sup> that take the word *body* mystically, for the mystical body of Christ, as if the apostle had pressed the spiritual union of Christians under Christ their head for a motive to work mutual compassion. And indeed it is a very forcible motive. It is plainly and pertinently pressed, 1 Cor. xii. 26.

Though in the general, the former clause, *as bound together*, and this, *as in the body*, may aim at the same scope, yet in particular they may be distinguished one from another, as the manner from the cause: the former especially setting out the manner, that is, with much compassion and fellow-feeling, 'as bound with them.' The latter leading us to a cause of mercy, even our common condition, being in the body as others, and also our spiritual union, being of the same mystical body.

Sec. 30. *Of compassion wrought by consideration of the common condition of all.*

The literal acception of this phrase, *as being yourselves also in the body*, doth shew that that common condition wherunto all are subject, should work compassion towards them which are in any adversity, in that we ourselves are also in the body, and are of such a constitution as others are, subject to the like adversity. This doth the apostle thus press, 'restore such a one as is fallen in the spirit of meekness, considering himself, lest thou also be tempted,' Gal. vi. 1. This is that thing which Job aims at, where he saith to his friends, 'if your soul were in my soul's stead, I would strengthen you with my mouth,' Job xvi. 4, 5. Hereby he intimates to his friends that they might be in such a case as he was. It is oft pressed upon the Israelites that they should remember that they were servants in the land of Egypt, and that thereupon they should shew mercy to servants, Deut. v. 14, 15. And that they should not oppress a stranger, because they were strangers in Egypt, Exod. xxiii. 9. God made men 'subject to like infirmities that other are,' to be priests, 'that they might have compassion on the ignorant,' Heb. v. 2. Yea, Christ himself took on him not only the nature of our infirmities, but also the infirmities of our nature, 'that he might be a merciful high priest,' Heb. ii. 17, and iv. 15.

1. The common condition of mankind makes a man more sensible of others' miseries, and that by experience of his own.

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, Junius, aliqui.

2. It convinceth him of that need wherein he himself may stand of others' help. For thereby he knows that his own state is alterable, and that he may be afflicted and distressed, as now he seeth another is, who is of the same mould and temper, of the same profession, who hath the same enemies, and is subject to the same temptations. Hard-hearted men, who are no whit moved at the cases of such as are in distress, do little think that they themselves also are in the body, that they are subject to such distresses. They provoke God to bring them to the like, or to a worse distress, and to harden the hearts of others against them, that by experience they may learn how ill it becometh him that is in the body to be unmerciful to them that are in distress. Severe and just judgment against such is thus denounced, 'He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy,' James ii. 13.

But what may be thought of them who have been in the same distress wherein they see others to lie, have no bowels of compassion, nor any ways afford any succour or comfort unto them? This was it for which Nehemiah was very angry at the nobles and rulers of Judah, that being themselves redeemed from slavery, did sell their brethren, Neh. v. 6-8. Because the children of Israel had been freed out of the land of Egypt, where they were in bondage, in memorial thereof, God ordained a law, that such Israelites as had been sold unto any of their brethren, should in the seventh year go out free, Deut. xv. 12, &c. Now, because in Zedekiah's time they did not shew this mercy to their servants, God threatened to give them into the hand of their enemies, Jer. xxxiv. 20. The servant that had a debt of ten thousand talents forgiven him, because he forgave not his fellow-servant a debt of a hundred pence, was 'delivered to the tormentors,' Mat. xviii. 24, &c. Learn we therefore to be otherwise minded.

Sec. 31. *Of the sympathy of the members of Christ's mystical body.*

The mystical sense of this phrase, *as being in the body*, sheweth that the mystical union that is betwixt Christians, should work a mutual compassion in Christians upon one another's distresses. For 'if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it,' 1 Cor. xii. 26. Thus was Nehemiah affected and afflicted with the affliction of those that were at Jerusalem, Neh. i. 3, 4. The apostle, in relation to the members of the mystical body, saith, 'Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?' By this sympathy upon the distresses of the members of Christ we gain assurance to our own souls, and give evidence to others, both of the reality of our union with others of that mystical body, and also of our persuasion of others with whom we sympathise, that they also are members of the same body. For it is a work of the same Spirit, as a sympathy of

natural members is an evidence that they are all animated by the same soul.

By this sympathy we shall be also induced to be helpful one to another, and so by consequence to the very body of Christ.

What now may be thought of such as are no whit at all moved with the afflictions of the church of Christ, or of the particular members thereof? Are they knit together by the same Spirit? Then the Spirit of Christ may be thought to have less efficacy to work on the spiritual members of Christ's body, than the soul of man to work on the members of a natural body; for these do always sympathise, 2 Cor. xii. 26.

The best that can be judged of such hard-hearted Christians, is,

1. That they err in their judgments about others, not thinking them to be true members.

2. Or that the flesh that remains in them, and the corruption thereof, stupefies their spiritual sense.

3. Or that the Spirit of Christ, some way or other provoked, withdraweth his effectual operation from them.

4. Or that they themselves are no true members; but by an outward profession make a mere show thereof.

Something or other is much amiss in them.

To prevent or redress such hard-heartedness, these rules are carefully to be observed:

1. Let such as profess themselves to be members of the mystical body, be indeed and in truth such as they profess themselves to be, or else cease to profess what they are not; that so there may not be expected of them that which in vain will be expected.

2. Let them judge of other professors according to the rule of love; which is to think the best and hope the best; to interpret all things in the better part. See Secs. 7, 9.

3. Let them take heed of grieving the Spirit of Christ, Eph. iv. 30, lest he withhold his operation, and withdraw that efficacy which he manifesteth in others.

4. Let them do what they can to suppress the remainder of corruption in them, that it carry not too great a sway, and make them neglect such duties as otherwise they should and would do.

5. Let them quicken up their own spirits hereunto; and, in case of spiritual senselessness, thus reason with their own spirit, and say, How is it, O my soul, that thou art thus senseless? shall every member of a natural body be more sensible of the case of another member than thou art of a member of Christ's body? By arguments labour to convince thy soul that such a disposition is very much unbecoming thy holy profession.

Sec. 32. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 3.*

The sum of this verse is a Christian's compassion at others' misery.

Here are offered two parts :

The first concerneth such as are restrained.

The other, such as are any way alllicted.

In the former is set down,

1. The duty to be performed.

2. The manner of performance, *as bound with them.*

In setting down the duty, two things are expressed,

1. The act, wherein the duty is performed, *remember.*

2. The persons to whom it is to be performed, *them that are in bonds.*

In the latter the act is understood, and two other points are expressed,

1. The object or persons that are to be succoured.

2. The motive, in this phrase, *as being yourselves also in the body.*

This may admit a literal interpretation, and imply a like common condition with others.

Or it may admit a mystical interpretation, and imply the near union of the members of Christ's mystical body together.

See. 33. *Of the instructions arising out of ver. 3.*

I. *Compassion at others' miseries is a fruit of brotherly love.* This I gather from the inference of this verse upon the first verse, wherein brotherly love is required.

II. *Others in distress must be remembered as well as strangers.* This I collect from the apostle's adding this exemplification of brotherly love to the other about strangers.

III. *Mindfulness of others' misery causeth mercy to be shewed to them.* The word *remember* intends thus much. See Sec. 24.

IV. *Saints are oft used as malefactors.* They were saints whom the apostle saith here were in bonds; and malefactors use to be in bonds. See Sec. 25.

V. *Succour must be afforded to such as cannot seek it.* They that are in bonds cannot go to seek succour, yet they must be remembered. See Sec. 26.

VI. *The causes of the distressed are to be made our own.* We must remember them that are bound, as if we ourselves were also bound with them, and so in their case. See Sec. 27.

VII. *Mercy is to be extended to all kind of misery.* They which suffer any adversity are to be remembered, as well as they who are in bonds. See Sec. 28.

VIII. *Man's common condition is a ground of mutual compassion.* This phrase, *as being yourselves also in the body*, in the literal acception of the words, intendeth so much. See Sec. 30.

IX. *Spiritual unity should work sympathy.* This is inferred from the mystical sense of these words, *as being yourselves also in the body.* See Secs. 29, 31.

See. 34. *Of this phrase, 'marriage is honourable.'*

Ver. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

From the duties which are to be performed to others, the apostle proceedeth to such as concern themselves; and declareth such duties as grace their profession, together with the contrary vices which disgrace the same.

The first grace that he commends is chastity, comprised under the means of preserving it, which is *marriage*. This the apostle here highly commendeth.

Of marriage I have largely treated in *Domestical Duties*, Treat. 2, Part 1, Sec. 1, &c.

Marriage is here commended by the honour thereof, *marriage is honourable.*

The Greek word, *γαμος*, signifieth that which is of high account or esteem.

It is attributed sometimes to persons; for where it is said that 'Gamaliel was had in reputation,' Acts v. 34, the Greek useth the same word that is here translated *honourable*.

Sometimes also it is attributed to things—as to the fruit of the earth, James v. 7; and to such stones as of all earthly things are most valuable, called precious stones, and joined with silver, gold, pearls, and other things of great worth, Rev. xviii. 12; yea, it is attributed to divine promises, 2 Pet. ii. 4; and to Christ's blood, 1 Pet. i. 19. In all these places it is translated 'precious.'

This word being thus applied to marriage, sheweth that it is an estate highly to be accounted of, and in that respect styled *honourable*.

In what respect marriage is honourable, hath been distinctly shewed in the foresaid book of *Domest. Dut.*, Treat. 2, Part 1, Sec. 23, &c.

The verb *is* in the original is not expressed word for word. It is thus, *marriage honourable*. Hereupon some understand a verb, *ἔστω*, of the imperative mood, which implieth a charge; but that is not so fitly understood.

1. It is most usual in Greek, when the verb is not expressed, to understand the indicative mood rather than the imperative. So the Greek fathers,<sup>1</sup> that have written upon this place, yea, and the Latin fathers<sup>2</sup> too; and protestant divines,<sup>3</sup> yea, and many popish expositors,<sup>4</sup> do here understand the indicative, as we in our English have expressed it. The Syriac doth express the indicative mood, *ܐܝܢܐ*, *est*.

2. The opposition betwixt this clause and the last clause of the verse, shew that this is rather a commendation of marriage, that it is honourable, than an injunction to make it honourable. For what consequence or dependence is this, Let marriage be honour-

<sup>1</sup> Chrys., Theod., &cum.

<sup>2</sup> Jerome, Comment in Mat. xiii. August. contr. Pelag. et Celest. lib. ii. cap. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Calv., Beza, aliique.

<sup>4</sup> Anselm., Cajet.

able, and a bed undefiled, but adulterers God will judge. The later clause should rather be a reason of the injunction, thus, Let marriage be honourable, *for* God will judge adulterers.

3. Marriage is here prescribed as a remedy against uncleanness, and in that respect thus commended, *is honourable*, as the best remedy that can be prescribed.

4. Marriage is positively declared to be honourable, as well as to be a bed undefiled.

5. That which an injunction expresseth will, by necessary consequence, follow upon the commendation of marriage. For it being granted that marriage is honourable, it followeth that it must be used as an honourable thing; chastely, holily, modestly, temperately, seasonably, so as it may prove to be a bed undefiled.

Sec. 35. *Of the extent of marriage, 'in all.'*

This phrase, *ἐν παντί*, *in all*, is so indefinite, as it may be referred to any of the genders, and to persons, or to things.

They who apply it to persons, thus translate it, 'among all,' or 'among all men;' meaning all sorts, degrees, conditions, or sexes; as males and females, kings and subjects, nobles and meaner, rich and poor, minister and lay-people, or of what calling and estate soever they be.

They who apply it to things, thus take it, 'every way,' or 'in everything' that appertain to marriage, or in all estates, whether of peace or trouble.

But it appears that the apostle here intends it of persons, because he opposeth it to these persons, 'whoremongers and adulterers.' For in that marriage is honourable in [or] among all men, God will judge whoremongers and adulterers, who might have used this remedy of marriage.

This general is to be limited to such as are fit for marriage, and to whom marriage is lawful; such are persons of different sexes, male and female, and of ripe years, not children; and free, not married nor contracted to another then living; and beyond the degrees of consanguinity and affinity forbidden in God's word; and are able to yield due benevolence to their yoke-fellow, not being born eunuchs, nor by any occasion impotent, in reference to the main marriage duty. All such marriages are no true marriages, but plain nullities.

Papists rank amongst these such as enter into religious orders (as they call them); but for this they have no warrant from God's word. See *Dom. Dut.*, Treat. 2, Part 1, Sec. 6.

Sec. 36. *Of the bed undefiled.*

This clause, *and the bed undefiled*, may be here taken as a further commendation of marriage. In this sense the copulative particle, *καὶ*, *and*, joineth two attributes appertaining to marriage together,

1. Honourable; 2. Undefiled. As if it were thus translated, 'and it is a bed undefiled.'

Or it may be taken as an explanation, shewing wherein marriage is honourable; namely, in that it is the bed undefiled. In this sense the copulative joineth two subjects together; namely, 'marriage, *and* the bed undefiled;' and makes them both honourable: as if he had said, 'marriage is honourable, and the bed undefiled is honourable.'

Both these in the general tend to the same scope.

This latter clause is added by way of prevention. For it might be objected, that married persons lie in bed together; and thence also inferred that it is polluted, and cannot be honourable. This is here prevented, in that the apostle addeth that that is the bed undefiled.

Some take this to be added by way of caution; that on this ground marriage is honourable, if the bed be kept undefiled.

I deny not but that the bed undefiled addeth much to the honour of marriage, and that the defiled bed taketh much from the honour thereof; yet marriage by virtue of the first institution thereof, is in itself honourable, though afterwards it may be dishonoured. A sacrament is in itself sacred, though by profane persons it be polluted.

*Bed, κοιτὴ*, is here metonymically taken for the conjugal act, which useth to be done in the bed: as a table is put for that which is done at the table; or for that which is set upon the table, 1 Cor. x. 21.

The simple verb, *μακάριον*, from whence this compound, *ἀμακάριον*, *undefiled*, is derived, signifieth to defile, Jude 8. A privative preposition added thereto implieth a freedom from pollution.

This privative compound useth to be applied to things perfectly pure, without any spot or blemish; as to the 'heavenly inheritance,' 1 Pet. i. 4; to 'pure religion,' James i. 27; and to Christ himself, Heb. vii. 27.

Here the marriage-bed is called *undefiled*, not simply, as if in the act of married persons there were no manner of pollution, no sin at all; but in regard of God's ordinance, and of the act considered in itself, and exempt from the frailties and faults of them that use it. Adam and Eve might have used it in their innocent estate. It is no more a defiled act, than to eat and to drink are. Well, therefore, is it here opposed to acts of uncleanness: namely, to whoredom and adultery.

In this respect married persons may live as chastely as single persons, whether male or female, if not more chastely. They were married wives whom the apostle exhorteth to be chaste, Tit. ii. 5.

Of matrimonial chastity, see *Domest. Dut.*, Treat. 2, Part 2, Sec. 4.

That which in itself is undefiled ought to be used, so far as in us lieth, without any pollution or defilement.

Though the marriage-bed be in itself the bed undefiled, yet by licentiousness it may be, and useth to be, too too much defiled. We must, therefore, pray that it may be sanctified to us; and we must use it with moderation and sobriety, having an eye to the right ends thereof, and carefully observing the directions of God's word thereabout.

Sec. 37. *Of fornication and adultery.*

The apostle, by way of opposition, produceth two vices, which much pervert the dignity and purity of marriage, as is evident by this particle of opposition, *ἐὰν, but*.

This I do the rather note against the manifest mistake of the vulgar Latin and Rheinst-English translation, and also against most of the popish expositors, who make the former clause an injunction to use marriage as an honourable thing, and to keep the bed undefiled, thus, 'let marriage be honourable in all, and the bed undefiled.' Hereupon they take this last clause as a reason to move men so to do, thus, 'for God will judge whoremongers and adulterers.' Yet they can produce no authentic Greek copy to justify that causal particle.

*Quest.* Wherein is the sin of whoremongers (it being between single persons) opposite to marriage? If not, why is it here brought in?

*Ans.* 1. Whoredom in the general is a base sin, and a bed defiled. In this respect it may well be brought in opposition to marriage, which is honourable, and the bed undefiled.

2. Marriage is a remedy to prevent fornication, 1 Cor. vii. 2. So as whoredom might have been prevented, if marriage had been duly used. Thus also it is opposite to marriage.

3. The Gentiles among whom the Hebrews lived, made too light account of whoredom; scarce thinking it to be simply a sin (this made the apostles to forbid it among indifferent things, Acts xv. 29.) Therefore this apostle here joineth it with adultery (as he doth in many other places), to move them the more to detest it.

4. Most of the particulars which aggravate adultery, aggravate also whoredom. Therefore the apostle might well join them together.

These two words, *whoremongers, adulterers*, are oft promiscuously used, and indefinitely put for all manner of uncleanness.

The first word, *πορνῶντες*, translated *whoremongers*, is oft translated *fornicators* as 1 Cor. v. 9-11, and vi. 9, Heb. xii. 16. The Greek word, *πορνῶς*, according to the notation thereof, signifieth to prostitute one's body for a price, or for gain. The root whence it cometh signifieth to sell;<sup>1</sup> thereupon they who commit uncleanness for gain, are said to sell their body;

or to set it, as we speak, to portsaill, Ezek. xvi. 33. This is the proper notation of the word; but it is also used for the sin of uncleanness, though no gain be intended thereby.

Most properly it is put for that sin which in this kind is committed betwixt single persons; so it is to be taken when *whoremongers* and *fornicators* are joined together, and distinguished the one from the other, as Gal. v. 19, and in sundry other places.

It is sometimes put for adultery itself, Mat. v. 32; sometimes for incest, 1 Cor. v. 1.

The other word, *μοιχεύωντες*, translated *adulterers*, is supposed to be taken from a Hebrew word, *כַּחֵה*, which signifieth to *put out*, or to *destroy*; as where it is said of an adulterer, 'His reproach shall not be wiped away' (*כִּמְחָה*), Prov. vi. 33. And where this advice is given, 'Give not thy strength to women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings' (*לְכַחֵה*), Prov. xxxi. 3. Those two texts of Scripture shew how fitly the notation of the Greek word is taken from the Hebrew. For nothing useth more to put out and destroy a man's state, name, body, and soul, than adultery.

The notation of our English word, *adultery*, is taken from the Latin, *adulterium*, and that from going, *ad alterius torum*, to another's bed. Thus is Reuben's incestuous adultery described, 'Thou wentest up to thy father's bed,' Gen. xlix. 4. And the adulteress enticeth a young man to her husband's bed, Prov. vii. 16-18.

As fornicators, so adulterers are indefinitely put for all kind of unclean persons, as in the seventh commandment.

Here these two words, *whoremongers* and *adulterers*, are distinguished one from another.

*Whoremongers* are such, as being both single persons, commit the sin of uncleanness betwixt themselves, as Shechem and Dinah did, Gen. xxxiv. 2.

*Adulterers* are such, as one of them at least, if not both also, is contracted or married. In that the same punishment was by God's law adjudged against him that defiled a virgin betrothed unto a husband, as to one that defiled a woman married, namely death, Deut. xxii. 22-24, it appears that the sin of the one and of the other is of the same kind, namely, adultery.

Having distinctly declared who are whoremongers and adulterers, and how they are distinguished one from the other, I will further endeavour to set out the heinousness of their sins, and remedies against them.

Sec. 38. *Of the heinousness of whoredom or fornication.*

In setting out the heinousness of the sins here mentioned by the apostle, it will be first meet to note out such points as declare the heinousness of them both; and then such aggravations as make adultery to exceed whoredom.

<sup>1</sup> Qu. 'adulterers'!—Ed.

<sup>1</sup> *πρῶτος* est et *υποπλοῦς*, *πρῶτος*, unde *πρῶτον* *πρῶτο*. Inde *πρῶτος*, qui se prostituit, et corpus suum vendit, meritorius. *πρῶτον*, meretrix.

The heinousness of fornication and adultery is herein manifested, that these sins are committed against God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

Against God, in that 'this is the will of God, even our sanctification, that we should abstain from fornication,' 1 Thes. iv. 3. A prophet thus aggravateth this sin: 'Have we not all one father? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?' Mal. ii. 10. The treachery there meant is the sin here spoken of, and that is committed against God, as our Father. It is also committed against the Son of God, in which respect the apostle thus expostulateth this case, 'Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid,' 1 Cor. vi. 15. And it is likewise committed against the Spirit of God, for the apostle thus again expostulateth the same case, 'What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?' 1 Cor. vi. 19. Thus is this sin committed against each person of the Trinity.

2. Against our neighbour, and that in sundry respects:

(1.) Against the party with whom the sin is committed, for it is always committed with another. Hereupon the brethren of Dinah, whom Shechem defiled, said, 'Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?' Gen. xxxiv. 31.

(2.) Against the children that are born in fornication, which are, in that respect, bastards. These by God's law could not inherit, 'The son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son,' saith Sarah, Gen. xxi. 10; which sentence God approved. By God's law, a bastard was not to enter into the congregation of the Lord to his tenth generation, Deut. xxiii. 2. By entering into the congregation of the Lord, is meant some special office and service whereby he had liberty to enter into the house of God.

That which is noted of Gilead's sons 'thrusting out Jephthah, and saying unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house, for thou art the son of a strange woman,' Judges xi. 2, sheweth that it was a custom among God's people to keep bastards from inheriting. The opposition which the apostle makes betwixt bastards and sons, in this phrase, 'then are ye bastards, and not sons,' Heb. xii. 8, sheweth, that bastards have not a right to the privilege of true sons.

(3.) Against the friends, kindred, and alliance of each party. It is expressly said of a priest's daughter that playeth the whore, that 'she profaneth her father,' Lev. xxi. 9. And the brethren of Dinah took themselves dishonoured in that their sister was defiled, Gen. xxxiv. 7.

(4.) Against the whole family. For this sin is 'a fire that consumeth to destruction,' Job xiii. 12. God thus threateneth David, 'The sword shall never de-

part from thy house, because thou hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife,' 2 Sam. xii. 10.

(5.) Against the very town, city, and nation, where such unclean birds do roost. For severe judgments have been executed upon those places, as we shall afterwards shew. This is one of the sins for which the prophet saith, 'the land shall mourn,' Hosea iv. 2, 3.

(6.) Against the church. For by the lawful use of marriage among professors of the truth, a godly seed is preserved, Mal. ii. 15. This is the seminary of the church, but by this sin a spurious brood is brought forth, and the church thereby destroyed.

3. This sin is committed against ourselves; even against our souls, bodies, name, and state; and against these in an especial manner.

(1.) It is expressly said of him that committeth adultery, that 'he destroyeth his own soul,' Prov. vi. 32.

(2.) It is said, that 'he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body,' 1 Cor. vi. 18. He maketh this very body the instrument whereby that sin is committed. Other actual sins are said to be 'without the body,' that is, some other object that is without the body is abused and made the instrument of sin in other cases; as wine in the sin of drunkenness.

(3.) Who so committeth adultery 'getteth a wound and dishonour, and his reproach shall not be wiped away,' Prov. vi. 32. Infamy, or an ill name is hereby set out.

(4.) Such bring themselves to extreme poverty. For 'by means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread,' Prov. vi. 26, that is, his state is much impaired, and even consumed, he hath not enough for his own sustenance.

Thus hath the Holy Ghost set forth the heinousness of both these sins of uncleanness. Adultery admits of further aggravations.

#### Sec. 39. *Of the aggravations of adultery above fornication.*

1. Adultery is expressly mentioned in the seventh commandment, which is this, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' Exod. xx. 14. It is counted an aggravation of a sin to be by name expressed in any of the ten commandments. For therein it is made a head of many other sins.

2. Adultery makes the nearest and firmest bond wherewith two persons are joined together, dissoluble. That bond is marriage, whereby two distinct persons are made one flesh, Gen. ii. 24. It is by God's ordinance an inviolable bond, and ought not to be dissolved, but by diremption, which is, by severing man and wife by death. But that adultery makes this bond of marriage dissoluble, is evident by this restriction of Christ, 'saving for the cause of fornication,' Mat. v. 32, meaning adultery.

3. Adultery nullifies a special covenant of God. This phrase, 'the wife of thy covenant,' Mal. ii. 14, intendeth a covenant made before God, whereof God is the author, Gen. ii. 18, and a witness, Mal. ii. 14, and in that respect called 'the covenant of God,' Prov. ii. 17.

4. Adultery makes an incurable wound. For 'jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance: he will not regard any ransom,' &c., Prov. vi. 34, 35. It is not so in the case of fornication, for a recompense is set down in that case, Deut. xxii. 29.

5. By adultery the affections of married persons are so alienated, as they are brought many times to wish and practise one another's death.

6. By adultery a spurious brood may be put in the room of legitimate children, and false heirs enjoy that inheritance which belongeth to true children, which we have shewed in the former Section to be against law and right, Gen. xxi. 10, Judges xi. 2.

7. By adultery the goods of the family cannot be but much wasted: the adulterous husband spending that wherewith he should provide for his family on his harlot: and the adulterous wife purloining what she can from her husband. Herein they shew themselves worse than infidels, 1 Tim. v. 8.

8. Adultery is by God's law judged to be a capital crime, Deut. xxii. 22. But fornication not so, Deut. xxii. 29.

9. The very heathen, by the light of nature, did judge this sin to be worthy of death. For Nebuchadnezzar 'roasted in the fire two men for committing adultery with their neighbours' wives,' Jer. xxix. 22, 23.

10. Adultery is made worse than theft, Prov. vi. 30; yet theft amongst us is accounted worthy of death.

*Obj.* Lust is a violent passion, and a man is more put on to adultery, than he can be to theft.

*Ans.* There may be a greater instigation to steal, namely, to satisfy a man's hunger, Prov. vi. 30, than to commit adultery. Though lust be violent, yet married persons have a ready remedy to allay it, which is a seasonable use of the lawful marriage duty.

Sec. 40. *Of God's judging fornicators and adulterers.*

This act of *judging*, attributed to God, hath reference,

Sometimes to all sorts indefinitely.

Sometimes distinctly to the righteous, or distinctly to the unrighteous.

In the indefinite respect it is used two ways:

1. To set out God's righteousness governing the whole world; and his equal dealing with all men. Thus it is said of God, 'He shall judge the world in righteousness,' Ps. ix. 8.

2. To demonstrate God's rewarding every one according to his works, as where it is said, 'How shall God judge the world?' Rom. iii. 6. His rewarding of all is thus set out especially at the last day: 'In the day when God shall judge,' &c., Rom. ii. 16.

Distinctly in reference to the righteous, it implies,

1. God's trying their truth and integrity, 'Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity: examine me, O Lord, and prove me,' Ps. xxvi. 1, 2.

2. His determining their cause, 'The Lord judge between me and thee, and see and plead my cause,' &c., 1 Sam. xxiv. 12, 15.

3. His justifying them by revenging their adversaries, Ps. ix. 4, 5.

4. His chastening them here, to prevent their eternal damnation, 1 Cor. xi. 32.

In reference to the unrighteous, it signifieth,

1. To revenge them in this world. Rev. vi. 10.

2. To condemn them in the world to come, Luke xix. 22, compared with Mat. xxv. 30. In these two last respects is this word *judge* here used.

Concerning God's judging these sinners, it is in general said, that 'because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience,' Eph. v. 6. Particular judgments are either such as God mediately by the ministry of man inflicteth on these kinds of sinners, or such as immediately he sendeth down from himself.

Mediate judgments by the ministry of men, are either extraordinary, or ordinary.

Of extraordinary mediate judgments, we have these instances:

Phinehas his thrusting through with a javelin Zimri and Cosbi in their tent, Num. xxv. 6, 7, &c. And the sons of Jacob destroying the Shechemites, Gen. xxxiv. 25, &c. And the Israelites destroying almost the whole tribe of Benjamin, Judges xx. 48. And Absalom's destroying his brother Amnon, 2 Sam. xiii. 29, 32.

The ordinary mediate judgment against adulterers was death. The law for this is expressly set down, Deut. xxii. 22. This judgment was in use among God's people even before the law of Moses, for Judah adjudged Tamar his daughter to be burnt for this sin, Gen. xxxviii. 24. The very heathen by the light of nature saw the equity hereof. For Abimelech charged all his people not to touch Isaac or Rebekah upon pain of death, Gen. xxvi. 11.

Some take this touching, especially of Isaac's wife, to be of committing adultery with her. But more clear is that instance which the prophet Jeremiah giveth concerning the king of Babylon's roasting in the fire Zedekiah and Ahab, because they committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, Jer. xxix. 22, 23.

Heathen authors give us many instances of the practice of states among the Gentiles, in putting adulterers to death.



The Arabians used so to do.<sup>1</sup>

Draco's law among the Athenians judged adultery to be a capital sin.<sup>2</sup>

The Goths used to put adulterers to death.<sup>3</sup>

The laws of the Romans, called the twelve tables, did also make adultery to be a capital offence. So did the Julian law. Thus was it also among the Romans in the days of Augustus Cæsar.

Judgments immediately from God have been of divers sorts: as,

1. Upon particular persons: namely, those four and twenty thousand which died of a plague for committing adultery with the daughters of Moab, Num. xxv. 9.

2. On cities. The prophet declareth this sin to be one cause of that extraordinary judgment that was executed on Sodom, and the cities near unto her; he saith, 'they committed abomination,' Ezek. xvi. 50, hereby he means their buggery and other kinds of uncleanness.

3. Upon nations. God expressly saith, that the land where Israel dwelt 'spued out the nations that were before them' for sins of uncleanness, Lev. xviii. 27, 28.

4. Upon the whole world. For concerning the old world which was destroyed with a flood, it is said that 'the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose,' Gen. vi. 2. Their adulteries are hereby described, and set down as a special cause of the general deluge.

More particularly, kinds of judgment may distinctly be considered as inflicted in this world, or in the world to come.

In this world, while they live, or after their death. While they live, temporal or spiritual.

Temporal judgments inflicted in this life on unclean persons are,

1. In their name, shame and disgrace, as we noted before, Sec. 38.

2. In their body, sundry diseases. God saith of an adulteress, that he would 'cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation,' Rev. ii. 22. By casting into a bed, diseases which force persons to keep their bed are meant.

3. In their state, with extreme poverty, as was shewed, Sec. 38.

4. In their soul, with terror of conscience. Certainly David was herewith sorely punished, who, in that psalm which he penneth as a testimony of his repentance for his adultery, thus prayeth, 'Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice,' Ps. li. 8. Under that metaphor of broken bones, terror of conscience is signified. Hardness of heart, and a reprobate sense,

<sup>1</sup> Strabo, lib. xvi., *Geog.*—Euseb., *De Prep. Evang.*, lib. vi. cap. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Pausan., in *Beot.*

<sup>3</sup> Procop., lib. i., *De Bel. Gothic.*

bath seized on others. These are spiritual judgments inflicted in this life.

5. All manner of bitterness: 'The end of a strange woman is bitter as wormwood, and sharp as a two-edged sword,' Prov. v. 4. By experience the wise man thus saith of such a one, 'I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets,' &c., Eccles. vii. 26.

6. A miserable death, which the wise man, speaking of an adulterer and adulteress, thus expresseth, 'He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart smite through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life,' Prov. vii. 22, 23.

After death his infamy continueth, for 'his reproach shall not be wiped away,' Prov. vi. 33; and this sin is 'a fire that will root out all his increase,' Job xxxi. 12.

In the world to come whoremongers and adulterers are judged,

Privatively and positively.

Privatively with pain of loss, *pæna damni*, for such 'shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' 1 Cor. vi. 9, Gal. v. 19, 21, Eph. v. 5.

Positively with pain of sense, *pæna sensus*, for 'whoremongers shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,' Rev. xxi. 8.

Sec. 41. *Of the reasons why God is said to judge whoremongers and adulterers.*

God is said to judge those sinners upon sundry weighty grounds:

1. Because these sins use to be committed in secret and close places, where no other person can see them. 'The eye of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me,' Job xxiv. 15: 'When there were none of the men of the house within,' Joseph's mistress tempted him to uncleanness, Gen. xxxix. 11, 12. God, by his prophet, saith of David's adultery, 'Thou didst it secretly,' 2 Sam. xii. 12. Therefore, that such sinners might not go unpunished, the Lord ('whose eye is in every place, beholding both the evil and the good,' Prov. xv. 3) judgeth them.

2. Because great and mighty men on earth, who think, by their greatness and power, to escape unpunished for all that man can do against them, are exceedingly bold in committing these sins. God taketh upon him to revenge them. God 'scattereth the proud, and putteth down the mighty,' Luke i. 51, 52.

3. Because men that are in place to punish these sins, use to be too remiss in punishing them. Though God's law, and the light of nature, as was shewed, Sec. 40, judge adultery to be a capital crime, yet since Christ's time, Christian commonwealths and states have taken away that just punishment. When

men wax remiss in executing condign punishment, God will judge. Because Eli restrained not his sons, God sware that the iniquity of Eli's house should not be purged with sacrifice, 1 Sam. iii. 13, 14.

4. Because men take such an insatiable delight in these things, as there needs more than ordinary terror to restrain them, even the terror of the Almighty. To restrain men from sin, the apostle thus useth this motive, 'Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men,' 2 Cor. v. 11: 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' Heb. x. 31. They therefore that fear not men, 'who can but kill the body,' may fear God, 'who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell,' Luke xii. 4, 5.

5. Because it is a great aggravation of the sins themselves, to hear that God will judge such as commit them, as if all that man can do were not a sufficient revenge of those sins.

Sec. 42. *Of the unlawfulness of brothel-houses or stews.*

That which hath been said of the heinousness of fornication and adultery, and of God's judging the same, affords a demonstration of the unlawfulness of tolerating stews or brothel-houses in a Christian state. God's wrath must needs be much incensed thereby, and be provoked to rise up in judgment against that state. By them many are enticed both to fornication and adultery, which otherwise might not fall into those actual sins. Not only single persons, but also such as are or have been married, may by them be induced to commit those unclean sins. Yea, a father and a son, or two brothers, may ignorantly be thereby brought to commit uncleanness with one and the same woman, and so fall into the abominable sin of incest. That which in the law is spoken against a sodomite, Deut. xxiii. 17, is taken to be meant of such as keep brothel-houses, in which respect they are expressly forbidden.

Some, in defence of them, allege a necessity, in regard of the violence of lust.

Ans. 1. We may not do evil that good may come thereof, Rom. iii. 8.

2. There be other means for suppressing the violence of lust, as moderate diet, fasting, watching, diligence in a man's calling, fervent prayer, &c.

Tolerance of stews remaineth as a strong evidence of the impurity of the church of Rome. As their idolatry makes them guilty of spiritual adultery, so this of corporal. It declares their practice to be unclean, as their doctrine is unsound.

Sec. 43. *Of magistrates' remissness in punishing adultery.*

The doom which is here denounced of God's judging adulterers, implieth a secret taxation of magistrates' remissness thereabouts. It is to be feared that this hath been one cause of sundry severe judgments

which have been from time to time inflicted upon this kingdom. Though there be no law directly to tolerate stews, or to justify and countenance whoredom and adultery, yet these sins, whereby God is so much provoked, are too frequent amongst us, either by the connivance of magistrates, or by their neglect of putting laws in execution, or by their corruption in taking bribes, or by some other indirect course. Among other sins, this was one, namely, that the sons of Eli 'lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle, and that their father restrained them not,' which provoked God to swear that 'the iniquity of Eli's house should not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever,' 1 Sam. ii. 22, and iii. 13, 14.

Sec. 44. *Of men's impudency in continuing in adultery.*

It is a great aggravation of the hardness of their heart, and obstinacy of their will, who hear the severe doom, that God will judge whoremongers and adulterers, and yet persist in these sins. This aggravation lieth against very many; for what sins are now more rife? These are like to our common swearers. The Lord hath expressly said that he 'will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,' Exod. xx. 7; that is, he will surely judge him; and yet how bold are most in taking the name of God in vain! I do the rather join these together, because of the like judgment denounced against both. On this ground we may complain as the prophet did, Jer. xxiii. 10, 'The land is full of adultery; because of swearing the land mourneth.' What is this but to dare God to judge us?

Sec. 45. *Of the matter of humiliation by reason of adulteries.*

Both the heinousness of whoredom and adultery (set out, Sec. 38), and the heavy judgment thereof (declared, Sec. 40), give great and just occasion to such as are guilty of these sins, yea, and to others that live among them, to be deeply humbled for the same, fearing lest God should rise in judgment against them. 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' Heb. x. 31. 'For our God is a consuming fire,' Heb. xii. 29. It may well be thought that this was the especial sin which moved the woman that was called 'a sinner,' that lay upon her soul, and moved her to 'stand at Jesus's feet behind him' (as ashamed to look him in the face), and to 'wash his feet with tears, and to wipe them with the hair of her head,' Luke vii. 37, 38. These were symptoms of deep humiliation; such sinners have great cause to judge themselves, the rather, that they may not be judged of the Lord. 'For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord,' 1 Cor. xi. 31.

Being thus deeply and duly humbled, we ought earnestly to supplicate mercy, and to say, 'Enter not

into judgment with thy servant,' Ps. cxlii. 2. With that earnestness doth David supplicate mercy in this kind, Ps. li. 1, &c.

Sec. 46. *Of avoiding the sins which God will judge.*

Among other sins these and other like unto them which God will judge, are most carefully to be avoided: and that by reason of the difference betwixt God and men, in these especial respects:

1. Many things may be concealed from men, Gen. xxxi. 35. Nothing from God, Prov. xv. 3.

2. Men may be moved by friends, bribes, fair promises, or other like means, 2 Sam. xiv. 21, 1 Sam. viii. 3, Ezek. xiii. 22, Esth. iii. 8, 9, 1 Kings xx. 34. But God by no such means, 1 Sam. ii. 25, Job xxxiv. 19.

3. Crimes may be extenuated before men. But God knoweth all things in their utmost extremities.

4. Men may be rescued from men, 1 Sam. xiv. 45, Acts xxiii. 10. But who can rescue any out of God's hand? Hosea xiv. 5, Isa. xliii. 13.

5. The uttermost that men can do is to 'kill the body;' but God 'can cast both body and soul into hell,' Luke xii. 45.

Sec. 47. *Of remedies against whoredom, adultery, and other sins of uncleanness.*

For the better understanding and better retaining such remedies as in this case shall be propounded, I will set them forth in a plain, but very pertinent comparison: which is about liquor in a pot.

Lust in man is as such liquor in a pot over the fire.

Now there are four ordinary ways to keep the liquor from boiling over the pot.

1. By taking off the lid. 2. By stirring the liquor. 3. By pulling away fuel. 4. By blowing cold breath, or putting some cool thing into it.

1. By taking off the lid, hot vapours are let out; thus may lust be let out by a lawful using of the marriage duty, which the apostle calls 'due benevolence,' 1 Cor. vii. 2, 3. For this end they that are not married ought to marry, 1 Cor. vii. 2. And they who are married ought to delight in their bedfellow, Prov. v. 19.

2. As a seething pot is cooled by stirring, so may lust be kept down by man's diligence in his calling. By this means the body of man is exercised, and his mind busied, and thus he kept from idleness, which is a great cause of lust. Idleness is noted to be one of the causes of the sodomitical pollutions, Ezek. xvi. 49. This also is noted to be the cause of David's committing adultery, 2 Sam. xi. 2-4. As a standing pool gathereth most mud, so doth lust increase in idle packs.<sup>1</sup> The devil is least idle when we are most idle. The house which is said to be empty and swept,

<sup>1</sup> *Hæc sunt jucundi causa cibisque mali.—Ovid. 4, De Remed. Amor.*

whereunto the unclean spirit re-entered with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, setteth out an idle person, Mat. xii. 43, &c.

3. As a pot is cooled by pulling away fuel from the fire, so lust by removing occasions, which are such as these:

(1.) Fulness of bread—that is, gluttony, under which drunkenness may be comprised, and fulness of pleasures. The great sin of Sodom was lust, this is one cause thereof, mentioned Ezek. xvi. 49. By drunkenness was Lot brought to his uncleanness, Gen. xix. 33.

(2.) Corrupt communication. 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' 1 Cor. xv. 33. Therefore the apostle forbiddeth all such communications, Eph. iv. 29.

(3.) Immodest spectacles, lascivious representations on a stage, wanton places, amorous books, &c.

(4.) Lewd company, which is as pitch; touch pitch and it defileth. This is it which the wise man intendeth about fire, Prov. vi. 27, 28, young men's and maids' dalliance: so husbands and wives of others, without just cause, are occasions of whoredom and adultery.

(5.) Garish apparel. Men and women's strange apparel do stir up lust in themselves, so likewise in others also, especially when such parts as ought to be covered are left naked. A strumpet is set out to allure others by her apparel, Ezek. xxiii. 40, Prov. vii. 16.

(6.) Lascivious dancing and masking, Mat. xiv. 6, 7.

4. As cool things, whether breath, cold water, or any other like thing, cool a seething pot, so the graces of God's Spirit are an especial means to keep down lust, as a fear of God, Gen. xxxix. 9. The sin of uncleanness is commonly committed in secret, but nothing is of more force to suppress such things as are concealed from man's eye, as a true fear of God. Spiritual prudence is also of force for this end; Solomon saith that wisdom and understanding will deliver a man from the strange woman, Prov. ii. 15, 16.

Watchfulness also is of special use to keep down lust. Watchfulness, I say,

(1.) Over the heart. 'Lust not after her beauty in thy heart,' Prov. vi. 25.

(2.) Over the eyes. For this end Job 'made a covenant with his eyes,' Job. xxxi. 1. As light goeth through windows, so lust through the eyes, Gen. vi. 2, and xxxiv. 2, 2 Sam. xi. 2.

(3.) Over the ears; that they hearken not to enticing speeches. 'With much fair speech a strumpet caused a young man to yield; with the flattering of her lips she forced him,' Prov. vii. 21.

(4.) Over the tongue. For this end the apostle adviseth that 'uncleanness be not named' amongst Christians: 'neither filthiness nor foolish talking,' Eph. v. 3, 4.

(5.) Over the lips, to be kept from wanton kisses. Kissing was another means whereby the strumpet allured the young man, Prov. vii. 13.

(6.) Over the hands, from lascivious touching. 'Whosoever toucheth a strumpet shall not be innocent,' Prov. vi. 29.

(7.) Over the feet. 'Go not astray in her paths,' Prov. vii. 25.

(8.) Over company. 'Be not partakers with them,' Eph. v. 7.

(9.) Over diet, that we be not overtaken as Lot was, Gen. xix. 31.

(10.) Over our apparel, Ezek. xxiii. 6, 15, 40.

As watchfulness, so fasting is an especial means of beating down the body, 1 Cor. ix. 27, whereby lust is cooled.

Though all these endeavours on man's part be not sufficient, yet they may prove good helps to the suppressing of lust. Licentious liberty about the fore-named points is a great cause of increasing lust.

Finally, pray earnestly and instantly against these sins; even as Paul did against the thorn in the flesh which much molested him, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8.

Sec. 48. *Of the words whereby covetousness is expressed.*

Ver. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness, &c.*

Branches of the eighth commandment, even such as concern our estate, are laid down in this verse.

The first branch is against covetousness.

The word, *ἐπιθυμία*, translated *conversetion*, implieth the course of a man's life, or his practice and dealing with other men; and intendeth that a man should so carry himself as in all his dealings to shew he hath not a covetous disposition.

The word, *ἀφιλάργυρος*, translated *without covetousness*, is a double compound. The simple word *ἀργύριος*, signifieth *silver*; the first compound, *φιλος*, *love*. Silver is the most usual commodity which man exchangeeth for other commodities, and it is put for all manner of riches, because by it all earthly things use to be purchased: men ordinarily desire it, and treasure it up, and never think they have enough of it. In this respect a covetous man is styled a *lover of silver*; and a lover of silver is put for a covetous man.

The other compound is a privative or negative particle, and thereupon denies what the former compound affirmeth. That signifieth a *lover of silver*, or *covetous*; this *no lover of silver*, or *not covetous*.

There is another word, *ἐπιμέλειαν*, used in the Greek Testament to set out one that is covetous, which, according to the notation of it, signifieth *to have more*; intending a desire of having more and more, so as it is never satisfied.

Both the words do set out the nature of a covetous man.

This sin of covetousness being here in the practice

thereof expressly forbidden, I intend distinctly to declare these four points:

1. What the nature of covetousness is.
2. Wherein the practice thereof consisteth.
3. How heinous a sin it is.
4. What remedies may be prescribed against it.

Sec. 49. *Of the nature of covetousness.*

Covetousness is an immoderate desire of riches. The apostle implieth as much, under this phrase, *βουλόμενα πλουτεῖν, they that will be rich*, 1 Tim. vi. 9; under that word, *will*, a desire, and that unsatiable desire, is comprised. The notation of both the words before mentioned, namely, *love of silver* and *desire of having more*, do demonstrate that covetousness consisteth in a desire.

Desire of riches is not simply covetousness, for a man may lawfully pray for them. So much is intended in the fourth petition. Now what a man may pray for, he may desire, with the same limitations as he may pray for it. Therefore it is an immoderate desire; that is, when a man is not content with that portion which God by his providence in a lawful and warrantable course doth afford unto him, but (according to the apostle's phrase) *he will be rich*; he will have more than God alloweth him in a fair way; and if he cannot otherwise get more, he will be discontent.

The general object of covetousness is riches. Under this word all the commodities of this world are comprised, and withal abundance of them, yea, more than is necessary. Things necessary may be desired, but not superfluity, Prov. xxx. 8.

This sin is especially in the heart. One may have little, and yet be covetous; and one may be rich, and yet free from covetousness.

Sec. 50. *Of the practice of covetousness in getting wealth.*

Covetousness is practised three ways:

1. In getting. 2. In keeping. 3. In spending what a man hath.

1. When wealth is gotten unconscionably or immoderately, it is a sign of a covetous heart.

That is said to be unconscionably gotten which is gotten against any duty whereunto conscience is bound, as—

1. Against any particular precept. Therein Achan covetously transgressed, Josh. vii. 21.

2. Against piety; as they which buy and sell on the Sabbath-day for gain, Neh. xii. 16.

3. Against justice; as Ahab, who by Naboth's unjust death got his vineyard, 1 Kings xxi. 19.

4. Against charity; as the rich man that took the poor man's sheep to entertain his friend, 2 Sam. xii. 6.

5. Against equity; as Gehazi, who got that which his master refused, 2 Kings v. 20.

6. Against verity; as Ananias and Sapphira with

a lie kept back part of that which was devoted to the church, Acts v. 2.

7. Against all these; which was Judas his sin in betraying his Master for thirty pieces of silver, Mat. xxvi. 15.

Whatsoever is by force or fraud, by stealing, lying, or any other indirect course gotten, is an effect of covetousness. It argueth an over-greedy desire. If it were not so, no means would be used but that which is lawful; and in the use of them men would depend on God, and be content with that portion which he by his providence affords them.

An immoderate getting is, when men spend their wit, pains, and time in getting the goods of this world, and rather than fail, lose their meal's meat, and sleep, and other refreshments, yea, and neglect the means of getting heavenly treasure: they are only and wholly for the things of this world. If spiritual and temporal blessings cannot stand together, temporals shall be preferred and spiritual neglected: as the Gadarenes, for fear of losing more swine, prayed Christ to depart from their coast, Mark v. 17; and they who, for their farm and oxen's sake, refused to come to the Lord's supper, Luke xiv. 18, &c.

Sec. 51. *Of the practice of covetousness in keeping wealth.*

Covetousness in keeping wealth is practised two ways:

1. When men hoard up all that they can, though they have enough for the present, yet fearing want for the future, treasure up whatsoever they can get. So did the rich fool in the Gospel. His ground bearing fruit plentifully, his mind was presently set upon enlarging his barns to lay up for many years to come, Luke xii. 16, &c. The wise man doth set out this covetous practice, 'There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches,' Eccles. iv. 8. These are they that take thought for the morrow; that is, care and care for the future time, which Christ expressly forbiddeth, Mat. vi. 34. They think that whosoever want, they will not.

2. When men hoard up only for themselves, they care not what treasure for the future the commonwealth or the church hath against times of need and trial, nor do they care for the flock of the poor.

Sec. 52. *Of the practice of covetousness in spending.*  
A covetous practice in spending is manifested two ways:

1. By spending too sparingly and too niggardly in all things, as when men live under their degree and place, when they regard not decency in apparel or other like things, when they afford not necessities to themselves or to those that are under their charge—these are pinch-pennies. Thus doth the wise man

set out such a one, 'A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth: yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof,' Eccles. vi. 2.

2. By being too prodigal in some things, as in housekeeping, in apparel, in their pleasures on themselves, wives, and children, but are too strait-handed in all works of charity, and in contributions to church and state. Nabal was such a one. He made a feast in his house 'like the feast of a king;' but yet refused to refresh David's soldiers in their necessity with any part of his provision, 1 Sam. xxv. 11, 36. And such a one was Dives; he was 'clothed himself in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day,' yet refused to feed Lazarus with the crumbs that fell from his table, Luke xvi. 19, &c. These may be counted pound-prodigal, and penny-covetous.

Sec. 53. *Of the heinousness of covetousness.*

There are many circumstances concerning covetousness which do much aggravate the heinousness thereof; for,

1. It is a deceiving sin; it blinds the understanding and corrupts the judgment in a main point of happiness: for the covetous man 'maketh gold his hope, and fine gold his confidence,' Job xxxi. 24. This is further manifest by the titles that are usually given to it, as 'substance,' and 'goods.' They who get much wealth, are said to be made for ever; and they who lose much, to be undone for ever. The rich man, when his corn exceedingly increased, thus saith to his soul, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry,' Luke xii. 19. Upon this conceit of happiness, wealth so stealthily away a man's heart, and so inflames his affections, as he maketh it his god. Justly therefore is a covetous person called an idolater, Eph. v. 5; and covetousness idolatry, Col. iii. 5.

2. It is an unsatiable sin. 'He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase,' Eccles. v. 10. In this respect covetousness is like a dropsy, which increaseth thirst by much drinking; and like a fire, which by addition of fuel is the more fierce. The desire of a covetous man ariseth from abundance, and in that respect is unnatural; for nature is satisfied with sufficiency. Hunger and thirst cease when a man hath eaten and drunk that which is sufficient.

3. It is a galling sin; it works a continual vexation, and takes away all the comforts of this life. The apostle saith, that 'they which covet after money, pierce themselves through with many sorrows,' 1 Tim. vi. 10. There is a threefold woe that accompanieth covetousness—1. A woe of labour and toil in getting wealth; 2. A woe of care and trouble in keeping it; 3. A woe of grief and anguish in parting with it. Nothing makes death more unwelcome than a covetous desire of the things of this world.

4. It is an ensnaring sin. 'They that will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare,' 1 Tim. vi. 9. Wealth, as it is a bait to allure men to snap thereat, so it is a snare fast to hold them, and a hook to pull them down to perdition. 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?' Mark x. 23. This snare kept the farmers from the wedding feast, Luke xiv. 18, 19. It keeps many from the word; yea, it steals away the heart of those that come to the word; for 'their heart goeth after their covetousness,' Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

5. It is a mother sin. 'The love of money is the root of all evil,' 1 Tim. vi. 10. Fittingly therefore doth the prophet thus style it 'evil covetousness,' Hab. ii. 9. There is no evil which a covetous man will forbear. His covetousness puts him on to all evil. It is a root of iniquity. It draws the heart from God, so as there can be no true love nor fear of God in a covetous heart. It makes a man be of that religion which is professed in the place where he liveth, though it be palpable idolatry. A covetous man can swallow all manner of oaths, yea, and perjury itself. For gain he will profane the Sabbath. It makes inferiors purloin from their superiors, and superiors to neglect their inferiors. It is a cause of much rebellion, of many treasons, murders, thefts, robberies, deceit, lying, false witness, breach of promise, and what not.

6. It is a growing sin. The longer men live in the world, the more covetous they use to be after the world. Old men are commonly the most covetous. Herein it differeth from other violent sins, which by age abate in their violence.

7. It is a devouring sin. 'The deceitfulness of riches choke the word,' Mat. xiii. 22. Covetousness is like Pharaoh's lean kine, 'which did eat up the fat kine; and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still as ill-favoured as at the beginning,' Gen. xli. 20, 21.

8. It is a crying sin. 'The cries of them which are oppressed' by covetous persons 'enter into the ears of the Lord.' Hereupon an apostle bids them 'weep and howl,' James v. 1, &c. Covetousness causeth a curse from man and God. 'He that withholdeth corn' (as the covetous man will when he can), 'the people shall curse him.' As for God's curse, 'the wrath of God cometh upon men because of these things,' Eph. v. 5, 6. The apostle reckoneth 'covetous persons' among those that 'shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' 1 Cor. vi. 10.

#### Sec. 54. Of remedies against covetousness.

For preventing or redressing covetousness, these rules following are to be observed:

1. The judgment must rightly be informed in these two points—

- (1.) In the nature of true happiness.
- (2.) In the vanity and deceitfulness of riches.

Many learned men want this point of understanding.

It is the blindness of a man's mind that maketh him place a kind of happiness in the things of this world, whereby he is brought even to doat upon them. If therefore we shall be rightly instructed that happiness consisteth in matters of another kind than this world affords, and that the things of this world are so vain as they can afford no solid comfort to a man, especially in spiritual distress, and so uncertain as they may suddenly be taken away from men, or men from them, surely their immoderate desire of riches could not be but much allayed. He that said, 'There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us,' Ps. iv. 6, well discerned the difference betwixt earthly and heavenly blessings. So did he who said, 'Riches profit not in the day of wrath; but righteousness delivereth from death,' Prov. xi. 4.

2. The will and heart of man must follow the judgment well informed, and raise themselves up to that sphere where true happiness resteth. 'Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth,' Col. iii. 2. This will keep the heart from doating on things below; for 'where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,' Mat. vi. 21. A beast which is feeding in fair and fresh pasture will not stray into a bare and barren heath; much less will an understanding man, that finds the sweetness of spiritual and heavenly blessings, doat upon earthly trash. This made Paul account all outward things but dung, because his heart had tasted of the sweetness of Christ, Phil. iii. 8, &c.

3. A man's confidence must be placed on God and his providence. God's providence is an overflowing and ever-flowing fountain. The richest treasures of men may be exhausted; God's cannot be. Be therefore fully resolved of this, that 'God will provide,' Gen. xxii. 8. This casting of our care on God's providence is much pressed in Scripture, as Ps. lv. 22, 1 Pet. v. 7, Mat. vi. 25, 26, &c. By experience we see how children depend on their parents' providence. Should not we much more on our heavenly Father? This resting upon God's providence is the more to be pressed in this case, because nothing makes men more to misplace their confidence than riches. 'The rich man's wealth is his strong city,' Prov. x. 15.

4. Our appetite or desire of riches must be moderate. Herein be of his mind who thus prayed, 'Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me,' Prov. xxx. 8. This is the main scope of the fourth petition, Mat. vi. 11. Be content, therefore, with that portion which God gives thee, and be persuaded it is best for thee. This lesson had Paul well learned, Phil. iv. 11. Contentedness and covetousness are directly opposite, as light and darkness. The apostle here in this text opposeth them.

5. We must pray against covetousness, as he who

said, 'Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness,' Ps. cxix. 36. We ought the rather to pray to God against it, because it is a hereditary disease, and in that respect the more hardly cured. It was one of Christ's greatest miracles to cure one that was born blind, John ix. 32.

Sec. 55. *Of well-using abundance.*

In case God by his providence give abundance, as he gave to many of the patriarchs—to Job, David, Solomon, and others—great care must be taken about well-using the same. For that end let these rules following be observed. Some of them are negative, and some affirmative.

1. Negative rules are such as these :

(1.) 'Abuse not the world,' 1 Cor. vii. 31. By the world is meant the things of the world—all manner of earthly commodities. These are abused when they are esteemed above that for which they were given—when they are preferred before spiritual and heavenly things.

(2.) 'Set not your heart on riches if they increase,' Ps. lxxii. 10. Delight not too much in them.

(3.) 'Trust not in uncertain riches,' 1 Tim. vi. 17. Do not so place thy confidence on them, as if happiness were to be found in them.

(4.) 'Let not the rich man glory in his riches,' Jer. ix. 23, nor be puffed up by them. There is nothing in them to make a man proud of them.

(5.) Let not thy wealth move thee to scorn the poor. This is it which an apostle taxeth in rich men ; saying, 'Ye have despised the poor,' James ii. 6.

(6.) Let them not occasion thee to oppress others. The foresaid apostle implicitly that rich men are prone hereunto, where he saith, 'Do not the rich oppress you ?' James ii. 6. The rich man that took his poor neighbour's lamb to entertain a traveller, oppressed him, 2 Sam. xiii. 4.

2. Affirmative rules are such as these :

(1.) 'Honour the Lord with thy substance,' Prov. iii. 9. So order the goods of this world which God giveth thee, as with them thou mayest maintain the service of God, and promote piety.

(2.) Be 'rich in good works,' 1 Tim. vi. 18. According to the abundance which God hath given thee, abound in works of charity. He that had five talents gained thereby five other talents, Mat. xxv. 20.

(3.) 'Make friends of thy riches,' Luke xvi. 9. They are made friends when they are so used as they may be evidences, and thereby give testimony of our piety, charity, justice, and other like graces.

(4.) Seriously and frequently meditate on the account that men are to give of using their wealth. We are not lords of our riches, but stewards ; and a steward must give an account of his stewardship, Luke xvi. 2. That which the wise man saith to the young man, may be applied to a rich man, 'For all these things God will bring thee into judgment,' Eccles. xi. 9.

(5.) Be ready to let go whatsoever God shall be pleased to take away. Of this mind was he who, when he had lost all that he had, thus said, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord,' Job i. 21.

(6.) Trust in the Lord. This advice doth the apostle give to rich men, 1 Tim. vi. 17 ; for this very end, to draw them from trusting in riches. He doth therefore thus infer the one upon the other, 'Trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living Lord.'

Sec. 56. *Of examination of a man's self about covetousness.*

Covetousness being such a sin, as hath been declared, in the nature, practice, and heinousness of it, it nearly concerns every Christian to consider how far it hath seized on him, and how guilty he stands thereof. This duty lieth on every one in these especial respects :

1. Covetousness doth especially consist in the inward desire of a man, which is best known to himself. A man's desire is one of the things of a man which no man knoweth, 'save the spirit of man which is in him,' 1 Cor. ii. 11.

2. It is so hereditary a disease, as no man is altogether free from it. It will in some degree or other be found in the best, if they thoroughly sift themselves. Certainly he found himself addicted thereto who thus prayed to God, 'Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness,' Ps. cxix. 36 ; yet he was 'a man after God's own heart,' Acts xiii. 22.

3. It is so deceiving a sin, covering itself under the veil of prudence, providence, good husbandry, thriftiness, harmlessness, and sundry other pretences, as if it be not thoroughly examined, it will hardly be discerned.

4. It is so eating, fretting, and consuming a sin, as if it be not searched out, but suffered to lurk and grow, it may prove like the thorns which soak out the heart of the earth, and make the seed fruitless, Mat. xiii. 22. The heart of many that frequent the word 'goeth after their covetousness,' Ezek. xxxiii. 31. This covetousness in the heart of a professor may prove like the wild gourds that were put into the pot of pottage, 2 Kings iv. 39, 40 ; and like that accursed thing that was by Achan brought into the camp of the Israelites, Josh. vii. 11.

5. Many, for want of thorough trying of themselves in this case, think better of themselves than there is cause. The Pharisees were covetous, yet they thought too highly of themselves, Luke xvi. 14, 15, and xviii. 11.

Sec. 57. *Of rules to find out covetousness.*

It is in vain for any to search after that which he knows not how to find out. God himself having exhorted Joshua and the elders of Israel to search

out the accursed thing that was hid in the camp, gave him advice and direction how to do it, Josh. vii. 13, 14. I hold it meet, therefore, here to add a direction.

1. Observe the inward wishes of thine heart. If they be especially for the things of this world, they argue a covetous disposition. Covetousness is styled 'the lust of the eye,' 1 John ii. 16; that is, an inward inordinate desire arising from the sight of such and such a thing, Josh. vii. 21. Many things may be seen which are not desired, but if desired, and that inordinately, there is covetousness.

2. In things which differ, mark what is preferred. If earthly things be preferred before heavenly, temporal before spiritual, that disposition is covetous. Such was the disposition of those who are invited to the king's supper, and refused to go, Luke xiv. 18, &c.; and the disposition of the Gadarenes, Mark v. 17.

3. In the means of getting, consider whether they be just and right, or no; for all unjust and undue ways of getting, arise from covetousness. A mind free from it will rest content with that portion which by the divine providence shall be allotted, Jer. xxii. 17, Micah ii. 12.

4. Compare with the stint which thou first settest to thyself, the issue that followeth. If, upon the obtaining of the first desire, a man remain unsatisfied, and his desire be more and more enlarged, he hath a covetous heart. For example, a poor man thinks if he could get ten shillings a week, it would serve his turn; he hath it, but then he desireth ten shillings a day; he hath that also, yet is not satisfied; from shillings his desire ariseth to pounds, and yet is not satisfied. These are such of whom the prophet thus speaketh, 'Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth,' Isa. v. 8. Such a one is said to 'enlarge his desire as hell,' Hab. ii. 5.

5. Well weigh the effects of thy desire of riches. If thoughts thereupon break thy sleep, and care thereabouts consume thy flesh, and labour and toil therein take up all thy time, and impair health and strength, that desire is immoderate—it is plain covetousness, Eccles. ii. 23, and v. 12. This argueth a greediness after 'filthy lucre,' as the apostle terms it, 1 Tim. iii. 3.

6. Take notice of thy disposition in hoarding up and keeping wealth, and sparing to spend it; for covetousness consisteth as much (if not more) in keeping as in getting. The rich man in the parable herein especially manifested his covetousness, Luke xii. 19. The Lord, therefore, for avoiding covetousness, dehortheth from laying up treasures on earth, Mat. vi. 19. See Secs. 51.

7. Observe thy manner of spending. If it be too sparingly, niggardly, and barely, if under thy degree and means, if against health and strength in general,

not affording what is needful thereunto; or against special occasions, not affording physic or other requisites in sickness, or help of chirurgery in case of wounds, sores, or other like maladies; or against the charge that belongs unto thee, as wife, children, servants, kindred, and neighbours; or against the duty and due which thou owest to the poor, state, and church; or in what thou doest in any of the foresaid kinds, thou doest perforce, so as otherwise thou wouldest not do it, surely this kind of spending savoureth rank of covetousness, Eccles. iv. 8.

#### Sec. 58. Of humiliation for, and detestation of covetousness.

Among other sins, this of covetousness ministereth to professors of the gospel great and deep matter of humiliation. Is it not a shame for such as have heaven set before them, and that prepared before all time by the good pleasure of God, purchased in the fulness of time by the precious blood of the Son of God, reserved to be enjoyed by them, after all times, for ever and ever, that they should doat upon earth and earthly things, which are base and transitory, and that in and under the light of the gospel, whereby the surpassing excellency of things above, and excessive vanity of things below, is distinctly and clearly laid down? What a shame is it that sons of God cannot be content with that portion which their heavenly Father provideth for them! Should professors have that deeply rooted in their hearts, and openly practised in their life, which the apostle would not have to be once named amongst Christians? Eph. v. 3. Doth not such a shameful and disgraceful rag of the old man give great matter of humiliation?

That which gives men just cause of humiliation, because they are infected with it, should make them so to detest it, as to give no rest to their souls till it be purged out of them. Unless this use be added to the former uses, they will be strong convictions against us, and aggravations of our condemnation. For to examine one's soul about covetousness, so far as to find it out, and to be humbled thereupon, will be an evidence, that if we loath it not, we like it, we love it, we are willing to entertain it, even against knowledge and conscience: herein we make our judgment the more heavy. You, therefore, that know covetousness to be a sin, a heinous sin, and know yourselves to be guilty thereof, and are brought to be humbled for your former practice thereof, abhor it for the future. In detestation thereof, say, 'I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes,' Job xli. 6. Every evil is to be abhorred, Rom. xii. 9. Much more such as are disgraceful to the Christian profession. Hate this, therefore, *come pejus et angue*, more than biting and poisoning creatures; and be deborted and dissuaded from all covetous practices before mentioned. See Secs. 50–52. The heinousness of this sin (set out, Sec. 53), is a strong motive to inferre this dissuasion.



Sec. 59. *Of graces contrary to covetousness.*

For the better avoiding of covetousness, it will be our wisdom to get our souls possessed with such graces as are contrary thereunto. One contrary expelleth another. Bring light into a room, and thereby you expel darkness.

I will exemplify this in four particulars :

1. Confidence in God's providence. This keeps a man from distrustfulness, which is the cause of covetousness. He that confidently relieth on God for supply of all needful good things, will not inordinately desire, nor unduly acquire, nor immoderately treasure up riches. What makes children or servants, in their parents' or masters' house, less covetous than when they are alone for themselves? Surely this, that they are confident that their parents or masters will sufficiently provide for them. This confidence on this ground doth the Lord much press, Mat. vi. 31, 32. Therefore, 'cast all your care upon God, for he careth for you,' 1 Pet. v. 7. To this very end tends that reason which the apostle himself here addeth, for he hath said, 'I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee.'

2. Contentedness. This is added in this text as an antidote to covetousness. For, nothing is more opposite to covetousness than contentedness. A covetous mind is never satisfied with anything, be it never so much. A contented mind is ever satisfied with anything, be it never so little. 'I have learned,' saith the apostle, 'in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know how to be abased, and how to abound,' &c., Phil. iv. 11, 12.

3. Charity. 'Charity seeketh not her own' (1 Cor. xiii. 5), which covetousness maketh a man to do. The covetous man is wholly and only for himself, Luke xii. 10. The charitable man having that which he accounts sufficient for himself, readily takes all opportunities of succouring others : 'He is merciful, and lendeth,' Ps. cxii. 5 ; he is merciful, 'and giveth,' Ps. xxxvii. 21. Mercifulness and covetousness cannot agree together ; nor reside in the same soul. *Non bene convenient, nec eadem sede morantur.* They are incompatible. The charitable man will not be covetous, the covetous man will not be charitable.

4. Liberality. This being sanctified exceedeth charity in the measure of contribution. Charity may stand with very small means, even with a cup of cold water, Mat. x. 42. But liberality implieth a large contribution, such a one as they who have abundance can give. A liberal and a bountiful man are joined together, as intending one and the same thing, and both opposed to a niggard or churl. And the liberal is said to 'devise liberal things,' Isa. xxxii. 5, 8, which is clean contrary to a covetous disposition. The apostle annexeth this epithet *riches*, to *liberality*, 2 Cor. viii. 2.

Sec. 60. *Of over-rash censuring others of covetousness.* Covetousness being a heinous sin, and exceedingly

disgraceful to the profession of the true faith, we ought to be very tender about laying it to the charge of professors. It cannot be denied but that many professors are too guilty thereof : yet withal it cannot be denied but that many others are too rash in censuring professors. It may be that to lay covetousness to one's charge will not bear an action in our courts of justice, but in God's court of justice it may prove a matter of condemnation.

Men may more safely judge themselves hereabouts than others. For covetousness is an inward inordinate desire ; and a man may better know the kind and qualification of his own desire than of others', 1 Cor. ii. 11.

The grounds which, ordinarily, men have of judging professors is suspicion or surmise, to which the apostle giveth this attribute, 'evil,' 1 Tim. vi. 4 ; for surmises are evil in their quality, and in their effects.

Ordinary surmises are such as these :

1. Such a man is very industrious and painful in his calling ; he riseth early ; he sitteth up late.

*Ans.* It may be that a good conscience about employing and improving his talent to the best advantage he can, putteth him on to that diligence, and not covetousness.

2. He lives not according to his estate, but much under it.

*Ans.* Thou mayest surmise his estate to be greater than it is. Dost thou know all his losses, all his debts, his manifold charges, and several ways of laying out ?

3. He is not liberal to the poor.

*Ans.* He may be prudent in well ordering his charity ; and conscientious in observing this rule of Christ, 'When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth,' Mat. vi. 3.

4. He layeth up much.

*Ans.* Thou canst not tell what part of his estate he layeth up, nor to what ends. The apostle prescribeth it as a duty belonging to parents to lay up for their children, 2 Cor. xii. 14.

Sec. 61. *Of contentment with things present.*

Ver. 5. *And be content with such things as ye have.*

This exhortation to contentedness is added to the former exhortation from covetousness, as a means to prevent or redress that vice. For covetousness argueth a discontent at that which a man hath : and contentedness will keep men from an inordinate desire of more.

This exhortation is not joined in the Greek to the former exhortation by any copulative, causal, or opposite conjunction ; but by a participle, ἀκούμενοι, *being content*, which maketh it a part of the former sentence, thus, *let your conversation be without covetousness, being content with such things as ye have.*

The active verb ἀκούω, from whence the passive in this text is derived, signifieth to *suffice*, John xiv. 8, 2 Cor. xii. 9. This word fitly expresseth the nature

of contentedness, which is, to account that which God bestoweth on a man, to be sufficient for him; and thereupon to rest quiet in his mind, not perplexing himself with cares and fears about more.

The passive is oft used in the New Testament in the same sense that it is here, namely, Luke iii. 14, 1 Tim. vi. 8, and translated to be content, upon accounting that which he hath to be sufficient.

There is in the New Testament, and in sundry other Greek authors, a word, *αὐτάρις*, compounded of this, and of a pronoun that signifieth *one's self*, and it is in general used to set out contentment: but it implieth a very great emphasis. For according to the notation of the word it signifieth such a one as is of himself and by himself and for himself sufficient. This properly belongs to God alone. Yet it is also attributed both to things and persons. To things, when they are of themselves sufficient for that whereunto they are used, without the addition of any other thing. To persons, when they account that which they have to be sufficient for them, and do not inordinately covet more. Thus the substantive *αὐτάρις* is used, and translated 'sufficiency,' 2 Cor. ix. 8, and 'contentment,' 1 Tim. vi. 6. And the adjective *αὐτάρις*, also translated 'content,' as where the apostle saith, 'I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content,' Phil. iv. 11.

The things here meant are temporal; such as are needful for us, and useful to us, while here we live. They are all comprised under these two words, 'food, raiment,' 1 Tim. vi. 8, and under this one word, 'bread,' Mat. vi. 11. Spiritual blessings may and must be coveted more than temporal.

These temporal blessings are here in the Greek called *ταῖς παρούσαις*, *things present*: which are such things as men for the present have and enjoy. They are opposed, 1. To such things as men have not; in this respect our English translators thus interpret the word, *such things as ye have*. 2. They are opposed to things that may in future times be enjoyed. About such things men ought not to be solicitous. 'Take no thought for the morrow,' saith Christ, Mat. vi. 34. We must rest content in that portion which God every day bestoweth upon us. These are the things present here meant. Thus much is intended in the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer.

#### Sec. 62. Of contentedness. What it is.

Contentedness is a satisfaction of the mind concerning the sufficiency and fitness of one's present condition.

This general matter of contentedness, a satisfaction of mind, doth not only put a distinguishing difference betwixt contentedness and covetousness, but also sheweth that they are diametrically contrary one to another: for a covetous mind is never satisfied with any estate: and a contented mind is never unsatisfied with any.

This satisfaction useth to accompany such things as God bestoweth on such as he taketh an especial care of. Such persons having long life are satisfied therewith. God with the blessing giveth satisfaction, Ps. xci. 16. 'The meek shall eat and be satisfied,' Ps. xxii. 26. God 'will satisfy the poor with bread,' Ps. cxxxii. 15. When God promiseth to send corn, wine, and oil as a blessing, it is added, 'ye shall be satisfied therewith,' Joel ii. 19, 26.

This satisfaction is said to be of the mind, to shew that it extends itself as far as covetousness doth; which is an inward inordinate desire of the mind. A contented person doth not only forbear outward indirect courses of getting more and more; but doth also restrain the motions of his mind or soul, from desiring more than God is willing to allot unto him.

The sufficiency mentioned in the description, hath not reference to any set quantity or measure which the contented person propounds to himself; but only to the wise providence of God, who doth give to every one of his what is sufficient for him: answerably a contented person so accounts his own estate, and is satisfied. She that made this answer, to him that would have spoken to the captain of the host for some reward to her, 'I dwell among mine own people,' was such a contented one, 2 Kings iv. 13.

This word *fitness* is added, to shew that contentedness extends itself not only to the things which are needful for man's livelihood, as food and raiment, 1 Tim. vi. 8, but also to the several estates whereunto man is subject: as of peace and trouble, ease and pain, honour and dishonour, prosperity and adversity. Contentedness makes a man account that estate, be it joyous or grievous, whereunto God brings him, to be the fittest and seasonablest for him.

The present condition wherewith a contented mind is limited in this text, admits a double reference. One to the time past; wherein though his condition hath been better, yet he repineth not at the alteration thereof.

The other reference is to the time to come; wherein though he have never so great hope of bettering himself, yet for the present he remaineth content with his present condition.

#### Sec. 63. Of the grounds of contentedness.

The grounds of contentedness are such as follow:

1. Knowledge of God's disposing providence; that he ordereth all things in heaven and earth, according to his own will, Ps. cxv. 3, and cxxxv. 6. Hence we may safely infer that our estate, whatsoever it be, great or mean, plentiful or scanty, quiet or troublesome, is ordered by God. 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,' Job i. 21. 'I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things,' Isa. xlv. 7. Who would not, who should not, be content with that estate which God provideth for him?

Among other divine properties there are three which are of greatest force to move us to rest content in our present condition.

1. God's almighty power. 2. His incomprehensible wisdom. 3. His infinite goodness.

God by his power is able to give any man anything. 'If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean,' saith a leper to Christ, Mat. viii. 2. By his wisdom he discerneth what is fittest for every one. For the same estate is not fit for every one: therefore he variously ordereth men's estates, 1 Sam. ii. 7. His goodness moveth him to order all things to good. 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted,' saith the psalmist, Ps. exix. 71. If this mighty God who can settle thee in any estate, in his wisdom see this present estate to be fittest for thee, and in goodness settle thee therein, oughtest not thou to be content therewith?

Of contentedness arising from God's disposing providence, see my sermon on Mat. x. 29, entitled, *The Extent of God's Providence*, Sec. 11.

2. Faith in God's special relation to thee; that he is in particular thy Father; so as thou mayest say to him, 'Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation,' Ps. lxxxix. 26. To be persuaded that the Almighty God, who can do what he will, that the wise God, who well discerneth what is fittest for thee, that the good God, who sweetens all the passages of his powerful and wise providence with his goodness, is in special thy Father, cannot but assure thee that he dealth with thee, as he knoweth to be best for thee. He that steadfastly believed this, would not have his estate otherwise ordered than it is. He must needs rest content with the present.

Of this special application of God's fatherhood, see my *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, entitled, *A Guide to go to God*, Sec. 12.

3. A full conviction of our unworthiness of the least of God's mercies. This did Jacob acknowledge before God, Gen. xxxii. 10. This useth to produce two effects, which much conduce to contentedness.

One is thankfulness for whatsoever we have. This made Paul 'thank Christ Jesus, for that he counted him faithful, putting him into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer,' 1 Tim. i. 12, 13. For in another place he saith, 'I am not meet' (or worthy) 'to be called an apostle,' 1 Cor. xv. 9. Thankfulness is a degree above contentedness.

The other effect is an expectation of God's continuing to provide what shall be sufficient for the future. For he that is conscious to his own unworthiness, cannot but acknowledge that whatsoever good he hath is from God's free grace. Thereupon he is moved to hope and believe, that God who for his own grace sake hath begun to do good unto him, will upon the same ground continue so to do; and thereupon he rests contented.

4. A deep apprehension of one's desert. He that knows himself cannot be ignorant that his desert is

extremity of wrath and vengeance; even hell and damnation. In that, therefore, he is on this side hell, in the land of the living, under means of salvation, he is content with any outward estate, though it be never so mean; yea, though it be an afflicted estate, and full of trouble. They who being sorely afflicted, duly consider that they had deserved much more than they had endured, with a holy content, and humble patience, thus say, 'It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not,' Lam. iii. 22.

5. A right application of God's promises. There is no condition so mean, no estate so troublesome, but that in God's word we may find some promise to support us therein.

About what it is said, 'There is no want to them that fear God.' They that young lions do lack and suffer hunger; but they that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing, Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. 'My God shall supply all your need,' Phil. iv. 19.

About danger thus saith the Lord, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt: neither shall the flame kindle upon thee,' Isa. xliii. 2.

About fear of men there is this promise, 'They that be with us are more than they that be with them,' 2 Kings vi. 16. And this, 'Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not, behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense: he will come and save you,' Isa. xxxv. 4.

About all sorts of afflictions or temptations it is said, 'There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it,' 1 Cor. x. 13.

About death we have this glorious insultation put into our minds and mouths, 'Death is swallowed up in victory: O death where is thy sting?' 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55. And they are pronounced 'blessed who die in the Lord,' &c., Rev. xiv. 13.

Of a particular application of God's promises, see more in *Domest. Duties*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 6, Sec. 72, &c.

6. Assurance of our right to Christ, and interest in him. All things are theirs whose Christ is. This doth the apostle not only in general affirm, but also in sundry particulars exemplify. For having laid down this general position, 'All things are yours,' he doth thus exemplify it, 'Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours.' Hereof he renders this reason, 'and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's,' 1 Cor. iii. 21-23.

Well may they who have Christ rest content in any estate; for,

(1.) Christ is more worth than all the world. He is that treasure for which a wise man will sell all that he hath, to buy that field where this treasure is. He is that pearl for which a wise man will sell all that he hath to buy it, Mat. xiii. 44-46.

(2.) God 'with Christ freely gives us all things,' Rom. viii. 32.

(3.) Christ can make all wants and all sufferings an advantage unto us. 'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,' Phil. i. 21. Have not now they whose Christ is, just cause to be content with that which they have, whatsoever it be?

7. Frequent and serious meditation on that excellent inheritance which is purchased and prepared for us in heaven. An heir that hath title to a rich inheritance, will be content with such diet and apparel as his father is pleased to allow him. 'The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all,' Gal. iv. 1. He goeth contentedly to school; he doth what his father enjoins him to do; he rests contented with his present condition, upon expectation of a future great inheritance: yet at the most is it but an earthly inheritance. How much more content should we be with the present, on hope of a heavenly inheritance! 1 Cor. ix. 25.

This was one special ground of martyrs', not contentment only, but rejoicing also in their sufferings: 'For the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,' Rom. viii. 18. 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,' 2 Cor. iv. 17. This was a reason whereby the patriarchs were induced to live all their days in tabernacles: 'For they looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God,' Heb. xi. 9, 10.

Sec. 64. *Of the necessity, equity, excellency, and comeliness of contentedness.*

To the seven forementioned grounds of contentedness, other grounds may be added, taken from sundry adjuncts, which do much commend the virtue and grace: as,

1. The necessity of contentedness. No man hath power over his own estate or condition of life to order it as he will. Will he, nill he, that shall befall him which God alloteth to him. 'Who can make that straight, which God hath made crooked?' Eccles. vii. 13. 'The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all,' Prov. xxii. 2. This is spoken of God, not only as the Creator of all of all sorts; but also as the disposer of all men's estates and conditions. He maketh some rich, he maketh others poor, 1 Sam. ii. 7. 'Which of you by taking thought, can add one cubit to his stature?' Mat. vi. 27. 'The very hairs of your head are all numbered,' Mat. x. 30.

There is, therefore, an absolute necessity of being in that estate and condition wherein God will have a man to be. Now, then, to be willingly content with that which a man cannot alter, is to make a virtue of necessity.

2. The equity of contentedness. Hardly can such an estate befall any one, the like whereof, or a worse, hath not befallen others whom he hath cause to judge better than himself; for 'every man ought to esteem other better than himself,' Phil. ii. 3. Is it not then most meet that we should be contented with that which others better than ourselves have been content withal? This is the argument which Uriah pleaded for not going down unto his own house: 'The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord are encamped in the open fields. Shall I then go into my house to eat and to drink?' &c., 2 Sam. xi. 11. Eljah renders this as a reason why he was content to die: 'For I am no better than my fathers,' 1 Kings xix. 4. Can any now living think himself better than to whom the Holy Ghost gives this testimony, 'Of whom the world was not worthy?' Heb. xi. 38; yet 'they wandered about in sheep-skins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.' To faint and sink under a lighter burden than others carry contentedly and cheerfully, doth not so much argue the weight of the burden, as the weakness of him that sinketh under it.

3. The excellency of contentment:

(1.) Among other graces, this is an especial one, that maketh us most like unto God. What greater excellency can be attributed to any creature than to be like his Creator? When God would set forth the excellency wherein he intended to make man, he thus expresseth it, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,' Gen. i. 26. We shewed, Sec. 61, that the Greek word, *αὐτάξια*, translated *contentedness*, signifieth *self-sufficiency*; and that this excellency was proper, in the full extent thereof, to God. One of those titles which in the Old Testament is given to God, שָׁרִי, signifieth *self-sufficient*. Now of all men the contented person is most sufficient in himself and by himself. This is not to be taken in opposition to God: as if any could be sufficient to anything without God, for 'we are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God,' 2 Cor. iii. 5. But it is meant in opposition to an unsatisfied desire; and it is to be taken in reference to the mind of such a man, who esteemeth every state wherein he is, to be sufficient for him.

(2.) Contentedness is like the holy ointment, and sweet perfume that was of use under the law. They were both compounded of sundry choice spices, Exod. xxx. 23, 24, 34, &c. So contentedness is compounded of sundry other excellent graces, the glory and beauty of which do brightly shine forth in

this one grace and virtue, and are exercised thereby ; as,

[1.] Faith in God's fatherly care over him, and providence towards him, Gen. xxii. 8.

[2.] Hope to be supported and supplied with such things as are needful, Ps. xlii. 5.

[3.] Patience in bearing the burden of want, and grief of affliction, James v. 11.

[4.] Humility in a mean esteem of one's self, Gen. xxxii. 10.

[5.] Obedient submission to the good pleasure of God, 1 Sam. iii. 18.

[6.] Meekness, in forbearing to take revenge of such as wrong us. He that in a contented mind said, 'Behold, here am I, let the Lord do to me as seemeth good unto him,' 2 Sam. xv. 26, said also of one that exceedingly wronged him, 'Let him alone, and let him curse : for the Lord hath bidden him,' 2 Sam. xvi. 11.

[7.] Thankfulness in all estates. Job, a contented person, blessed God for taking away as well as for giving, Job i. 21.

4. The commodity of contentment. Commodity puts on every one to do what he can for attaining that which may be commodious to him. I dare not undertake to set down all the commodities of contentment ; I will only give a brief view of some special ones.

(1.) Contentedness setteth and quieteth the soul in the greatest troubles that can befall a man. Paul and Silas, after they had been sorely scourged, and thrust into the inner prison, and their feet made fast to the stocks, 'at midnight sang praises unto God,' Acts xvi. 23-25. Admirable evidences of much quietness and cheerfulness of spirit have been given by martyrs in the midst of their grievous torments.

(2.) It so moderateth a man's desire, as in all estates he thinks he hath enough. Though Jacob came far short of his brother Esau in his estate, yet he could say as well as Esau, 'I have enough,' Gen. xxxiii. 9, 11. Our English in both places useth the same phrase, 'I have enough ;' but in the Hebrew there is a great difference betwixt that which Esau uttered and Jacob. To translate them word for word, Esau's phrase was this, *יש לי רב*, *there is much to me*, or, *I have much*. So he acknowledged a great plenty. But Jacob's phrase is this, *יש לי כל*, *all things are to me*, or, *I have all*. This shewed a contented mind, in that he accounted what he had to be as much as if he had had all the world. Some apply that phrase of Jacob to his interest in the Lord ; that the Lord being his portion, he accounted him to be all in all. The contented man accounting himself to have all, must needs be, at least in his mind, a rich man. His desire is satisfied with what he hath. If, therefore, it be a commodity to be rich, contentedness is a great commodity.

(3.) It makes a supply of all the losses that can

befall a man. Losses, to him that is content with what remains, are as no losses. He hath in his mind as much sufficiency as he had before. This is evident in Job's case, Job i. 21. He was as thankful unto God for taking away as for giving : and the Hebrews 'took joyfully the spoiling of their goods,' Heb. x. 34.

(4.) It easeth heavy burdens, and maketh them tolerable. As discontent, by vexing and perplexing the spirit, weakens it, and makes light burdens lie very heavy upon a man ; so contentedness puts life and spirit into a man, and makes him better able to bear his burden. The very same burden lying on a contented and discontented person, seems much lighter to the one than to the other. When David and the men that were with him were spoiled of their wives, sons, daughters, and goods, his men were much grieved, and spake of stoning him ; but 'David encouraged himself in the Lord his God,' 1 Sam. xxx. 6.

(5.) It is a compliance with God's providence in every state ; for it brings us to a resignation of our will to God's will, so as to make God's will a rule of our will ; and to say as Christ did, 'not my will, but thine be done,' Luke xxii. 41. We have a proof hereof in him who said unto God, 'Behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him,' 2 Sam. xv. 26. Surely this is a great commodity, to enjoy with quietness what the will of God is that we should enjoy.

Sec. 65. *Of the variety of cases wherein contentedness is to be exercised.*

Every state wherein any man is in this world is accompanied with so many occasions of discontent [to] the mind of man, as it is requisite that he learn how to be contented in every one of them. This I will endeavour to exemplify in sundry particular cases ; as,

1. Plenty, and all manner of prosperity. Among other instances the apostle giveth this wherein he had learned to be content : 'I know how to abound everywhere ; and in all things I am instructed to be full,' Phil. iv. 12. Two especial reasons there are to move men to learn contentedness in plenty and prosperity.

(1.) Because no plenty, no manner of prosperity can fully satisfy a discontented mind. If all that at once he desireth should be granted him, when he hath that, he would thereupon desire more. See Sec. 53.

(2.) Sundry perplexities and troubles arise out of plenty and prosperity. Many upon sense hereof are so discontent, as they think they should live more quietly if their estate were meaner than it is, and if they had more troubles than they had. Contentment is an antidote against both these extremes.

2. Poverty. This is another instance which the apostle gives of his contentedness, 'I know how to

be abased, I am instructed to be hungry, and to suffer need,' Phil. iv. 12. This estate is that which the apostle especially intends, where he saith, 'having food and raiment, let us be therewith content,' 1 Tim. vi. 8. Nature itself is satisfied with little, yea, though it be homely and coarse. Experience sheweth that both poor folks themselves, and also their children, are for the most part healthier and stronger than rich ones and their children. Besides, poor folks are freed from many cares, fears, and dangers whereunto rich ones and great ones are subject. Poor folks have not so large and great accounts to make as the richer sort; yet their faithful and diligent improvement of that little they have shall be as well accepted, approved, and rewarded as a like improvement of much. The very same approbation and remuneration is given to him that improved two talents, that is given to him that improved five talents, and that in the very same words: thus, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,' Mat. xxv. 21, 23. Great cause there is for poor persons to be content, especially if the many promises and engagements of God for taking care of them, and supplying their wants and needs, be duly weighed, as Ps. xxxiv. 6, &c., xxxvii. 23, and iv. 22, Mat. vi. 25, &c., Phil iv. 19.

3. A single life. Single persons who never were married are indeed deprived of many comforts which married persons enjoy. But withal they are freed from many cares and troubles which usually accompany the married estate. In a single estate there is a greater freedom to serve God, which the apostle implieth under this phrase, 'He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord,' 1 Cor. vii. 32. Hereupon they who are free, and can abstain, are advised so to abide, 1 Cor. vii. 27. The best man that ever was lived all his days in a single life. Who, then, should not be content with this estate, if God call him thereto?

4. The married estate. It cannot be denied but that their estate is ordinarily much encumbered with sundry cares and troubles. But withal it must be granted that these cares and troubles arise from the weakness and wickedness of men; their wickedness, who raise troubles against others; their weakness, who suffer themselves to be disquieted, and too much distracted with the affairs of the family, and cares for wife, children, and others. Were it not for the wickedness of some, and weakness of others, to please a husband or a wife would be no hindrance to pleasing of the Lord. If the honour, ends, and privileges of marriage (whereof see *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 2, Part 1, Secs. 23-25) be poised with the cares and troubles thereof, we shall find just cause to rest content in that estate.

5. Want of children. This of old was a matter of great discontent. This brought many tears from Hannah's eyes, and prayers from her heart, 1 Sam. i. 10. The Shunammite preferred a child before any other thing that could be granted her, 2 Kings iv. 14. Abraham himself said to God, 'What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?' Gen. xv. 2. 'Give me children, or else I die,' saith Rachel to her husband, Gen. xxx. 1. It was denounced as a great judgment against Coniah, to die childless, Jer. xxii. 30. And it is denounced as a judgment to have a 'miscarrying womb, and dry breast,' Hosea ix. 14. To this day such as are childless complain that they shall have none to bear their name, to be their heir, and to succeed them in their place. To these I commend these considerations:—

(1.) It is God that denieth children, Gen. xxx. 2.

(2.) They may be denied children, because God seeth them not meet to bring up children.

(3.) Children are certain cares, but uncertain comforts.

(4.) Children may prove a grief of mind to their parents, Gen. xxvi. 35. They may be a cause of heavy judgments upon their parents, 1 Sam. iii. 13. They may do much mischief to their parents, 2 Sam. xv. 10. They may foolishly lose what their prudent parents have left them, 1 Kings xii. 16.

(5.) God hath promised to them that fear him a better name than of sons and daughters, even an everlasting name that shall not be cut off, Isa. lvi. 5.

These are weighty motives to persuade such as have no children, to rest content.

6. Many children. Christians in this case use to manifest more discontent than the Jews of old did. We do not read that they used to be discontent at a numerous offspring, but rather still to desire more, though they had many. Leah had six sons, one after another; yet, when she saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah, her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife, that she might have more children by her. Yea, after that she hired of her sister liberty to lie with Jacob, and thereupon had two more sons and a daughter, Gen. xxx. 9, 16, 17, 19, 21. We read that Ithzan, a judge in Israel, had thirty sons and thirty daughters. And that Abdon, another judge, had forty sons and thirty nephews, Judges xii. 9, 14. And that Jerubbaal, another judge, had three-score and ten sons, Judges ix. 5. Should a father now have so many, how would he complain, and think he should never have enough for them all! Surely it is distrustfulness in God's providence that causeth discontentedness in this case. The sacred Scripture tells us that 'God provideth for the young ravens when they wander for lack of meat,' Job xxxviii. 41. Experience sheweth that the lesser sort of birds bring forth and breed up fifteen young ones together. Are not Christians' children more worth than many birds? God provides for all thy children while they are in

the womb. Why dost thou not trust to his providence for them when they are brought into this world? Many poor folks' children do not only wax fat and strong with coarse food and raiment; but also attain to very good callings through the divine providence.

God hath said of our children, 'They are mine, born to me,' Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. Will he not, then, take care of his own?

God hath promised children, yea, many children, as a blessing, Ps. cxxvii. 3-5, and cxviii. 3. Did we believe God's word, and in faith plead it before God, and depend on him for making it good, in his own way, and at his own time, we should certainly not only be content, but also thankful for the many children he bestoweth on us.

7. Losses. This case of losses may be extended to goods, friends, children, and other things that are near and dear unto us, and are needful for us, and useful unto us. Such losses do oft cause much discontent, and work great disquiet in men. But if such as have losses would seriously weigh the example of Job, and about him consider,

(1.) What a man he was; how great, how good, Job i. 1, 3.

(2.) What his losses were in every kind, Job i. 15, &c.; even more, I daresay, than thine are who complainest.

(3.) With what contentedness, yea, and thankfulness, he did bear all, Job i. 21.

(4.) What was 'the end of the Lord,' James v. 11; and what recompense the Lord returned, Job xlii. 10, &c.

If these four things in Job's case were seriously weighed, we should find him a worthy pattern of contentment in this case of losses, and a strong enforcement of the duty. The apostle testifies of the Hebrews, that they 'took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance,' Heb. x. 34.

The goods of this world are but transitory commodities, such as the Lord lends us, and that only for such a time as seemeth good to himself. He hath power to demand them when he will.

As for friends, God, who taketh them away, can and will make an abundant supply. Is not God better to us than many friends? What good can friends do, without he also be our friend? And if he be our friend, what need we have any more friends?

Children that are taken from us, are taken to a better Father, that provideth better for them than we can. That children taken away are not to be reckoned among things lost, is evident by Job's case, in that God doubled all the things that Job lost, save his children. Other things that he lost were doubled unto him. Instead of seven thousand sheep which

he lost, he had fourteen thousand restored. Instead of three thousand camels, he had six thousand. So in other things which he lost. But having lost seven sons and three daughters, he had but so many restored to him; yet are these accounted doubled, because the ten children which were taken away were with God, and not utterly lost. There is, therefore, no reason that a man should be discontent that his children are taken away to a better place. It was Jacob's ignorance of that course which God took to advance Joseph to such an estate as he might be a means of preserving his father's household, and of saving much people alive, that made him so impatient and discontent at his supposed loss, Gen. xxxvii. 33, &c., and xlv. 7.

8. Crosses in men's callings. Men's callings are the ordinary means of their livelihood. If they thrive not thereby, but rather lose, they use to be much discontent.

To remove discontent in this kind—

(1.) I advise such to search into the cause of their not thriving, whether it be not their own unskillfulness, idleness, negligence, pride, prodigality, too eager pursuit of their pleasures, too much trust in such as are unfaithful, or other like faults of their own; or whether they do not ambitiously aim at a greater kind of thriving than God seeth meet for them; or whether it be not envy at the greater thriving of others than at themselves. If so, they have just cause to be humbled. To such I may say, 'Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin?' Lam. iii. 39. In these and other like cases a man hath more cause to repent than be discontent.

(2.) In this case about crosses in their callings, I advise men to consider that it is the Lord who giveth, or withholdeth blessing. Read for this purpose, Ps. cxxvii. 1, 2, and cxviii. 2-4. This consideration is of great force to make a believer content with that estate wherein God sets him, willing to abide therein, patient under crosses that befall him therein, diligent in the duties thereof, constant in waiting on God for his blessing, and ready to resign himself wholly to God's disposing providence.

9. Reproach. All reproach is against a man's name, which is more precious unto him than wealth, yea, than life itself, Prov. xxii. 1, Eccles. vii. 1. Reproaches pierce deep into a man's soul, and make him exceedingly discontent.

The advice therefore which was given about crosses in a man's calling must in this case be observed.

Consider the cause of the reproach that is laid upon thee. If it be for thy own misdemeanour or wickedness, thou art to bear it contentedly as a just punishment; but if it be without cause given on thy part, refer the case to God; and say as David did, 'Let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that

the Lord will requite good for his cursing this day,' 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.

On hope hereof rest content; the rather because not only many righteous men, but also Christ himself, endured in this case more than thou dost.

If the reproach be for righteousness' sake, and for the Lord's sake, we ought not only to be content therewith, but also to rejoice therein, Mat. v. 11, 12.

The like may be said of all manner of persecution for the Lord's sake.

10. Afflictions. Under this head I comprise all manner of oppressions and hard handlings by men, and all kind of wasting and torturing maladies more immediately inflicted by God; yea, and all things grievous to weak flesh. To work contentment in these cases our eye must be on the prime and principal author of all, which is the wise God, and our tender Father; and withal we ought to consider the end which he aims at therein, and the good that he will produce from thence. He sees that the afflictions which he layeth on us, either mediately by visible, instrumental, and secondary means; or immediately by himself, are needful for us, and useful to us; for he always correcteth us 'for our profit,' Heb. xii. 10. See more hereof on that place.

Sec. 66. *Of examining one's self about contentment.*

If serious and thorough examination be made concerning this grace of contentment, we shall find it to be a most rare grace; not only rare in the excellency of it (whereof see Sec. 64), but rare in the scarcity thereof. Scarce one man among a thousand will be found to have attained it.

The discontented complaints that are everywhere heard of men's want of means, of their great charge, of their not thriving as others do, of heavy burdens, of grievous oppressions, sore afflictions, and other things that disquiet them, are evidences of the want of this grace in them.

Could the inward perplexities of the spirit at everything that crosseth their humour, and their unsatisfied mind about their present estate be discerned, the want of this grace would be more evidently manifested.

This is a case much to be bewailed, and for which we ought deeply to be humbled. It robs God of that praise which is due to him for those blessings that he doth bestow. For a discontented mind lightly esteems such blessings as God bestows on him, because he hath not what he would, and by the inward perplexity of his soul makes his life a kind of hell.

The grounds of contentedness laid down (Sec. 63) afford a good direction for attaining this grace.

Sec. 67. *Of the inference of God's promise against covetousness, and for contentedness.*

Ver. 5. *For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

The first particle of this text, *for*, sheweth that this

promise is added as a reason of that which goeth before. It hath reference both to the vice forbidden, which is covetousness, and also to the virtue enjoined, which is contentedness. It is here added to dissuade from the former, and to persuade to the latter. The argument is taken from God's promise of providing for his. It may be thus framed:

They whom God hath promised never to leave nor forsake, ought not to be covetous, but content;

But God hath promised never to leave nor forsake such as trust in him;

Therefore such as trust in God ought not to be covetous, but content.

This promise of God's continual providence and protection, much aggravateth the sin of covetousness, and is of much force to work contentment. To covet more than God, who hath promised never to leave thee, nor forsake thee, seemeth meet to bestow on thee, is a real denial of the truth of that promise, and in that respect it maketh God a liar. On the other side, to be content with such things as thou hast, addeth a seal to the truth of this promise, and in that respect avoucheth God's truth and faithfulness; yea, also it giveth evidence that thou confidently retest upon the accomplishment of that promise. Therefore covetousness is a vice very dishonourable to God, but contentedness is a virtue very honourable to him.

Sec. 68. *Of applying to others promises made to some.*

Question is made, Where God should say that which is here set down?

Some think that it is gathered out of the usual and common doctrine of the sacred Scripture, as if it were thus more distinctly expressed, The Lord doth here and there, even everywhere almost throughout the Scripture, faithfully promise to be always present with his children, to provide for them, to succour them according to their need; and never to leave them successless, nor utterly to cast them off. Thus such an indefinite testimony is used in these words: 'Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest,' &c., Eph. v. 14. That testimony is not in express terms set down in any particular text of Scripture. But because it is the general doctrine of the Scripture, it is brought in as a divine testimony thus, *he saith*; for the Holy Ghost in the Scripture very oft calls upon those that sleep in sin to awake and repent. This general interpretation of a testimony may well stand where the express words cannot be found in any distinct place. But the testimony here in this text, quoted by the apostle, is in so many words set down by God himself, Josh. i. 5.

*Obj.* That promise being in particular made to Joshua, how can it be extended to all saints?

*Ans.* It containeth a truth that concerneth all God's children; and therefore as God, on one occasion, applied it to Joshua, to encourage him against the many and mighty nations with whom he was to



fight; so on other occasions it may be applied to others. For God's presence with his, and care over them, encourageth them against enemies; makes them content in any state, makes them patient under all crosses, hearteneth them against all temptations, and emboldeneth them against all dangers.

Of that grace which God shewed to Abraham in counting to him his faith for righteousness (Gen. xv. 6), the apostle thus saith, 'It was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed,' &c., Rom. iv. 24.

That which is said of promises may also be applied to threatenings and judgments. For thus saith the apostle of the judgments that were executed on the Israelites in the wilderness: 'These things were our examples.' And again, 'All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition,' &c., 1 Cor. x. 6, 7. Yea, the apostle tells us, that 'whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning,' Rom. xv. 4. It was usual with the apostles to apply sundry points, delivered by the prophets to the Jews, unto Christians, as Rom. xii. 9, 16, 17, 20, 1 Cor. ix. 9, 1 Peter i. 16.

Thus God's former dealing with saints, in mercy, in judgment, by promises, by threatenings, or any other way, may and ought to be applied to every one of us, as if the promises or threatenings had in particular been directed to us.

For God is of himself and in himself unchangeable, 'with him is no variableness,' James i. 17. He is as holy, as merciful, as just, as true as ever he was. God being always like himself, he answerably dealth with such as are like those that lived before them. 'God is no respecter of persons,' Acts x. 34. He is equal and impartial in his dealings with men, in what age soever they live. Whosoever believeth on him, as Abraham did, their faith shall be counted for righteousness. Whosoever trusteth, as Joshua did, shall find God to be with them, and not to fail nor forsake them. Whosoever murmur and rebel against him, as the Israelites, shall also be punished as they were.

We may here observe one special reason of that small profit which many reap by the word. They read it and hear it only as a history of former times, not thinking that it concerneth them at all. This promise of God made to Abraham, 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed,' they conceive to be an especial evidence of God's favour to Abraham; but in that they apply it not to themselves, nor take it as spoken to themselves, their own faith is little strengthened thereby, and small comfort redoundeth to their own souls. The like may be said of this promise to Joshua, and of other promises to other saints in former times.

Hence we may learn a good direction for reaping much profit from former promises, threatenings, mercies, judgments, precepts, and other points in God's word. This may be by applying them unto ourselves,

and taking them as directed to ourselves in particular. Thus will directions to others put us into the right way, and admonitions to others make us wary, and promises to others encourage us, and threatenings against others restrain us from sin. Thus 'whatsoever things were written aforetime,' will prove good instructions to us.

Thus shall we not need to wish that we had such extraordinary ministers as the prophets and apostles were; for those things which by the Spirit were revealed to them, were revealed for us, and for our sake they remain upon perpetual record. See Sec. 79. See also Chap. iii. 15, Sec. 158.

Of avoiding the sins of former ages, see Chap. iii. 8, Secs. 89, 90, 95.

#### Sec. 69. *Of this phrase, 'he hath said.'*

The promise here expressed is thus indefinitely set down, *he hath said*. There is no antecedent mentioned by the apostle, whereunto this relative *he* hath reference. But because the express words of the promise are in the Old Testament, it is taken for granted that God is here meant. For it was the Lord that made this promise to Joshua (Josh. i. 5); and where the said promise is made to the congregation of Israel, he that makes the promise is thus set out, 'the Lord thy God,' Deut. xxxi. 6.

Of the divers ways of citing texts of Scripture, see Chap. ii. 6, Sec. 50.

This indefinite expression of him that made the promise, by this relative *he*, giveth us to understand, that whatsoever is registered in the Old Testament, is to be taken for God's word; and thereupon to be rested on, without making any question thereof, or opposition against it. The disciples of an ancient philosopher had their master in such high account, as they accounted what he had said to be so true, as no question was to be made thereof. When they affirmed anything in their disputes, and were asked why it was so, they would answer, *he said it*. This by the heathen themselves was counted too great a presumption in scholars to give it, and in masters to take it. But in reference to God, who is truth itself, it is most proper to conclude, *he hath said*, and thereupon to rest as on the surest proof that can be given. See Chap. i. Sec. 46.

#### Sec. 70. *Of these words, 'leave,' 'forsake.'*

The promise here produced by the apostle is expressed in God's own name. God himself is brought in uttering it, thus, *I will not leave thee*, &c. Indeed, God himself did first utter this to Joshua. And the apostle by this manner of bringing it in, would have every believer set God before him, and be persuaded

<sup>1</sup> Pythagoras. Siquid Pythagorici affirmarent in disputando, cum ex his quæreretur, quare ita esset, respondere solebant, *ipse dixit*.—Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1. Hinc proverbium, *αὐτὸς ἐφα*.

that God in particular saith to him, 'I will not leave thee,' &c.

The word translated<sup>1</sup> *leave*, signifieth to loose or undo a thing, as where it is said of prisoners, 'every one's bands (*ἀνδρῶν*) were loosed,' Acts xvi. 26. So of rudder bands, Acts xxvii. 40. It signifieth also to put a thing from one, as where the apostle saith to masters, 'forbear or put away (*ἀνέστης*) threatening,' Eph. vi. 9. This word, being here negatively used, implieth that God will not put from him such as trust in him, but will hold them close to himself, and not leave them loose to shift for themselves.

The other Greek word, *ἐγκαταλείπω*, translated *for-sake*, is a double compound. The simple *λείπω*, signifieth to be wanting, as Tit. i. 5, 'Things (*λείποντα*) that are wanting,' and Tit. iii. 13, 'that nothing be wanting.' The compound, to leave or go away, thus it is said of Christ, 'leaving (*καταλείπων*) Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum,' Mat. iv. 13. And of a husband it is said, 'he shall leave (*καταλείψει*) father,' &c., Mat. xix. 5.

The double compound, *ἐγκαταλείπω*, signifieth to leave one in time of danger. It is nine times used in the New Testament, and always in this sense. Where Christ on the cross saith to his Father, 'Why hast thou forsaken me?' this double compound is used, Mat. xxvii. 46; so 2 Tim. iv. 16. This being here negatively applied to God, sheweth that we need not fear any want, danger, or distress, as if God should leave or forsake us therein.

Sec. 71. *Of God's earnest manner of pressing his promise.*

The manner of setting down this promise is very emphatical, and that in four respects:

1. In that it is set down negatively, *I will never leave*. This maketh the promise to be of a larger extent. For it includeth all times, all places, all estates, all danger, all needs, all distresses whatsoever, as if he had more largely said, thou shalt never stand in need of my help and protection, but thou shalt be sure to find it. An affirmative promise doth not carry such an extent; for if one say, I will help thee or succour thee, if he do it sometimes, upon some occasions, the promise is kept. But negatively to say, I will not fail thee, though succour should be afforded a hundred times, and yet once and on some occasion fail, that negative promise is not kept to the full, but is broken.

2. In that the negative is doubled, yea, and trebled; for in the Greek it is thus expressed, *I will (ὃ μὴ) not leave thee (ὅδ' ὃ μὴ), neither not not forsake thee*. There is a like trebling of the Greek negative, Mat. xxiv. 21, Mark xiv. 25, Luke x. 19.

In Latin and other languages two negatives make an affirmative; as, *not nobody* is *somebody*: *not no-*

<sup>1</sup> *ἀνέω* aorist. 2. subjunct. *ἀνίπα* *τω* *την* *mittō*. *ἀνίπα* *remitto*.

*thing* is *something*. But in Greek doubling and trebling negatives make them much the stronger. When they would set forth the impossibility of a thing, they use to double the negative, as Mat. v. 18, 26. In these places, to shew the emphasis of doubling this negative particle, it is thus translated, 'in no wise,' 'by no means.' It also implieth the continuance of that which is denied, and translated 'no more;' as where God saith, 'I will remember their sins no more,' Heb. x. 17. The doubling of the negative particle doth in this place carry the greater emphasis, because in setting down the same thing, it is not only twice doubled, but in the latter place it is trebled, so as there are in all five negatives. I read not the like throughout the New Testament.

3. In that the matter of the promise is set down in two words, which in general imply one and the same thing: but, as Joseph said of Pharaoh's two dreams, which set forth the same thing, 'The thing is doubled, because it is established by God,' Gen. xli. 32. Besides the two words do explain each other, as was shewed, Sec. 69. And this latter doth render a reason of the former. For God doth not leave his that he might not seem to forsake them. And the former sheweth a ground of the latter, namely, that God by not leaving his, doth not forsake them.

4. In that the two phrases, *never leave nor forsake*, are so general, as they include all wants, all needs, all dangers, all distresses, all manner of evils that any can fall into. They being spoken of God, who is able and willing to do whatsoever is needful for any, his *not leaving, nor forsaking*, implieth all needful succour. It is more than if he had said, I will supply thy wants, I will heal thy sores, I will recover thee from sickness, I will ease thy pain, I will free thee from thine oppressors, I will break thy bonds, I will deliver thee out of prison, I will vanquish thy enemies, or any the like particular promise: for these generals comprise all manner of particulars under them. Of the use of general promises, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 6, Of Faith, Sec. 73.

God knoweth how dull we are in conceiving his careful providence over us, and backward to believe his gracious promises toward us, and therefore he doth with such earnestness press the same.

It is God's earnest desire that we should not miss, but rather reap, the benefit which he intends us by his promise.

'Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed hereunto,' Heb. ii. 1. The more instant and earnest God is in promising, the more ready and steady must we be in believing.

Sec. 72. *Of applying promises every one to himself.*

It is further observable, that the apostle who writ this epistle to many, expresseth the person to whom the promise is intended in the second person of the

singular number, *thee*. Hereof these reasons may be given :

1. God made this promise to Joshua by name, as to a single person. And the apostle would not alter one tittle in the promise.

2. Every believer is to apply the promises which concern many, so to himself in special, as if it were directed to him by name, and concerned him alone. The fruit, the life, the comfort of a promise resteth in this particular application thereof.

3. Christians are considered all as one ; for they are members of one and the same body, and in regard of their spiritual condition animated by one and the same spirit, and thus all of them spoken to as to one. On this ground, where it is said that 'Moses spake unto all Israel,' he thus expresseth his mind, 'The Lord thy God will go before thee ;' 'He it is that doth go with thee ;' 'He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee,' Deut. xxxi. 1, 3, 6.

4. God doth account all believers as dead unto him as if they were but one. They are therefore all as one spouse to his Son, Cant. iv. 8, 9, 2 Cor. xi. 2. They are all heirs of the same kingdom, James ii. 5. To be an heir is the property of *one*, Gen. xxi. 10.

This is a good ground for every particular believer to apply the precious promises of the gospel to himself in particular.

The like may be said of the duties which God requireth of children of men. For in the decalogue or ten commandments they are laid down as a particular precept to every person in the singular number thus, 'Thou shalt have no other gods ;' 'Thou shalt not make to thyself,' &c.

#### Sec. 73. *Of God's not failing nor forsaking his.*

The substance of this promise, *I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee*, giveth assurance of God's constant and continual careful providence over his. Concerning it the psalmist upon his own experience thus saith, 'I have been young and now am old ; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken,' &c., and again, 'The Lord forsaketh not his saints ; they are preserved for ever,' Ps. xxxvii. 25, 28. Very elegantly doth the prophet, by an argument from the less to the greater, thus enforce this point, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee,' Isa. xlix. 15. This negative promise is much pressed in Scripture, as 1 Chron. xxviii. 20, 1 Sam. xii. 22, 1 Kings vi. 13, Isa. xlii. 17. The ground hereof resteth upon the unchangeableness of God's love. God is in all things unchangeable. God is immutable in his nature, in which respect he thus saith, 'I am the Lord, I change not,' Mal. iii. 6. He is also immutable in his counsel, in his word, in his oath, Heb. vi. 17, 18, and in his love, John xiii. 1.

Besides, the relations which he hath caused to pass  
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betwixt himself and us, giveth us further assurance that he will never leave nor forsake us. 'When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up,' Ps. xxvii. 10. 'Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not,' &c., Isa. lxiii. 16.

*Obj.* Job by reason of his sore and heavy crosses, and Lazarus who died a beggar, may seem to be left and forsaken of God.

*Ans.* Losses, crosses, pain, penury, and other afflictions, are no argument of God's forsaking men. His wise providence is much manifested in ordering his children's estate here in this world ; for,

1. God never suffers his to be tempted above that they are able to bear. He giveth strength answerable to the burden he layeth upon his. 'We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed ; we are perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed,' 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

2. God always gives a good issue to the trials of his children, 1 Cor. x. 13. Job had all that was taken from him doubled, Job xlii. 10. The angels carried Lazarus his soul into heaven, Luke xvi. 22.

3. God recompenseth outward losses and crosses with far better things. For wealth he giveth grace ; for bondage of body, freedom of conscience ; for pain, patience ; for corporal death, eternal life.

*Obj.* 2. Saints themselves have complained that they have been forgotten and forsaken, Isa. xlix. 14.

*Ans.* That was the misapprehension of their weak flesh, which is no sufficient evidence against God's express promise. The psalmist acknowledgeth this misapprehension, Ps. lxxvii. 10.

*Obj.* 3. Christ himself complaineth that he was forsaken, Mat. xxvii. 46.

*Ans.* Christ together with our flesh took the infirmity thereof : and thereupon complaineth according to his present apprehension. But to shew that he did not utterly despond, nor judge himself totally and finally forsaken, he premiseth this clause of affiance, *My God, my God*.

Do they believe the foresaid promise of God, who faint and sink under the burden of any trial, or under any fear that they shall be forsaken ? yet how many be there in the number of those that profess the Christian faith, who, upon great losses, cry out and say they are utterly undone ; and upon some sore afflictions despairingly say, they shall never be able to endure it. Such are more like to Cain, who said, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear,' Gen. iv. 13, than to David, who, 'when he was greatly distressed, encouraged himself in the Lord his God,' 1 Sam. xiii. 6, or Jehoshaphat, who in his distress said, 'O our God, we know not what to do, but our eyes are upon thee,' 2 Chron. xx. 12, or Abraham, who, when God's promise and precept seemed to cross one another about the sacrificing of his son, said, 'God will provide,' Gen. xxii. 8.

This promise of God's not leaving nor forsaking his, is of singular use to support us in all trials and distresses whatsoever. It is so general as it may be applied to spiritual and corporal distresses. In such losses as Job had, Job i. 15, &c.; in such jealousies as Daniel was tried withal, Dan. vi. 4; in such a prison as Paul and Silas was cast into, Acts xvi. 24; in such a dungeon as Jeremiah was let down into, Jer. xxxviii. 6; in such a sickness as Hezekiah fell into, Isa. xxxviii. 1; when we are falsely accused as Paul was, Acts xxiv. 5; when we are forsaken of men as Paul was, 2 Tim. iv. 16; when we are disquieted in mind as David was, Ps. xlii. 11; at the point of death, in which case Stephen was, Acts vii. 59, 60; in our thoughts and cares about our children and posterity, such as came into Jacob's head, Gen. xlix. 1, 2, &c.; we may and must meditate on this promise, and with confidence thereon support ourselves.

Sec. 74. *Of the persons whom God will not forsake.*

The persons to whom in special this promise of God's not leaving and forsaking is made, is comprised under this pronoun *thee*. This promise was of old by God himself made in particular to Joshua. Joshua was a man of such courage and confidence in God's word, as he, together with Caleb, steadfastly believed that God would not leave nor forsake them, when the whole congregation of Israel so fainted, as they wept that God had brought them out of Egypt, and murmured against the ministers employed in that service of bringing them out. They must therefore be such as Joshua was, who have right to apply this promise to themselves. Such were they to whom Moses doth apply it, Dent. xxxi. 6.

It cannot be denied but that God's general providence is extended to all of all sorts, 'for in him all live, and move, and have their being,' Acts xvii. 28. And 'he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,' Mat. v. 45. But his special care is on them that believe on him, 1 Tim. iv. 10. In this case the psalmist maketh an apparent difference betwixt the wicked and the righteous, Ps. xxxvii. 17, 18, &c. 'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust to be punished,' 2 Pet. ii. 9. The apostle exemplifieth this in the good angels, that were not left nor forsaken, and the evil angels, that were cast down into hell: and in Noah and his family, whom God saved when he brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and in Lot, whom God delivered when he destroyed four cities, and the inhabitants thereof.

This providence of God in not leaving nor forsaking his, might further be exemplified in the three great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and in sundry of their posterity. Hundreds, thousands, millions of instances might be given for the proof hereof. I dare boldly avouch that from the beginning of the

world to this day, not one that trusted in God was left or forsaken.

Sec. 75. *Of the inference of ver. 6 on ver. 5.*

Ver. 6. *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

In this verse there is an inference made upon the former promise of God's not leaving nor forsaking his. The conjunction, *ὥστε*, translated *so that*, implieth an inference, and such an inference in this place as teacheth us to make a good use of the forenamed promise. The use here set down is double: one is confidence in God, *the Lord is my helper*; the other is courage against man, *I will not fear*, &c.

In the former verse the apostle alleged the promise to dissuade from covetousness, and persuade to contentedness. Here he addeth two other ends or uses thereof. Hereby it appeareth that God's promise of never leaving nor forsaking his, is of manifold use, and therefore it is the more steadfastly to be rested on, and more frequently and seriously to be meditated upon.

Hereby it further appeareth that many inferences and sundry uses may be made of the same doctrine.

This profession, *the Lord is my helper*, may also have a more remote reference, both to the vice of covetousness forbidden, and also to the virtue of contentedness commanded, and that as another dissuasion from the one, and persuasion to the other. For if God be our helper, what need we covet more than he seeth meet to bestow upon us? and why shall we not be content with that which he seeth meet for us? If God be our helper, we may rest upon it that he will help us to whatsoever he seeth needful and good for us. Hereupon we need not fear man's spoiling us of that which God seeth fit for us, neither need we fear any thing that man can do to disturb us in that wherein we rest content.

This pronoun, *ἐγώ*, *we*, being of the first person and plural number, hath reference to him that wrote this epistle, and to those unto whom he wrote it, who lived many hundred years after the forementioned promise was made to Joshua; yea, it hath reference to all Christians that have lived since this apostle's time, and shall live to the end of the world, so as hereby is confirmed that which was noted, Sec. 68, of applying promises made to saints of old to such as should live long after them.

As this particle *we* hath reference to the words following, which were the words of David, it sheweth, that not only God's promises, but also the speeches and actions of saints in former ages, are left upon record for our use, that we upon like grounds and occasions should speak as they did, and do as they did, *ἐγὼς λέγω*, *we may say*, saith the apostle—namely, as the psalmist did in the words following. The same ground of saying what he did, we also have.

We have the Lord to be our God, as well as they of old had. God is set forth unto us in all those divine excellencies of power, wisdom, truth, righteousness, goodness, grace, compassion, and patience, he was unto them. We have also the same Spirit to work in us knowledge, faith, hope, courage, and other like graces that they had.

On this ground, thus saith the apostle, 'We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak,' 2 Cor. iv. 13.

Faith in such promises as saints of old had, will make saints in later times freely speak such things as they in former times did. Hereof see more in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 10, Sec. 67.

Sec. 76. *Of confidence and boldness arising from God's promise.*

The word translated *boldly*, is in the Greek a participle, *παρρησιας*, and may thus be translated word for word, *so that we being confident may say*.

The root, *παρρησι* seu *παρρησι*, from whence the Greek word here used cometh, doth signify *confidence*, and the verb, *παρρησι* seu *παρρησι*, to be *confident*. This word is always in the New Testament used in the better sense, and translated, sometimes to 'be of good cheer,' or to 'be of good comfort,' Mat. ix. 2, 22. Sometimes to 'be confident,' 2 Cor. v. 6, 8, or, to 'be bold,' 2 Cor. x. 1, 2. But *boldness* in that and this text, is to be taken in the better part, for a virtue, implying the very same thing that *confidence* doth. It is here the rather translated *boldly*, because it is opposed to *fear*, mentioned in the last clause of this verse. For boldness and fear are opposed one to another. Fear keeps a man from being bold, and boldness drives away fear. In this respect, saith Christ, 'Be of good cheer (or be bold); it is I; be not afraid,' Mat. xiv. 27.

This word *therefore* here inserted, sheweth that God's promise, duly believed, will make men bold, or confident in all distresses. Joshua was hereby moved with great resolution and courage to fight against all those nations which God promised to give into his hands, Josh. i. 5, 10, &c. A like promise moved the Israelites boldly to venture through the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 13, &c. Jehoshaphat was hereby moved to go against that numerous army that came against him, 2 Chron. xx. 15, &c. The like may be noted of Elisha, Judges iv. 7, Gideon, Judges vii. 7, &c., Paul, Acts xxvii. 24, &c., and sundry others. David professeth that this was it that caused him to hope.

The ground hereof resteth in God, who maketh the promise, and in those excellent properties whereby he hath made known himself unto us; as,

1. In his unsearchable wisdom in ordering the kind of promise he makes to children of men. He maketh no promise but what he seeth meet and fit to be accomplished.

2. In his almighty power, whereby he is able to perform and make good whatsoever he promiseth.

3. In his infallible truth and faithfulness, which puts him on to ratify and perform every word that cometh out of his mouth.

4. In his goodness to all them that come to him, and rely upon him.

That we may observe this apostolical direction, and, by God's promise, be emboldened with confidence, as the apostle here directeth us to do, two especial duties are requisite:

1. A faithful remembrance of God's promises.

2. A wise and right application of them.

Of these two, see *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 2, Of Faith, Sec. 71, &c.

Sec. 77. *Of boldness in a man's holy profession.*

The evidence of the boldness and confidence here mentioned is given in a Christian's speech, intimated in this participle *say* (*so that we may boldly say*.) Hereby we are given to understand, that faith in God's promise makes men freely and boldly utter their mind.

Hereof see more in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 10, Sec. 67.

Sec. 78. *Of God's presence presupposing help.*

The profession which the apostle putteth into Christians' mouths is expressed in the words of the psalmist thus, *The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me*. This text is taken out of Ps. cxviii. 6. There is indeed some difference in the apostle's quoting the text betwixt the Hebrew and the Greek. The Hebrew thus reads it, יהוה לי, 'The Lord is with me,' or, 'for me,' or, as our English hath translated it, 'The Lord is on my side,' the Greek thus, 'The Lord is my helper.'

To this sundry answers may be given:

1. Penmen of the New Testament were not translators of the words and sentences, but quoters of the sense and meaning of the Old Testament. See Chap. i. 6, Sec. 72.

2. The word *helper* is used by the psalmist in the next verse, and from thence it may be taken by the apostle.

3. The LXX Greek translation. Thus Abras the translation that the church use, would kill <sup>reclusion</sup> *lostles* time, see Chap. i. 6, Sec. 72) read was afraid word for word as the apostle doth. The *se* therefore, being the same with the Hebrew, the apostle would not alter that translation.

4. The alteration which is in the Greek serves for an exposition of the mind and meaning of the psalmist. For God's being *with*, or *for* us, or *on our side*, presupposeth that he is our *helper*. So as there is no contradiction betwixt the psalmist and apostle, but a clear interpretation of the psalmist's mind, and a profitable instruction thence ariseth, namely, that upon

assurance of God's being with us, for us, and on our side, we may rest upon it that he will afford all needful help and succour unto us. Hereupon the psalmist himself making this inference: for having said, 'The Lord is on my side,' he addeth, 'The Lord taketh my part with them that help me,' Ps. cxviii. 6, 7. God himself having said to Joshua, 'I will be with thee,' maketh this further inference, 'I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee,' Josh. i. 5; and upon this promise to the church, 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,' God further addeth, 'and they shall not overflow thee' (Isa. xliii. 2), that is, God would so help it as it should not be overwhelmed and drowned. We have a real and visible demonstration hereof in the example of those three faithful servants of God, who yielded their bodies to be cast into a hot fiery furnace, [rather] than to worship any god except their own God. The Son of God was in the midst of the fire with them, thereupon they had no hurt, Dan. iii. 25.

God is not with his servants as a stranger, who only beholdeth the case wherein they are, but as a Master or Father, who takes an especial care of them, and thereupon being with them, he cannot but help them.

Singular comfort hence ariseth from the omnipresence of God to his children especially, who place their confidence on him. All of us give assent to that which God thus saith of himself, 'Do not I fill heaven and earth?' Jer. xxiii. 24; and to this, 'The eyes of the Lord are in every place,' Prov. xv. 3; and to this, 'Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me,' Ps. cxxxix. 5. How, then, can we doubt of help and succour in any place, or in any case?

Sec. 79. *Of using the same sayings that saints of old did.*

In that the apostle puts the words of an ancient servant of God into the mouths of other servants of God that lived in after times, he sheweth, that all of all ages, who are of the same faith, may make the same profession of God, and rest with as much confidence on God as they who lived in former times did. We need to rescue our greatest difficulties, 'God will provide.' The apostle did, Gen. xxii. 8; and as Jonathan did, 'It were not restraint to the Lord to save by many, or ere cast' 1 Sam. xiv. 6; and as Jehoshaphat did, 'Ov, whom, we know not what to do, but our eyes are upon thee,' 2 Chron. xx. 12; and as Paul did, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Rom. viii. 31.

God is every way the same to us as he was to his saints of old: his promises remain the same to us. We have the same Spirit, to work in us the same mind that they had; thereupon we may use the same profession, the same supplication, and in all like things the same words that they did.

It is an especial point of wisdom to take due notice of the words and speeches of saints of old: such, especially, as were evidences of their faith in God; and to make them familiar to ourselves, that they may be as proverbs, on all occasions in our mouths. This will be an especial means to quicken our spirits, to help our devotion, and to strengthen our faith. Hereunto let me add this caution, that as we use the same words, so we use them with the same mind, and with the same affection. See more hereof, Sec. 68.

Sec. 80. *Of the Lord Jehovah.*

The first words of the forenamed profession are these, *The Lord is my helper*. Here are two emphatical words, which are of special force to strengthen our faith:

One is this proper title, *the Lord*, applied to God.

The other is this epithet, *helper*, attributed to him.

The former is the interpretation of the Hebrew word *Jehovah*, which is a title proper and peculiar to God alone. It setteth out the eternity, self-existence, immutability, fidelity, and sundry other excellencies of God. We may, with much confidence, rest upon that which Jehovah, this Lord, undertaketh to do. If he be our *helper*, we may be sure to want no help, whatsoever our case be. He is both able and ready to do whatsoever he seeth needful for us.

Of this title *Jehovah*, see more Chap. i. Sec. 128. See also *The Church's Conquest*, on Exod. xvii. 15, Sec. 72.

Sec. 81. *Of God's readiness to help.*

The latter word, *βοηθῶν*, *helper*, according to the notation of it, signifieth one that is ready to run at the cry of another. Hereof see Chap. ii. Sec. 184.

This notation implieth a willing readiness, and a ready willingness in God to afford all needful succour. Herein God shews himself like a tender father, mother, or nurse, who presently runs when any of them hear the child cry, to help it. This, therefore, is spoken of God by way of resemblance, to make us the better conceive God's readiness to help us.

The ground hereof resteth on his own goodness. He hath pity, because he will have pity; and sheweth mercy, because he will shew mercy, Exod. xxxiii. 29. 'Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.' Mat. xi. 26.

A great encouragement this is in all our needs to cry unto God, and to make our case known unto him by humble and faithful prayer.

Sec. 82. *Of God's hearing those whom he leaves not.*

Wherein this profession of God's being our helper, is inferred upon the forementioned promise of not leaving nor forsaking, it appears, that those whom

God forsakes not, he readily and really helps in all their needs and straits. God doth not content himself with the negative, *not to leave*, but adds an affirmative assistance, he is a *helper*.

That God who promised Joshua not to fail nor forsake him (Josh. i. 5), afterwards appeared unto Joshua with his sword drawn, and said, 'As Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come,' Josh. v. 13, 14. Hereby he shewed himself a helper of Joshua. This is further confirmed by the success which the Lord gave to Joshua's undertakings.

There is no mean betwixt God's *not failing* and *helping*. If he do not help, he fails; and if he that is able to help do not fail, then help must needs be afforded.

Besides, God will have his presence with his saints (which his not forsaking them presupposeth) make to the best advantage that can be: which must be by helping of them.

1. By this it is manifest, that the negative promise of not failing doth not only imply a privative, but also a positive good.

2. This doth much amplify the comfort that was noted to arise from God's promise of not failing his. Sec. 53, in the end thereof.

3. This may serve as a good pattern unto us in reference to a friend: and that by giving evidence of our not failing him, in that we afford unto him all needful help and succour, so far as lieth in our power. Thus shall we shew ourselves children of our heavenly Father, like unto God.

Sec. 83. *Of applying general privileges to ourselves in particular.*

Whereas the apostle said in the plural number, *we may say*, here he expresseth that which we should say in the singular number, *the Lord is my helper*, he giveth us to understand, that every one is in particular to apply unto himself such promises and evidences of God's fatherly providence, as belong unto many. The psalmist frequently maketh such particular applications, as where he saith, 'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God, my strength, my buckler, the horn of my salvation, my high tower,' Ps. xviii. 2. In like manner said Ruth to Naomi, 'Thy God shall be my God,' Ruth i. 16. And the Virgin Mary, 'My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,' Luke i. 47.

Good grounds there are of this particular application, as,

1. God's indefinite offer of himself, of his grace, of his Son, and of the things that Christ hath done and endured for man's redemption, and of all other needful good things; and that to every one, without exception of any, Isa. lv. 1.

2. God's truth and faithfulness in making good his word and promise, Heb. x. 23.

3. God's command to every one to believe, and

thereby to receive to his own benefit that which God offers unto him, Mark i. 15, John i. 12.

Let us, therefore, not content ourselves with a general knowledge of the mind of God; and that we well understand that God is able and willing to help; and that indeed he is a present help in all trouble; but let us further endeavour to get assurance of God's fatherly favour to us, and special care over us, that we may in faith and with confidence say, *the Lord is my helper*.

Of the great and manifold benefits of this particular persuasion, see the *Guide to go to God*, in the Preface of the Lord's Prayer, Sec. 12.

Sec. 84. *Of fear of man.*

Among other benefits of confidence in God's protection, this is one, which is here hinted by the apostle, that it expelleth fear of man, which is implied under this negative resolution, *I will not fear what men shall do to me*.

Of the notation of the Greek word, φοβησθαι, translated *fear*, see Chap. ii., Sec. 149.

About this vice I purpose to shew,

1. The nature of it.
2. The evil wherein it consisteth.
3. Motives against it.
4. Rules to prevent or redress it.

1. Fear is a troubled passion upon the apprehension of evil. When Zacarias was troubled at the apparition of an angel, the angel saith to him, 'Fear not.' The like he said to the Virgin Mary on the like occasion, Luke i. 13, 30.

Again on the other side, when the disciples were afraid at the sudden apparition of Jesus, he said, 'Why are ye troubled?' Luke xxiv. 38. In this respect these two are joined together, 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,' John xiv. 27. In allusion herunto David saith of the waters, 'They were afraid and troubled,' Ps. lxxvii. 16.

That this trouble ariseth from the apprehension of some evil, is evident, by this phrase, 'I will fear no evil,' Ps. xxiii. 4.

From hence we may infer, that fear of man is a disturbed passion upon the apprehension of some evil that man will do unto him. Thus Abraham apprehended that the Egyptians would kill him by reason of his wife, and thereupon was afraid to profess Sarah to be his wife, Gen. xii. 12.

Sec. 85. *Of the evil wherein the fear of man consisteth.*

11. Fear is not simply evil in itself, for it is a passion, that is, one of man's affections; which are no further evil than they are perverted or abused, as is shewed in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 1, Sec. 4. The abuse of a passion is in misplacing of it upon a wrong object, or in the excess thereof. Now man is

not simply a wrong object of fear, for we are commanded to fear man, Rom. xiii. 7; for,

1. Some men bear the image of God, and in that regard a reverent respect is due unto them. That honour which the law requireth of inferiors towards their superiors is comprised under this word *fear*. Thus we are commanded to 'fear the king,' Prov. xxiv. 21; to 'fear father and mother,' Lev. xix. 3; to 'fear masters,' Eph. vi. 5.

2. Others have power to hurt. In such a case, nature teacheth us so to fear them, as prudently to avoid the mischief they may do. Thus Jacob said concerning his brother Esau, 'I fear him;' thereupon he prayed to God to be delivered from him; and withal used means to prevent what mischief he could, Gen. xxxii. 11, 13, &c.

The evil therefore of fear of man is in the excess thereof, and that,

1. When man is feared more than God: so as in that case there is an opposition betwixt God and man. This Christ forbids, where he saith, 'Fear not them which kill the body: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body,' Mat. x. 28.

2. When fear of man keeps us from our bounden duty: as, they which knew Christ, yet were kept from speaking openly of him for fear of the Jews, John vii. 13.

3. When it puts us on to any sin, as Abraham was hereby brought to dissemble his wife, Gen. xii. 11, &c., and xx. 2; so Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 7, and Peter was hereby brought to deny his Master, Mat. xxvi. 69, &c. Saul acknowledgeth his sinful fear in this kind, 1 Sam. xv. 24.

#### Sec. 86. *Of motives against fear of man.*

III. Among other motives against fear of man, these following are of force:

1. Express prohibition, 1 Pet. iii. 14. Christ himself hath thrice together inculcated this prohibition (Mat. x. 26, 28, 31), which makes it the more forcible.

2. The pattern of such worthies of old as have not feared man. The parents of Moses were 'not afraid of the king's commandment,' Moses himself 'feared not the wrath of the king,' Heb. xi. 23, 27; David, as here, so in sundry other places, professed, that he feared not man, Ps. lvi. 4; Micajah feared not the threatening of Ahab, 1 Kings xxii. 28; nor Daniel, nor his three companions, feared the king and his princes, Dan. iii. 16, and vi. 10. The apostles feared not the threatening of the priests of the Jews, Acts iv. 19, and v. 29. The examples of martyrs in all ages are memorable in this kind.

3. The disgrace that followeth upon fear of man. It ill becometh, yea, it is a great shame to servants of God to fear men. 'Should such a man as I flee?' saith Nehemiah in this case, Neh. vi. 14. There can be

no greater disgrace to a soldier than upon fear to flee from his colours.

4. The evil effects that follow thereupon. Many are thereby brought, against their conscience, to omit bounden duties: as openly to profess Christ, John vii. 13, and to acknowledge other truths, John ix. 22. Others are brought to commit gross sins. This moved Aaron to make the golden calf, Exod. xxxii. 22, &c. This made many Christians of old to offer sacrifice to devils, as the heathen did, and otherwise to commit abominable idolatry. This made many English in Queen Mary's days to go to mass and profess popery. This in our days hath made many to seem more profane than their consciences told them they should be. This hath made many judges to pervert judgment. There is scarce a sin that fear of man brings not men unto.

5. The restraint of man's power. It can at the uttermost but reach to the body, and all that it can do to the body, cannot make a man miserable. See more hereof in *The Extent of God's Providence*, on Mat. x. 29, Sec. 8.

6. The extent of God's power, no way limited but by his own will. The extent thereof in this case is to be considered two ways:

- (1.) Against such as God's servants may be afraid of.
- (2.) For God's servants themselves.

In the former respect, five things are duly to be observed:

[1.] God can turn the minds of enemies. 'The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord,' &c., Prov. xxi. 1. God turned the fury of Esau into favour towards his brother. Compare Gen. xxxii. 6, with Gen. xxxiii. 4.

[2.] God can abate the spirit of the stoutest. God made all the inhabitants of Canaan to faint, Josh. ii. 9. 'The terror of God was upon the cities that were round about Jacob,' Gen. xxxv. 5. 'Even the youth shall faint,' &c., Isa. xl. 30.

[3.] God can weaken the power of the strongest. 'He weakeneth the strength of the mighty,' Job xii. 21.

[4.] He can disappoint men's plots. 'He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot accomplish their enterprise,' Job v. 12. 'Ye thought evil against me,' saith Joseph to his brethren, 'but God meant it unto good,' Gen. i. 20, Acts xii. 6.

[5.] God can utterly destroy his servants' enemies, 2 Kings xix. 35.

In the latter respect, five other things are duly to be observed:

[1.] God can keep his servants safe in the midst of danger. He kept Daniel's three companions safe in the midst of a fiery furnace, and Daniel himself in a den of lions, Dan. iii. 25, and vi. 22. God in general hath promised as much, Isa. xliii. 2.

[2.] He can deliver out of the danger. He caused



Jeremiah to be pulled out of the dungeon. He delivered also him that pulled out Jeremiah, Jer. xxxviii. 13, and xxxix. 17, 18.

[3.] He can turn the judgment to an advantage. The carrying of Daniel and his three companions, and Mordecai and Esther into captivity, proved much to their advantage, Dan. ii. 48, 49, Esth. ii. 17, and vi. 10.

[4.] God can make a temporal judgment to be a means of spiritual good. When Manasseh was in affliction, 'he prayed unto God, and God was entreated of him,' 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13.

[5.] By the uttermost that man can do, which is death, God can free his servants from greater evils, Isa. lvii. 1. Josiah was killed by an enemy at that very time when the floodgates of Israel's misery began to be pulled up. Hereupon it is said, that he should be 'gathered to his grave in peace,' and that 'his eye should not see all the evil,' &c., 2 Kings xxii. 20.

Sec. 87. *Of rules for redressing fear of man.*

IV. For preventing and redressing fear of man, these rules following are observable:

1. Possess thy soul with a fear of God. Fear of God and fear of man are contrary one to another; as light and darkness; life and death. Light keeps out darkness; and so long as life remains in a man, death is kept away. The more fear of God there is in one, the less fear of man there will be in him: if the fear of God were perfect in one, there would be no fear of man in him. Christ prescribeth this rule, where, after he had forbidden his to be 'afraid of them that kill the body,' he addeth, 'but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him,' Luke xii. 4, 5.

2. Lift up the eye of thy soul, which is faith, higher than thou canst the eye of thy body. Thus shalt thou see him who is invisible. So did Moses, and 'feared not the wrath of the king,' Heb. xi. 27.

3. Frequently and seriously meditate on God's promises, and on his properties of mercy, goodness, truth, faithfulness, wisdom, power, and the like, Ps. xviii. 2, and xxiii. 4.

4. Always walk before God, as Enoch did, Gen. v. 24. This will keep thee from fearing any that would draw thee from God. Joseph considered God's presence, when he said to his master's wife, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' Gen. xxxix. 9.

5. Well weigh the difference betwixt God and man. This case the apostles propounded to their adversaries, Acts iv. 19, and v. 29. God can protect from the fury of all men, Dan. iii. 17. But 'there is not any that can deliver out of God's hand,' Deut. xxxii. 39.

Sec. 88. *Of timorousness.*

That which hath been delivered of the evil nature and effects of fear of man, affords matter of lamentation and exhortation.

Of lamentation, in regard of that timorousness which many professors of the true religion bewray; whereby they bring a great blemish even upon the profession itself. If persecution arise for the gospel, so as their goods, liberty, and life be in hazard, they are ready to renounce their holy profession, and to embrace the religion of the times, though it should be apparently idolatrous. Yea, if reproach and disgrace do accompany the power of the true religion, they are moved to abate of their holy zeal, and to be no more forward than the common sort. In these and other like cases they are like to a foolish man, who upon sight of a flaming fire pictured on a map or wall, is so affrighted therewith, as he starts back, and falls into a true burning, flaming fire, wherewith he is terribly scorched, if not clean consumed. Their timorous disposition shews, that they prefer man before God, and this world before the world to come. Such walk by sense more than by faith. Things visible seem to the eye of a mortal man more terrible than things invisible. He therefore who doats upon matters of sense, cannot but be affrighted with the terrors of men.

Sec. 89. *Of watchfulness against fear of man.*

There is great cause again and again to exhort such as profess themselves to be God's servants, whether ministers or others, to take courage unto themselves that they be not disheartened from their good courses by anything that man can do, and to take heed that this root of bitterness, namely, timorousness, spring not up in them. This is one of those roots that trouble men, and whereby many be defiled, Heb. xii. 15. We are the rather to be watchful hereabouts, by reason of the proneness of men, even of saints and believers, thereto. Instance Abraham, Gen. xii. 13; Isaac, Gen. xxvi. 7; Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 7; David, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1; and sundry others; for the flesh as well as the spirit is in such, and 'though the spirit be ready, the flesh is weak,' Mat. xxi. 41.

The more prone our nature is to a sin, the more watchful we ought to be against the same.

How far faith and fear may stand together, see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 11, Sec. 75.

Sec. 90. *Of not fearing multitudes, plots, and practices against one's self.*

In setting down the object of the forementioned fear, he expresseth it in the singular number, *ἀντὶ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ*. This word is here collectively to be taken, and may comprise multitudes under it; and therunto the confidence of this man of God is to be extended, according to that which in another place he saith, 'I will not be afraid of ten thousand of people that have

set themselves against me round about,' Ps. iii. 6. For many in opposition unto God are but as one. Therefore 'there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few,' 1 Sam. xiv. 6, and in like manner against many or against few. Herewith did Asa strengthen his faith, 2 Chron. xiv. 11. There is an infiniteness in the power, wisdom, and other properties of God; so as all human power being finite, one man and multitudes of men are alike to him. In this respect the psalmist, with a holy insultation, saith, 'Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?' &c., Ps. ii. 1-3. On this ground we need not be affrighted at the consultations, conspiracies, and combinations of multitudes together.

As all in the world can stand us in no stead if God be against us, so all can do us no hurt if God be with us.

To amplify this the more, he addeth this, *τί ποιήσει, what can do* ('what man can do'). Hereby he intendeth all manner of inventions, plots, and practices of men. Not only men's persons are not to be feared, but also their wit, their policy, their strength, their dignity, their retinue, their friends, their words, their threats, their attempts, or anything else appertaining to them, or that may any way be achieved by their or others under them. David feared not the counsel of Ahithophel, though it were 'as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God,' but prayed against it, 2 Sam. xv. 31, and xvi. 23; neither did David fear the huge stature of Goliath, nor his warlike preparation, 1 Sam. xvii. 32. Daniel feared not the decree that was made against him by the king and the princes, though it were an unalterable decree, Dan. vi. 10. This might further be applied to anything that is any way in the power of men.

For all that man can do is under the disposing providence of God, so as God can order all as it pleaseth him. It is therefore a point of folly to pretend man's wit, strength, fierceness, threatening, or anything else, to dishearten him.

Though that which any plot or practise as a mischief be in special intended against me, yet ought I not to fear it. So much is implied under this special particle, *me*. When plots and practices are intended against such and such a one in particular, that particular person is in the greater danger, as David, when Saul's envious eye was upon him in special, 1 Sam. xviii. 9; and Paul, when the Jews laid wait for him in particular, Acts ix. 23. This is a great amplification of his courage, that he feared not what any could do against him in particular.

See, 91. *Of the concurrence of faith in God, and courage against man.*

This invincible resolution, *I will not fear what man shall do to me*, being inferred upon the former confident profession, *The Lord is my helper*, and both joined together by this copulative particle, *and*, giveth

us to understand that these two, confidence in God, and courage against man, do go together. They who in truth profess the one will be resolute against the other. Confidence in God, and courage against man, are as twins which are born together, live together, and will die together. David oft joyneth them together, as in that psalm which the apostle here quoteth twice or thrice together, Ps. cxviii. 6, 7, &c., and lvi. 1, 11. So doth the prophet, Isa. xii. 2.

The former is the cause of the latter. Confidence in God is that which produceth and preserveth courage against man, as the sun causeth light, and fire heat.

They who desire proof of their confidence in God, let them make trial of their courage against man. If they can go on cheerfully in their Christian course, and steadfastly hold their holy profession, and resolutely continue in God's work, notwithstanding the envy, fury, plotting, threatening, rage, raving, fretting, fuming, oppression, and persecution of men, they hereby give evidence of their true confidence in God. So did Moses, Exod. x. 25, 26; Zerubbabel and Jeshua, Ezra iv. 3; and Ezra, chap. x. 22; and Nehemiah, chap. iv. 14; and the prophets and apostles. So will all whose confidence is in God.

It is hereby manifested, that they who in time of persecution renounce their profession, or forsake those who stand stoutly to their profession (like those who forsook Paul, 2 Tim. iv. 16), or forgo any duty which their conscience tells them they are bound to, or commit any sin against their knowledge for fear of man, have not attained to that confidence in God which becomes true professors.

The apostle that sets down a believer's profession in the Lord affirmatively, thus, *We may boldly say, The Lord is my helper*, expresseth his esteem of man negatively; thus, *I will not fear what man shall do to me*, doth hereby make faith in God and fear of man so opposite as they cannot stand together, no more than light and darkness. Therefore, where we are exhorted to the former, we are dejected from the latter.

*Obj.* Examples were before given (Sec. 89) of sundry worthies who were endued with a great measure of faith, and yet feared men.

*Ans.* 1. Their faith then lay asleep, and did not exercise itself as it should. A man while he is asleep, though he be living, yet in regard of sundry acts of life is as if he had no life.

2. Opposites, which in the extremes cannot stand together, may be together in their remiss degrees, as light and darkness in twilight.

3. These may be in the same person, as enemies fighting one against another, as in Israel the house of Saul and the house of David for a time stood in opposition. But faith in God, and fear of man—as other fruits of the Spirit and flesh—have such an antipathy, and contrary affection one unto another, that they will never be reconciled. Now faith being

the stronger, will get the upper hand; and at length subdue fear, as the house of David subdued the house of Saul, 2 Sam. iii. 1.

This is a strong inducement to use all means, as to get faith in God, so to nourish, strengthen, and increase the same.

Sec. 92. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 5, 6.*

Ver. 5. *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

6. *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

In these verses the substance of the eighth commandment is laid down.

We have thereabout:

1. The parts.
2. The reason to enforce them.

The parts are two:

One negative, forbidding a vice.

The other affirmative, enjoining a virtue.

About the vice two things are expressed:

1. The kind of it, *covetousness*.
2. The practice of it, in this word, *conversation*.

About the virtue two other things are expressed:

1. The kind of it, *contentedness*.
2. The subject whereabout it is exercised, *such things as you have*.

The motive to enforce the one and the other, is God's promise.

About this we may observe,

1. The substance of the promise, ver. 5.
2. An inference made thereupon, ver. 6.

The former sheweth, what God for his part will do.

The latter, what we for our part must do.

In the former is manifested,

1. A preface.
2. The point itself.

In both,

1. The manner.
2. The matter.

The manner of the former is by an indefinite expression of the person promising, *he*.

The matter implieth a promise, in this phrase, *hath said*.

The manner of the latter is by a multiplied negation.

The matter in two branches.

In both branches there is an express act and object.

The former act, in this word, *have*.

The latter in this, *forsake*.

The object in both is the same, but twice expressed, in this participle, *thee*.

In the inference there is,

1. An introduction, in this phrase, *so that we may boldly say*.

2. An instruction; whereof are two parts,

(1.) A believer's confidence.

(2.) His courage.

In the former we have,

1. The subject whereon his confidence resteth, *the Lord*.

2. The ground or reason of resting thereon, *helper*.

3. The appropriation of it, in this participle, *my*.

In setting down his courage, note,

1. An opposition betwixt God and man, in this negative connexion, *and not*.

2. A manifestation of his courage.

Here we are to observe,

1. The manner of setting it down, by a negative.
2. The matter. Wherein,

1. A vice, *fear*.

2. The object, *man*.

3. The extent, *can do*.

4. The application, *to me*.

Sec. 93. *Of the observations raised out of Heb. xiii. 5, 6.*

1. *Covetousness becometh not Christians.* See Sec. 53.

II. *The practice of covetousness is to be avoided.* For our conversation must be without covetousness. See Sec. 59, &c.

III. *Contentedness is a Christian virtue.* It is here enjoined to Christians. See Sec. 62.

IV. *Christians must be content with their present condition.* This phrase, *such things as you have*, implieth our present condition. See Sec. 63.

V. *Covetousness and contentedness cannot stand together.* The one is here forbidden, and the other commanded. See Sec. 59.

VI. *What dissuades from covetousness, persuades to contentedness.* The same reason is produced for the one and other purpose. See Sec. 67.

VII. *God's promise is of force to keep from covetousness, and to work contentedness.* This is here alleged for both these ends. See Sec. 67.

VIII. *A divine testimony is sufficient to settle one's judgment.* For this end this indefinite phrase, *he said*, is here used. See Sec. 69.

IX. *The Holy Ghost presseth God's promise with much power.* Here are five negatives used. See Sec. 71.

X. *General promises made to saints of old, still are of force to Christians.* See Sec. 68.

XI. *God will not leave his to shift for themselves.* See Secs. 70, 73.

XII. *God will not forsake his in their distress.* See Secs. 70, 73.

XIII. *Every believer may apply an indefinite promise to himself.* See Sec. 72.

XIV. *Words of faith uttered by others may be made our words.* The apostle here putteth David's words into our mouth. See Sec. 75.

XV. *Faith in God works boldness.* This word, *boldly*, intends as much. See Secs. 76, 77.

XVI. *God's presence presupposeth success.* Upon God's promise of not leaving his, the apostle inferreth that God is our helper. See Secs. 78, 79.

XVII. *God is Jehovah.* The word here translated *Lord*, is in the Hebrew text *Jehovah*. See Sec. 80.

XVIII. *God's not forsaking is a helping.* Upon God's promise, *not to forsake*, the apostle styleth him a helper. See Sec. 82.

XIX. *General privileges concern every particular believer.* For God to be a helper is a general privilege. But here every one is taught to say unto him, *my helper*. See Sec. 83.

XX. *Man is not to be feared.* The prophet professeth that he will not fear man. See Sec. 85.

XXI. *Many in opposition to God are as one man.* Under this word *man* in the singular number multitudes are comprised.

XXII. *Nothing that man can do is to be feared.* He saith not only, 'I will not fear man,' but also, 'I will not fear *what man shall do*.'

XXIII. *Man's spite to one's self in particular is not to be feared.* This particle *me* intendeth as much. Of these three last doctrines, see Sec. 90.

XXIV. *Confidence in God and courage against man are inseparable.* He that can say, *the Lord is my helper*, may also say, *I will not fear man*.

XXV. *Faith in God and fear of man cannot stand together.* For he that saith, *God is my helper*, will not fear man. Of these two last doctrines, see Sec. 91.

See. 91. *Of the coherence of ver. 7 with the former.*

Ver. 7. *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*

In this verse is laid down a fourth duty to be performed to others. See Sec. 1. Those others are ministers; so as the duties enjoined in this verse are branches of the fifth commandment. Though the duties be distinct in themselves, yet they have reference to those that go before.

1. They may have a general reference to all the forementioned duties, for their teachers had well instructed them in all. Therefore, by remembering their teachers, they might be the better directed and incited to them.

2. They may have a particular and more immediate reference to the virtues mentioned in the verse immediately going before, which were confidence and courage. For by remembering the doctrine and practice of their teachers, who had well instructed them in the grounds of both, and sealed up their doctrine by being themselves a pattern even unto death, they could not but be much established thereby.

See. 95. *Of remembering our teachers.*

To *remember*, *μνησθῆναι*, is a proper act of the memory. The memory is placed in man as a treasury to lay up for future use such things as the understanding conceiveth to be a truth, and the will yieldeth unto as good.

This act of remembering may admit of a fourfold distinction.

1. To receive and lay up what is conceived by the mind. Thus the preacher would have the young man 'remember his Creator in the days of his youth;' even then to receive and lay up his word and works for some use, Eccles. xii. 1.

2. To hold fast that which is so laid up. Thus it is most properly opposed to forgetfulness. 'Remember, and forget not,' saith Moses to the Israelites, Deut. ix. 7.

3. To call again to mind what hath been forgotten. Thus the disciples are said to remember what Jesus had said to them, John ii. 22. Jesus, in the time of his ministry, had told them that he should rise the third day from the dead; but they forgot it till the time of his resurrection: then they remembered it—that is, they called it again to mind. Thus this word is explained, Isa. xlii. 8.

4. To think on and consider that which we have learned; as when we are enjoined to 'remember God,' Deut. xiii. 18; to 'remember his law,' Mal. iv. 4; to 'remember the Sabbath,' Exod. xx. 8. These and other like things are seriously and frequently to be thought on. Our last English translators of the Bible do oft translate the original word, which properly signifieth to 'remember,' thus, 'think on,' Gen. xl. 14, Neh. v. 19. The word *remember*, being here spoken of things that they had before learned, may be applied to the three latter distinctions, namely, to hold fast, and not forget, or, in case they had forgotten, to use means of calling to mind again; and frequently and seriously to think on what they had heard of their teachers, and seen to be practised by them.

In these respects, Joshua adviseth the Israelites that went beyond Jordan to 'remember the word which Moses commanded them,' Josh. i. 13. And an angel bid them that came to seek Christ in the grave to 'remember how he spake unto them when he was in Galilee,' Luke xxiv. 6.

This word, *remember*, is here used, because,

1. It is a comprehensive word. It compriseth under it all particular duties that hearers owe to their teachers—as to praise God for them, to speak well of them, to believe their word, to obey their directions, to imitate their commendable practices, &c.

2. Remembrance of teachers quickeneth up people to do on their behalf when they are absent as much as if they were present; but no respect useth to be shewed to them that are forgotten.

3. Remembrance of such as are absent doth in a

manner set them before our eyes, and so represents their doctrine and practice unto us, as if we saw them in the pulpit, heard them preaching, and beheld their good conversation.

4. Remembrance of such teachers as have begotten us to God, or further built us up in the true faith, is an especial means to establish us in that truth which we have received from them, and to keep us steady in that way of righteousness wherein they walked before us; for remembering of them makes them to be in absence as present with us. Continual presence of ministers, and their continual preaching sound doctrine, and living holily, doth much confirm and more and more build up hearers. So will the remembrance of them do.

5. Remembrance of teachers removed from us, will keep us from being seduced with corrupt and lewd teachers. So soon as faithful pastors are removed from their flocks, the devil will be ready to thrust in thieves, robbers, yea, and wolves amongst them. This the apostle found to be so by woeful experience, Gal. i. 6, 7, iii. 1, and iv. 9; yea, he foretold as much to the elders of Ephesus, Acts xx. 29, &c.

It is the greatest honour that living people can do to their deceased pastors, to remember their wholesome instructions and holy conversation.

On these and other like grounds the apostles have been very careful in using means to put people in remembrance of them in their absence. For this cause St Paul sent Timotheus unto the Corinthians, to 'bring them into remembrance' of his ways, 2 Cor. iv. 17; this St Peter thought meet to do as long as he lived, 2 Pet. i. 13; for this end he wrote his second epistle, 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2.

Hereby is discovered both the ingratitude and folly of such as, having had faithful ministers, forget them so soon as they are removed from them. It is taxed as a foul blemish in that city which was delivered by the wisdom of a poor wise man, that 'no man remembered that same poor man,' Eccles. ix. 15. It was the destruction of Joash that 'he remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada had done to him,' 2 Chron. xxiv. 22, 23, &c.

That therefore which the apostle here requires, as it is our duty, so it will be our wisdom to observe. This the apostle presseth upon the Philippian, chap. i. 27, and ii. 12. For this he also commendeth the Corinthians, 2 Cor. xi. 2; and the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. iii. 6.

See. 96. *Of ministers being guides.*

They who are in special to be remembered, are thus described in our English translation, *which have the oversight*. This is the interpretation of one Greek word, *ἐπισκοπος*.

The word which the apostle useth is a participle, and cometh from a verb, *ἡγείναι*, which signifieth to *lead*, to *go before*, to *be a guide* in the way, to *be over*

others, to *govern*. It signifieth also to 'think,' Acts xxvi. 2; to 'suppose,' Phil. ii. 25; to 'esteem,' 1 Thess. v. 13; and to 'count,' or 'account,' Phil. iii. 7, 8. In this [sense] it is thrice used in this epistle, as chap. x. 29, and xi. 11, 26; but in this chapter it is thrice used in the former sense.

The word here used is in other places translated 'governor,' as Mat. ii. 6, Acts vii. 10; and 'chief,' Luke xxii. 26, Acts xv. 22.

Some judicious translators in Latin<sup>1</sup> do interpret it by a word, *doctores*, that signifieth *guides*.

This word setteth out the dignity and duty of ministers.

Their dignity, in that by reason of their function, in matters of God, they are over the people, and have a kind of authority in the Lord and in his name.

Their duty, in that they are every way, both by preaching and practice, to go before their people, and to guide them in the way to life.

Sundry other titles, which set forth both these, are in Scripture attributed unto them—as 'rulers,' John vii. 48; 'overseers,' Acts xx. 28; 'guides,' Mat. xxiii. 16, 24; 'leaders,' Mat. xv. 14, John x. 3; 'elders,' 1 Pet. v. 1; 'shepherds,' Mat. ix. 36; 'pastors, teachers,' Eph. iv. 12; 'stewards,' Titus i. 7; 'bishops,' 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2; 'watchmen,' Ezek. iii. 17; 'fathers,' 1 Kings xiii. 14, Philem. 10.

God hath made ministers to be such guides unto his people, in regard of people's need, and for their good.

1. Men of themselves, in regard of the things of God, are blind, and understand not the way wherein they should walk. In this respect they have need of guides. When Philip asked the eunuch whether he understood what he read or no, he answered, 'How can I, except some man should guide me?' Acts viii. 31. That which Christ said to Paul, is true of all ministers; Christ sends them to 'open people's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light,' Acts xxvi. 18. There are many by-paths that lead to destruction, whereto people would soon fall if they had not guides.

2. Men are not only blind, but they are also by nature of a stubborn disposition, hardly brought into the right way; and when they are brought, hardly held therein; so as in this respect there is great need of ministers to be over them, to exhort, incite, admonish, persuade, reprove, and use all other meet means to put them into the right way, and hold them therein.

The good that people may reap by ministers being made guides is very great. Thereby they are instructed and directed in the way to life. By ministers being guides, superiors and inferiors, magistrates and subjects, ministers themselves and people, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, rich and poor, old and young,

<sup>1</sup> Beza, Pareus.

all of all sorts are instructed in their duty, kept within compass of their place, and stirred up to use and employ the abilities that God bestoweth on them to the good of others.

As men do stand in more need of guides in regard of their spiritual estate, than in regard of their temporal estate, so the benefit that they reap from those former guides far exceeds and excels the benefits that they can reap from the latter guides, even as much as our souls excel our bodies, heavenly commodities excel earthly, and everlasting salvation excels temporal preservation.

This giveth an evidence of the good providence of God in providing spiritual guides for his church, for God hath set them there, 1 Cor. xii. 28; and in enabling them to that great function, for God makes able ministers of the new testament, 2 Cor. iii. 6; and in giving them gifts for that end, Eph. iv. 7, 8; and conferring authority on them, so as they may perform their duty with all authority, Titus ii. 15; and finally, in making them accountable to himself, ver. 17, Mat. xxv. 19, Luke xvi. 2, that so they may be the more 'faithful to him that appointed them,' as Moses was, Heb. iii. 3.

This title, *guides*, puts ministers in mind of their duty. We ought to have this title much in mind, and well weigh what duties are comprised under it; and be conscionable in performing the same, Ezek. iii. 17.

There being, by the high supreme Lord, guides set over people, and that in regard of their need, and for their good, it becomes them,

1. To be thankful to God for that evidence of his careful providence.

2. In case they want such guides, to pray for them, as Christ adviseth, Mat. ix. 38.

3. To be conscionable in submitting to their ministry; as this apostle expressly exhorteth, ver. 17.

The duties which are in general to be performed in reference to such guides, are in special to be performed to such as God hath set over ourselves in particular. This the apostle here intimateth under this relative, *you*, for a good shepherd hath an especial care over his own sheep. 'He calleth his own sheep by name, he putteth forth his own sheep,' John x. 3, 4. 'Take heed,' saith the apostle, 'to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.'

Every one hath an especial care of those that are his own, and must give an account for them. Most meet therefore it is that such in special be remembered. The rule of relation requires as much; as guides must be most careful over their own people, so people must be most subject to their own guides.

See. 97. *Of guides preaching.*

The duty of the foresaid guides is thus expressed, *Who have spoken unto you the word of God.* The

Greek word here translated *spoken* is the very same that is so translated, chap. ii. 3. It is here used in the very same sense that there it was, namely, for preaching. See Chap. ii. Sec. 23.

The most principal duty of such as are here called guides, or governors, consisteth herein: it belongeth to the very essence of their calling. When the Lord sent out his apostles, he said unto them, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel,' Mark xvi. 15. Herein Christ requireth Peter to testify his love to him, saying three times, 'Feed my lambs,' 'feed my sheep,' 'feed my sheep,' John xxi. 15-17. And this Peter himself doth press upon other ministers, saying, 'Feed the flock of God,' 1 Peter v. 2. The like doth Paul upon Timothy thus, 'Preach the word, be instant in season, and out of season,' 2 Tim. iv. 2.

There is no way wherein and whereby such as are guides of God's people may do good unto them, than by preaching. By preaching it pleases God to save such as believe, 1 Cor. i. 21. Oh that this were duly weighed of those that can plead for the dignity and authority of such as are spiritual guides or governors in God's church!

See. 98. *Of God's word to be preached.*

The subject-matter to be preached is here styled *the word of God*. Though that which is uttered by men as ministers be properly the sound of a man's voice, yet that which true ministers of God in exercising their ministerial function preach, is the word of God. Thus it is said of the apostles, 'They spake the word of God,' Acts iv. 31, and hereupon it is said of the people of Antioch, that 'almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God,' Acts xiii. 44.

That which ministers do or ought to preach is styled the word of God in a fourfold respect.

1. In regard of the primary author thereof, which is God. God did immediately inspire extraordinary ministers, and thereby informed them in his will. 'For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,' 2 Peter i. 21. Therefore they were wont to use these prefaces, 'The word of the Lord,' Hosea i. 1; 'Thus saith the Lord,' Isa. vii. 7; and an apostle thus, 'I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you,' 1 Cor. xi. 23. As for ordinary ministers, they have God's word written and left upon record for their use, 'For all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,' 2 Tim. iii. 16. They therefore that ground what they preach upon the Scripture, and deliver nothing but what is agreeable therunto, preach the word of God.

2. In regard of the subject-matter which they preach, which is the will of God; as the apostle exhorteth, to 'understand what the will of the Lord is,' Eph. v. 17, and to 'prove what is that good, that acceptable, and perfect will of God,' Rom. xii. 2.

3. In regard of the end of preaching, which is the glory of God, and making known 'the manifold wisdom of God,' Eph. iii. 10.

4. In regard of the mighty effect and efficacy thereof, for preaching God's word is 'the power of God unto salvation.' Rom. i. 16. Preaching the word of God, this is it which is 'mighty through God to bring every thought to the obedience of Christ,' 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. For 'the word of God is quick and powerful,' &c., Heb. iv. 12.

So close ought ministers to hold to God's word in their preaching, as not to dare to swerve in anything from it. The apostle denounceth a curse against him, whosoever he be, that shall preach any other word,' Gal. i. 8, 9.

Upon this we have just cause to avoid such teachers as preach contrary to this doctrine, Rom. xvi. 17, 2 John 10. The whole mass of popery is hereupon to be rejected. So are the manifold errors and heresies that in former ages, and in this our age, have been broached. Pretence of new light, and immediate inspiration in these days, is a mere pretence.

By this subject-matter of preaching, *the word of God*, we may receive a good direction to observe two caveats enjoined by Christ concerning hearing.

The first is concerning the matter which we hear. 'Take heed what ye hear,' Mark iv. 24. We must with approbation hear nothing but what we know to be the word of God. We must, therefore, ourselves be well acquainted with the Scriptures, and by them try the things which we hear, whether they be the word of God or no; as the men of Berea did, Acts xvii. 11.

The second caveat is concerning the manner of hearing, 'Take heed how ye hear,' Luke viii. 18. That which we know to be grounded upon the Scriptures we must receive, 'not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God,' 1 Thess. ii. 13. We must with reverence attend unto it; we must in our hearts believe, and we must in our lives obey it.

It is God's word that doth convert, quicken, comfort, and build up, or, on the other side, wound and beat down. What is the reason that there was so great an alteration made by the ministry of Christ and his disciples, by the apostles and others after them; yea, by Luther, and other ministers of reformed churches? They preached not traditions of elders, as the scribes nor pharisees, as papists, but the pure word of God, which is more purely God's word is preached, the more deeply it pierceth, the more kindly it worketh. There is no other way to be saved, but by the word of God.

Sec. 99. *Of duty it is, that the foresaid guides are to be followed.*

One particular duty is, thus set down, *whose faith follow.*

Of faith in general, as it is a gift of God, or grace whereby we are justified and saved, I have at large

discoursed in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 6, Sec. 11, &c.

This word *faith* must in this place be taken for something that may be heard or seen, and in that respect imitable; namely, for the doctrine of faith (Rom. i. 5), or profession of faith (Acts xiv. 22, Rom. i. 8), or effects and fruits of faith (James ii. 14, 18), or for fidelity and faithfulness (Mat. xxiii. 23). Our English translators do turn the Greek word which properly signifieth *faith* into *fidelity*, Titus ii. 10.

Either or every of these significations may here not unfitly be intended; for when obedience is yielded to the doctrine of faith, which ministers preach; or when people conform themselves to that profession of the faith which their ministers do; or when they shew forth such fruits of faith as they do; or are faithful in their own place, as their ministers were in their own, then they follow the faith of their guides.

The apostle setteth out the object of Christians' imitation, under this word *faith*,

1. Because faith is a mother grace, a breeding grace. All the acts of God's ancient worthies are produced as acts of faith, Heb. xi.

2. Because faith is that grace that makes a'l things acceptable. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God,' Heb. xi. 6.

3. Because God is most glorified by the faith of his servants.

4. Because, in regard of man's good, faith is the most necessary, profitable, and comfortable grace. Of the glory which faith brings to God, and good to man, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Of Faith, Secs. 7, 8.

Sec. 100. *Of imitating our guides.*

The duty which is required of people in reference to the foresaid faith of their guides, is expressed in this word, *follow*.

The Greek word, *μυμαίνω*, translated *follow*, implieth an endeavour to be like those whom they set before them. Our English hath borrowed a word from the Latin, *imitari*, which carrieth some emphasis — namely, to *imitate*. There is a noun, *μυμητής*, derived from the Greek word, which we translate *follower*, frequently used in the New Testament, as 1 Cor. iv. 16, Heb. xi. 1, and in other places.

That noun is by other authors used to set out a stage-play<sup>er</sup> who endeavoureth to be as like him whose part<sup>er</sup> acteth as possibly he can be. There is also a noun, *μυμωτής*, derived from the same verb, which is more usually appropriated to a *stage-player*. There is another noun, *ἡμιμωτής*, which is used to set out the *mime*. Now of all creatures an ape is most moved to *imitate* men.

It is to be noted that these things about this word, to shew how *follow* is used by the apostle, implying that *ἡμιμωτής* τῶν τραγικῶν παύω. — *Plut. Symp. 8.*

we must in our lives obey it.

It is Gods Word that doth convert, quicken, comfort and build up, or on the other side wound, and beat down. What is the reason that there was so great an alteration made by the Ministry of Christ and his Disciples, by the Apostles; and others after them: Yea by *Luther* and other Ministers of reformed Churches? They preached not Traditions of Elders, as the Scribes; nor mens inventions, as Papists, but the pure Word of God. The more purely Gods Word is preached, the more deeply it pierceth, the more kindly it worketh.

§. 99. *Of that Faith which is to be followed.*

**O**Ne particular wherein the foresaid Guides are to be remembred, is thus set down, *Whose faith follow.*

Of faith in generall as it is a gift of God, or grace whereby we are justified, and saved, I have at large discoursed in the *Whole Armour of God*, on *Eph. 6. 16. Treat. 2. Part. 6. §. 11, &c.*

This word Faith must in this place be taken for something that may be heard or



people ought in matters of faith, to endeavour to be as like to their prudent and godly guides as they can be.

This is it which the apostle requires of some, 1 Cor. iv. 16, and xi. 1.

This is it for which he commends others, 1 Thess. i. 6, and ii. 14.

This is the best use that we can make of such as God hath made guides unto us.

This is here in particular to be applied to such guides as God in special hath set over us. Our English, therefore, thus translates it, *which have the rule over you*; but in Greek, *your guides*. Hereof see Sec. 96, in the end thereof.

Of imitating Christ, see Ver. 13, Sec. 132.

Of imitating God, see Chap. iv. 11, Sec. 62.

Sec. 101. *Of imitating both living and dead saints.*

This point of imitation may also be further extended to other prudent and pious patterns, whether of such as are living, or of such as are dead.

They were living of whom the apostle thus saith, 'ye became followers of us;' and again, 'ye became followers of the churches of God,' 1 Thess. i. 6, and ii. 14.

They were dead of whom the apostle thus saith, 'be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises,' Heb. vi. 12; and they of whom another apostle thus saith, 'take the prophets for an example,' &c., James v. 10.

It is one end of the Spirit's guiding some living men in the right way, and that eminently, that by their walking therein they might incite others to follow them. This motive the church intends where she thus prayeth to Christ, 'Draw me, we will run after thee' (Cant. i. 4). By this change of the number in these two pronouns, *me, we*, she intendeth that, by her following Christ, others would be also stirred up to follow him.

It is also an especial end of registering the history of saints being dead; for, 'whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning,' Rom. xv. 4. This is the best learning that we can reap from such records, to emulate the excellencies of former worthies, and to strive to outstrip them, if it be possible, in their excellencies.

This point of imitation concerns those that are in place to be guides, and those also to whom they are made guides.

Not only ministers of the gospel, but other professors also thereof, are or should be herdes. The apostle saith of a Jew, as he was a rememer of the true religion, whether he were a Lev; as guid' another tribe, that he was accounted a people, so people. ii. 19. As it is said of ministers, 'Ye des. of the world,' Mat. v. 14; so it is said of herders, 'Ye shine as lights in the world,' Ph.

That which concerns these lights or guides expresses that they look to their feet, and well order their steps;

that they so carry themselves as they may prove a good pattern to others. 'Be thou an example of the believers,' saith St Paul to Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. 12. 'Be ensamples to the flock,' saith St Peter to all sorts of ministers, 1 Pet. v. 3. Professors in Thessalonica are commended for being 'ensamples to such as believed,' 1 Thess. i. 7. Thus shall they shew themselves good guides; good to themselves, and good to others. I may apply to this purpose that which the apostle said in a case not unlike this, 'in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee,' 1 Tim. iv. 16, yea, and them that see thee.

On the other side it is a great aggravation of the unworthy walking of ministers, and other professors, yea, of all who by their place or gifts are guides. By walking themselves in the broad way that leadeth to destruction, they draw many others thereto. If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. They who have eyes, and yet walk in by-paths, are worse than the blind. Such are many scandalous ministers and loose professors. Read 1 Cor. viii. 10-12.

These pull upon their souls their own blood, and the blood of others, Ezek. iii. 18.

Sec. 102. *Of excess in honouring saints departed.*

Unto those to whom guides for imitation are given, I would commend a caution, and a direction.

A caution in two respects. One to prevent excess. Another to redress defect.

The excesses of such as have the patterns of those whom they take to be guides in too high admiration, accounting their works meritorious, yea, and supererogatory. Hereupon they conceive that they may receive benefit by the works of those others. The superstitious priests and Pharisees among the Jews taught their people such a conceit; namely, that by children's giving a great gift to the temple (which they called *corban*), their parents might be profited, though they did no more for them, Mark vii. 11, 12. By this means men are so far from observing this duty of following their guides, as they are kept from it. For by expecting benefit from others walking in such and such courses, they think it needless for themselves to walk in such ways; because they have the benefit of others walking therein, without such pains of their own.

From this high conceit of others' meritorious and supererogatory works hath risen an idolatrous practice of canonising, deifying, adoring, and invoking them; of setting up their images, of consecrating churches, of making prayers, and vows, and offering oblations unto them, and of reserving their relics.

Sec. 103. *Of failing in the right use of saints' patterns.*

The other caution is to redress defect about this duty here required of following guides.

Defect is manifested in those who having such guides do think that they go far if they approve and commend their doctrine and course of life, if they well entertain them, and be beneficial to them while they live, and speak well of them when they are dead, but follow not their faith. Though they may seem to go far, yet they come very short of that full duty which they owe to their guides, and fail of the best benefit they might reap from them, which is to be like unto them. That which they do in testimony of their approving them, is an evidence of their failing in following them, and an aggravation of that their failing.

There are others which diligently read the histories of saints departed; but only as bare histories to inform their understanding about matters of former times, not as directions to guide them in the same way. Though good instructions may be learned from those histories, yet those instructions make not men the better. Virtue and knowledge are joined together by an apostle, 2 Pet. i. 6. Herein lies a main difference betwixt the histories of heathens and saints. It was before noted, Sec. 101, that the histories of saints are in sacred Scripture purposely recorded for imitation.

#### Sec. 104. *Of the benefits of imitating guides.*

The direction to be observed about the right and best use concerning guides, is, so to set them before us, as we may endeavour to be like unto them; and that whether they be living or dead; whether of later or ancienter times. There is mention made of a star which certain wise men of the East so fixed their eyes upon, as they followed it, till at length they came to Jerusalem, and from thence to Bethlehem, where they found Jesus, Mat. ii. 1, &c. Thus must we set our eyes upon such guides as God doth set before us, and follow them till we may come to that place where Jesus now is; thus shall we honour them. This is indeed the greatest honour that we can do to them. Hereby we make a supply of them in God's church, they being taken away, so as the church doth the less miss them. Elijah was the less missed, because Elisha was induced with his spirit. This therefore brings a great benefit to the church of God.

The greatest benefit of imitating our guides redoundeth to ourselves. We being like to them shall receive from God such approbation and acceptance as they received; we shall find such consolation in our own souls while here we live, and when we are dead partake of their glory. Their virtue will live in us. Abel's offering his sacrifice in faith, will make us so to offer up our spiritual sacrifices, Enoch's walking with God will make us in all things to eye God. Noah's uprightness will make us upright. So the graces of others will be wrought in us.

Finally, God hereby will be much honoured, in

that fear, service, praise, and other duties are perpetually performed by mortal men, which have but a time to be here in this world. For as they who are departed have served him in their generation, others who imitate them will serve him in succeeding generations. So as the eternal God will be served from generation to generation.

#### Sec. 105. *Of setting out the lives of saints departed.*

That which hath been said of the good which followeth upon imitating saints, justifieth the laudable, profitable, and pious custom of setting forth the lives of saints after their departure. The sacred Scriptures abound herein. The like have the fathers of the Christian church done in all ages, and still may it be performed. This is not only a means of keeping them fresh in memory, according to that which the wise man saith, 'the memory of the just is blessed,' Prov. x. 7, but also many are directed and invited to follow them. Had not their lives been set forth, succeeding ages would have wanted both directions and encouragements.

True it is that abuses are committed herein by uncertain, frivolous, and false narrations. But abuse of a good thing is no sufficient warrant clean to take away all use thereof.

#### Sec. 106. *Of the things wherein saints are not to be imitated.*

This object of the forenamed duty, *faith* (whose *faith* follow), is a limitation of that duty of imitation, and it sheweth that the doctrine and practice of other men, though pious, is no absolute and infallible rule. The particulars that are mentioned, or otherwise intended, do shew wherein such and such are to be imitated: as the prophets in suffering affliction; Job in patience, James v. 9, 10. So others in other like things. The best saints were men, and had the flesh in them as well as the spirit, and many fruits of the flesh were manifest in them as well as of the spirit.

That this point may be the more distinctly understood, I will endeavour to clear these two points:

1. Wherein they were not to be imitated.
2. Wherein they might and must be imitated.
1. Concerning the negative, there are three things wherein they are not to be imitated.
  - (1.) Extraordinary matters. These were for particular persons, not for all.
  - (2.) Temporary matters. These were for special times, not for all times.
  - (3.) Sinful matters. These were for no persons, for no times.
- (1.) It was the motion of an extraordinary spirit that moved Elijah to call for fire from heaven to consume two captains and their fifties, 2 Kings i. 9, 10, &c. Therefore when Christ's disciples alleged this example for them to do the like, Christ rebuked

them, and said, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.'

(2.) Joshua's worshipping God on mount Gerizim and mount Ebal was but temporary. It was therefore unwarrantably brought unto a perpetual custom by the Samaritans, John iv. 20-22.

(3.) It was a sinful practice of the Jews to put away their wives for every cause. Christ, therefore, condemneth their successors for imitating them therein, Mat. xix. 3, &c.

If it be demanded why those things were then registered: I answer, that though they were not all written for our imitation; yet all for our instruction and learning, Rom. xv. 4.

Particular instructions which we may gather from them, are such as these:

1. By extraordinary acts the doctrine which they delivered is confirmed.

2. By temporary acts the manifold wisdom of God is manifested, Eph. iii. 10; and saints' submission unto God answerably ordered.

3. By sinful acts the weakness of saints is evidenced; and God's goodness and patience toward them. Admirable comfort may be received from thence.

*Quest.* If patterns of saints be not rules in all things, how are doctrines raised from thence?

*Ans.* Doctrines are not raised simply from the practice of saints, but from the conformity thereof to those precepts which are an infallible rule for all; and from God's approbation of them.

The limitation of saints' practice doth demonstrate the preposterous apology of enthusiasts, who take their warrant from such as were extraordinarily inspired: and of superstitious persons, who plead the practice of the apostles about Jewish rites, which were in the time of their honourable burial, Acts xxi. 24. And of impudent sinners, who produce the sinful acts of saints for justifying themselves in their sins. There is scarce a sin which might not this way be justified. But I advise such to consider the evidences of God's displeasure against such sin; and the deep humiliation and thorough repentance of saints for the same.

Sec. 107. *Of the things wherein saints are to be imitated.*

Concerning the affirmative, the things wherein saints are to be imitated are to be brought to two heads. The one general: the other particular.

All general moral duties, appertaining to all persons, at all times, are for imitation; as, fear of God, zeal of his glory, faith in Christ, love of the saints, meekness, forgiveness, temperance, patience, and other the like.

The particular head containeth under it,

1. Duties of a particular calling, place, or condition; which they that are of the same may and ought to imitate. Thus the apostle setteth before wives the commendable practices of such holy women as had

exemplarily carried themselves towards their husbands, 1 Pet. iii. 5, 6.

2. Duties performed in particular cases. When a like case falleth out, the approved pattern of former saints is a good warrant to us in such a case. Thus Christ justifieth his disciples' fact by a like fact of David in a like case, Mat. xii. 2, 3, &c.

This affords direction about imitating saints' practices, which is to bring their practice to the right rule, which is God's law and will, to compare them together; and thereupon finding them to agree, to be the rather incited to do the like, because such a worthy, so approved of God, did it before us. An especial use of saints' practice, is to incite and quicken us to be like unto them.

Sec. 108. *Of these words, 'the end of their conversation.'*

The more to stir them up to follow the foresaid faith of their guides, the apostle adviseth them to consider the issue of their conversation.

The Greek word, ἀνάστροφην, translated *conversation*, is another than that which was used, Ver. 5, Sec. 48. That word, τροπή, is there only used in that sense; but this word is frequently used in the New Testament, even thirteen times, and ever for *conversation*.

It is a compound word. The simple verb, στρέψω, signifieth to *turn*, Rev. xi. 6. The compound, ἀναστρέψω, to *turn again*, or *return*, Acts xv. 16. In the course of man's life there be many turnings, up and down, this way, and that way.

As the original word, so this translation of it, *conversation*, is fitly used. For it sheweth what we must expect in this world, even various turnings; and what need we have of manifold wisdom, that we may prudently carry ourselves, as David is said to 'behave himself wisely,' 1 Sam. xviii. 5, 14, 15, 30. He that doth so 'shall find good, and shall be delivered' from evil, Prov. xvi. 20, and xxviii. 26.

Their holy conversation being inferred upon that faith which they preached, sheweth that their practice was answerable to their doctrine. Herein they are made a pattern to their people, whose course of life must be agreeable to their profession of faith. See *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 59.

Under this word *end*, the issue or last act of a thing is comprised.

The Greek word, ἐκβάσις, is a compound. The simple verb, βαίνω, signifieth to *go*. The compound, ἐκβαίνω, to *go out*, or *escape*.

The word here used signifieth a passing through, or going out. It is translated, 'a way to escape,' 1 Cor. x. 13. By our former English it is translated, the *issue*.

This word then intendeth that the guides here mentioned had passed through many troubles, and had escaped out of all; so as by none of them they had been kept from preaching the faith, or from

living answerably thereto; but (as the apostle professeth of himself, 2 Tim. iv. 7) they had 'fought a good fight, they had finished their course, they had kept the faith;' yea, as some hence infer, they had sealed the faith with their blood, and were glorious martyrs. Thus their constancy in the faith is set out.

Of this perseverance, see chap. iii. 6.

See also *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 60.

Sec. 109. *Of a serious considering of weighty matters.*

The foresaid end of their conversation the apostle would have them duly to consider. The word, ἀναθεωρεῖτε, whereby he expresseth his mind, is emphatical. It is a compound. The simple verb, θεωρεῖν, signifieth to behold, and that seriously; as 'Christ beheld how the people cast money into the treasury:' it signifieth also to perceive with the eye of the mind; as where the woman of Samaria said to Jesus, 'I perceive that thou art a prophet,' John iv. 19. Yea, it signifieth also to consider, 'Consider how great this man was,' Heb. vii. 4. But this compound, ἀναθεωρεῖν, carrieth a greater emphasis. It implieth a reviewing of a thing, a diligent pondering upon it. It is used to set out the apostle's pondering upon the idolatrous devotions of the Athenians, Acts xvii. 23.

God having given these Hebrews such guides as had built them up in the true faith, and made themselves a pattern unto them by a godly conversation, wherein they continued all their life, and at length sealed it up by their blood, and now enjoyed the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls, the apostle would not have them of all others forgotten; but be seriously remembered, conscientiously followed, and thoroughly thought upon; and that especially in regard of their perseverance unto death, and the glorious issue of all. This, this is again and again to be thought upon.

Two things are here intended.

1. The issue of holy men's conversation is very remarkable. For this end this apostle hath set forth a catalogue of them in the eleventh chapter of this epistle. Of imitating these therein, see Sec. 101.

2. Remarkable matters are very seriously to be considered. To this purpose doth this apostle use another like emphatical word, ἀναλογισασθε, which we translate consider, Heb. xii. 3. And another, κατανοήσατε, in Heb. iii. 1, which also is translated consider. See more hereof, Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 21, 22.

Sec. 110. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 7.*

Ver. 7. Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

The sum of this verse is, a duty of people to their deceased pastors.

The parts are two.

Vol. III.

1. A description of a faithful pastor.

2. A declaration of his people's duty.

The pastor is described,

1. By his function.

2. By his conversation.

His function is set out,

1. By the dignity of it.

2. By the principal duty belonging to it.

The dignity of his function is expressed, in this word, guides, or governors. And amplified by a special relation, in this word, your.

His duty is set down,

1. By the act, have spoken.

2. By the subject-matter, the word of God.

The people's duty is,

1. Generally propounded, in this word, remember.

2. Particularly exemplified.

In the exemplification there are two particulars.

1. An imitation.

2. A consideration.

In both these there is noted,

1. A distinct act.

2. A proper object.

In the former the act is thus expressed, follow.

The object thus, whose faith.

In the latter the act is thus set down, consider.

The object thus, the end of their conversation.

Sec. 111. *Of the observations arising out of Heb. xiii. 7.*

I. Faithful pastors deceased must be remembered. This word, remember, hath reference to such. See Sec. 95.

II. People must especially remember their own pastors. This relative, your, intendeth them. See Sec. 96.

III. Ministers of the word are as guides, or rulers. They are here so called. See Sec. 96.

IV. Preaching is a minister's special work. This is meant by the word, have spoken. See Sec. 97.

V. God's word is the proper matter of a minister's preaching. They are here expressly said to speak the word of God. See Sec. 97.

VI. Faith must be practised. Ministers must manifest it, and people must imitate it. See Sec. 99.

VII. Good guides must be followed. This is the main duty here enjoined. See Sec. 100.

VIII. Men's examples have their limitation. Here they are limited by faith. See Sec. 106.

IX. Good guides are careful of their conversation. This is necessarily implied by causing others to imitate them.

X. A good conversation will have a good issue. This is here taken for grant. See Sec. 108.

XI. Perseverance must be added to good beginnings. See Sec. 108.

XII. Weighty matters are to be well weighed. This is to consider them. See Sec. 109.

Sec. 112. *Of Christ ever the same.*

Ver. 8. *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.*

Though in this verse there be no particle of connexion or relation that may direct us to the dependence of it upon that which goeth before, or followeth: yet the very subject-matter thereof evidently sheweth that it hath a fit reference both to the verse before it, and also to that which followeth.

In the former verse the Hebrews were exhorted to follow the faith of their guides which had been before them. This verse layeth down a forcible reason to move them thereto. The reason is taken from the object of their faith, which was Jesus Christ, who remains still the same object of faith: whereupon it becomes those that live after them to follow that very faith.

In the following verse they are dehorted from following strange doctrines; a reason to enforce that dehortation is laid down in this verse, which is, that Jesus Christ, who is the foundation and very substance of all sound, true doctrine, ever continues the same: so as they have no cause to be 'carried about with divers and strange doctrines.'

Of this title *Jesus*, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 73.

Of this title *Christ*, see Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 51.

Of these two titles *Jesus Christ*, joined together, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 29.

This note of distinction of time, *χθις, yesterday*, doth properly signify the day immediately before, as John iv. 52, Acts vii. 28. But tropically, by a synecdoche, it is put for time past, whether it consists of many days or years: as where the Lord saith of Israel, 'He that was yesterday my people,' Micah ii. 8, that is, heretofore in former time. Where it is said, 'Tophet is ordained of old,' Isa. xxx. 33, in Hebrew it is, 'from yesterday.' So much is noted in the margin of our English Bible. The sense is well thus rendered, 'of old.' Here under this word, *yesterday*, may be comprised,

1. All that time wherein Christ lived upon earth.

2. All the time from his first incarnation till that present wherein the apostle wrote.

3. All the time from whence Christ was typified in the Mosaic rites, to that time wherein they were abolished.

4. All the time that hath passed from the first promise that was made of Christ, Gen. iii. 15.

5. Eternity itself in reference to former times. For Christ from all eternity was the same.

The second note of distinction, *αύριον, to-day*, significth the time present. Hereof see more, Chap. i. 5, Sec. 61, and Chap. iii. 7, Sec. 76.

The third note of distinction, *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, for ever*, setteth out the time future: and that,

1. Indefinitely, time after time.

2. Determinately, to the end of the world.

3. Everlastingly, beyond all end whatsoever. Of this phrase, *for ever*, see Chap. i. 8, Sec. 108.

Thus these three distinctions of time do set out Christ; as these three like distinctions, 'which is, and which was, and which is to come,' Rev. i. 4.

The Greek word, *ὁ αὐτός*, translated the *same*, significth *he himself*: and implieth that he is ever himself, without any alteration or change: and fully it is translated the *same*, both in this and sundry other places. It is applied to Christ to set forth his immutability, Chap. i. 12, Sec. 141. There are shewed sundry particulars wherein and whereby the immutability of Christ is manifested.

Besides the particulars there noted, Christ ever was, is, and will be,

1. The same object of faith, John iii. 14-16.

2. The same means of salvation, Acts iv. 12.

3. The same foundation of his church, 1 Cor. iii. 11.

4. The same in all his offices: as he is an everlasting king, Heb. i. 8, 2 Pet. i. 11, so he hath an unchangeable priesthood, Heb. vii. 24. In like manner, his other offices are without alteration.

5. The same in efficacy of what he hath done and endured for man's redemption and salvation. In this respect he is said to be 'a lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' Rev. xiii. 8.

6. The same in the identity or sameness of the faith of all true believers in all ages. Abraham's faith was such a faith as the faith of Christians is; and their faith such a faith as his was, Rom. iv. 24, Gal. iii. 7. The like may be said of all true believers, Jews or Gentiles.

That which the apostle hath noted concerning Christ being ever the same, discovereth sundry errors: as,

1. That believers, before Christ was exhibited, had another ground of faith and hope than such as have lived since.

2. That the place of rest whither the souls of believers, before Christ exhibited, went after their decease, was another (which they call *Limbus Patrum*) than that whereunto the souls of deceased saints now go.

3. That traditions of men, and that concerning articles of faith, may be added to the gospel of Christ.

4. That there are other mediators and intercessors besides Jesus Christ.

5. That the Messiah is yet to come; whom the unbelieving Jews still expect.

The foresaid doctrine concerning Christ to be ever the same, requires that we be well instructed in the types and prophecies concerning Christ before he was exhibited, and in those mysteries which are since more clearly revealed of him; as in his titles, and the meaning of them: in all his offices and undertakings; in whatsoever he hath done and endured

for man's redemption and salvation,—all set out the same Christ.

As we know him, so we ought, according to that which is set forth in the Old and New Testament, to respect him, and to have him in as high account as ever any had, because he is still the same. We ought to rest only on him, and place our whole confidence on him, and subject ourselves wholly to him as to our only Lord, Saviour, and Redeemer, even the only head and foundation of the church: *ever the same*.

Sec. 113. *Of the resolution and observations on Heb. xiii. 8.*

In this verse is set down the immutability of Christ.

Hereof are two parts:

1. A description of the person.
2. A declaration of the point.

The person is described by his two titles or names, *Jesus Christ*.

The point is,

1. Expressed, in this word, *the same*.
2. Amplified by a distinction of time; and this is distinguished,

- (1.) By that which is past, *yesterday*.
- (2.) By that which is present, *to-day*.
- (3.) By that which is to come, *for ever*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *People that have the same ground of faith that their pastors had, have just cause to follow that faith.* This ariseth from the inference of this verse upon the former. See Sec. 112.

II. *Christ is a Saviour.* The title *Jesus* demonstrateth as much. See Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 73.

III. *Jesus is the anointed of God.* The title *Christ* intendeth as much. See Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 54.

IV. *Jesus Christ belongeth to Jews and Gentiles.* In this respect the Hebrew name *Jesus*, and the Greek name *Christ*, are both attributed to him. See Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 29.

V. *Christ is eternal.* Thus far may this word *yesterday* be extended. See Chap. i. 10, Sec. 129.

VI. *Christ was to his church, before his incarnation, the same that he hath been since.* To that time may *yesterday* be also applied. See Sec. 112.

VII. *Christ is to every one in the time present what he was before, and will be after.* This word, *to-day*, implieth so much. See Sec. 112.

VIII. *What Christ hath been and is, he ever will be.* He is *for ever* the same. See Sec. 112.

IX. *Christ is immutable.* This is the main substance of the verse. See Chap. i. 12, Sec. 141.

Sec. 114. *Of circumspection against false doctrine.*

Ver. 9. *Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.*

Upon laying down the only true foundation of all sound and saving doctrine, which is Jesus Christ, the apostle fitly inferreth a dissuasion from divers doctrines. Hereby he sheweth, that by fixing our minds on Jesus Christ, and on such things as set him out, we may be brought the better to understand sound and saving doctrine. Limmers, by eyeing the person whose picture they draw, draw that picture much more to the life.

It therefore becomes Christians to be well instructed in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and in those principles which concern him. They who study the gospel will thereby be established in that truth which will bring their souls to eternal salvation.

The first word of this text, *περιεργασθε*, as our English hath set it down, translated *carried about*, is a compound, and fitly, according to the composition, turned *carried about*. It is applied to such impotent persons as could not go of themselves, but were by others carried hither and thither for cure, Mark vi. 55; and to clouds carried about with winds, Jude 12; and to other light things which are easily moved and carried up and down, Eph. iv. 14.

It here implieth two things:

1. Levity.
2. Inconstancy.

Levity in the disposition of men; in that they are easy to be seduced and drawn aside; like those whom the apostle calls 'children,' Eph. iv. 14, and 'silly women,' 2 Tim. iii. 6, 7.

Inconstancy, in their entertaining one opinion after another.

That this is man's natural disposition, is evident by the apostle's manner of expressing this dissuasion, 'Be no more children, tossed to and fro,' Eph. iv. 14. In that he would have them to be so no more, he implieth that formerly they had been such, and might also again be such. Woeful experience of all ages hath given too great evidence hereof. Upon Moses his absence from the Israelites about forty days, they turned to idolatry, Exod. xxxii. 1, &c.; so soon as Jehoiada was dead, king and people revolted from the Lord, 2 Chron. xxiv. 17, &c. Many of those Jews which, in congratulation of Christ, cried *Hosanna*, as he was coming to Jerusalem, Mat. xxi. 15, within a few days after cried out against Christ, *Crucify him*, Mark xv. 13. This levity and inconstancy in people gave occasion to St Paul thus to complain, 'I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you,' &c., Gal. i. 6; and thus, 'O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth?' &c. 'Are you so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?' Gal. iii. 1, 3. Scarcely was there any false doctrine broached, but it found many entertainers thereof. It is said that 'many shall follow the pernicious ways' of false prophets, 2 Pet. ii. 2.

There is in this respect great need of much circum-

spection, that we be not seduced, and of labouring to be established in the doctrine of Christ; whereof see more, Sec. 118.

That with which men are ordinarily seduced is here styled *ἡσυχάζειν*, *doctrines*. This is the same word that is used, Chap. vi, 2, Sec. 11, but in a far different sense.

1. There it is used in the singular number, and implieth the harmony and agreement of all sound principles, making up one form of doctrine; but here the plural number is used, which implieth a variousness and disagreement in false doctrines, as the word *divers* in this verse implieth.

2. There it is taken for the doctrine of Christ, the doctrine of truth and salvation; here for the doctrines which vain men teach, doctrines of falsehood and perdition.

Seducers have their doctrines (as well as faithful ministers) which they teach, and wherein they instruct their disciples. The Pharisees and Sadducees had their doctrines, Mat. xvi. 12. Mention is also made of 'the doctrine of Balaam,' and of 'the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,' Rev. ii. 14, 15.

There is in seducers a diabolical spirit, that makes them restless; they think it nothing for themselves to run in the broad way that leadeth to destruction, unless they draw others with them thereunto.

The scribes and Pharisees would 'compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and that twofold more the child of hell than themselves,' Mat. xxiii. 15. Though they were blind, yet they would be leaders; 'blind leaders of the blind,' Mat. xv. 14.

This sheweth the necessity of a sound orthodox ministry, whereby men may be instructed in the true doctrine of Christ, and kept from these doctrines of men. The apostle setteth down this as a principal end of Christ's giving to his church 'pastors and teachers, that we be henceforth no more children tossed to and fro,' &c., Eph. iv. 11, 14.

Sec. 115. *Of divers and strange doctrines, and undue toleration thereof.*

To the foresaid doctrines of men the apostle addeth these two epithets, *divers*, *strange*.

The first of these, *ποικίλαις*, *divers*, hath reference both to the multitude, and also to the various kinds, of things: as is shewed, Chap. ii. 4, Sec. 34.

Herein lieth a main difference betwixt the doctrine of God and the doctrines of men. God's doctrine is the truth itself, and truth is only one, plain, clear, firm, stable; but doctrines of men are erroneous and false, and in that respect various, ambiguous, deceitful, inconstant, unstable. Man is full of vain inventions. There is no certain rule to be found but in God's word.

The advice of the apostle John, about 'trying the spirits, whether they be of God,' 1 John iv. 1, is very behoveful to this purpose.

For this end we must pray for 'the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ,' Eph. i. 17. We are of ourselves blind, and, without the spirit of illumination, may soon be drawn into one or other of these divers doctrines.

The other epithet is *ξέναις*, *strange*. That is counted strange which is not usual, with which men are not acquainted, or whereof they have not heard before. Thus the Athenians counted the doctrine of Jesus, and of the resurrection, 'a doctrine of strange gods,' Acts xvii. 18; for Jesus, and he put to death, and raised again, was such a God as they had not heard of before.

About religion and matters of faith, that is counted strange in God's church, and among God's people, which is not grounded on God's word. For God's word is that whereupon the church groundeth all her doctrines, and acknowledgeth none for sound but that which is thence raised. The fire which Nadab and Abihu offered before the Lord is called 'strange,' because it had not God's warrant, but was against his word. In this sense mention is made of 'strange incense,' Exod. xxx. 9, and of 'strange apparel,' Zeph. i. 8.

Thus the doctrines against which this apostle forewarned these Hebrews were such as had no warrant in God's word, and which God's church had neither acknowledged nor received.

That we be not carried about with strange doctrines, we must be well exercised in God's word, and make that a touchstone to try doctrines thereby. There is no better way to discover strange doctrines.

The danger of divers and strange doctrines giveth proof that toleration of divers religions in one and the same church and state is intolerable. This is 'the root that beareth gall and wormwood,' Deut. xxix. 18. It is 'that root of bitterness which will trouble men, and defile many,' Heb. xii. 15. It makes much against God's honour, the good of the church in general, and the particular members thereof; yea, against those that maintain divers doctrines, and against such as are without the church.

1. In regard of God. All divers and strange doctrines impeach some divine truth or other. Now God's truth is most precious to him. He cannot endure to have it any way impeached.

2. The church is 'the pillar and ground of truth,' 1 Tim. iii. 5. The oracles of God are committed to her; how can she, then, but be accounted unfaithful if she tolerate divers and strange doctrines? Doth she not herein make herself accessory both to the fault and punishment? Christ had a quarrel against Pergamus, because she had 'there them that held the doctrine of Balaam,' Rev. ii. 19.

3. Particular members of the church are in great hazard to be carried about with these doctrines; as was shewed, Sec. 111. One scabbed sheep may soon infect a whole flock. False doctrine is like leaven,

'which soon heaveneth the whole lump,' 1 Cor. v. 6; Christ, therefore, is very earnest in dissuading from such leaven, Mat. xvi. 6. An apostle saith that 'false teachers will draw many after them, and that many will follow their pernicious ways,' 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

4. They that teach divers and strange doctrines bring upon their souls their own and others' blood. In this respect such doctrines are called 'damnable,' and the broachers themselves are said to 'bring upon themselves swift destruction,' 2 Pet. ii. 1.

5. They who are without the church, by divers doctrines, and by the divisions that in the church are raised thereabout, are still kept out, and have the greater dislike of church courses wrought in them.

In this case Elijah's expostulation must take place, 'How long halt you between two opinions?' 1 Kings xviii. 21. If the religion which ye profess be the truth, follow it; if the popish religion, or any other be the truth, go after it. 'Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.'

This admonition discovereth another pernicious conceit; which is, that a man may be saved in any religion. This conceit will soon carry men about with divers doctrines; but if Christ be the only foundation of salvation, and if that doctrine which is not built on this foundation be divers and strange, surely a man can be saved in no other religion than that which is built on this foundation.

If this conceit of being saved in any religion were sound, what need such care be taken for finding out and maintaining the true religion? Why do any suffer for the same? As the apostle implieth concerning the resurrection, that 'if there be no resurrection, we are of all men the most miserable,' 1 Cor. xv. 19; so I may say in this case, if a man may be saved in any religion, martyrs were of all men the greatest fools. But he that hath prepared a crown for them, accounteth them the wisest of all.

#### Sec. 116. *Of good, and the divers acceptations thereof.*

That divers and strange doctrines may be the better avoided, the apostle expressly sheweth what is that true, sound, saving doctrine which is to be entertained. This he styleth *grace*; and the more to commend it, he premiseth this preface, *it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace*. This is a forcible motive to take heed of being carried about with divers doctrines. It is therefore inferred with this causal particle, *γὰρ*, for. If it be a good thing to be established with grace, then it cannot be good to be carried about with divers doctrines.

*Good*, καλόν, is an extensive word, and applied to sundry desirable things. It is used to set out,

1 Sam. xii. 23, Ps. cxxv. 4.

2. That which is profitable and beneficial, Gen. ii. 18.

3. That which is delectable, pleasant, and sweet, Cant. i. 3.

4. That which is great, large, and abundant, 2 Sam. vi. 19.

5. That which is excellent, Mat. xvii. 4, 1 Tim. iii. 1.

6. That which is seasonable, 2 Sam. xvii. 7.

7. That which is prosperous, 1 Kings xxii. 13.

8. The truth and substance of legal types and shadows, Heb. ix. 11, and x. 1.

9. The blessings of this world, Ps. iv. 6, 1 John iii. 17.

10. True happiness, Deut. xxx. 15.

In most of these respects may this epithet *good* be here taken, but especially for that which is profitable, extending the profit here intended to the profit of the soul. That it is here thus to be taken, is evident by the apostle's inference of a contrary effect upon a contrary cause, thus, *meats have not profited*.

This positive *good* is oft used comparatively for *better*, as if he had said, 'It is better that the heart be established with grace than with meat.' Thus is this positive translated, Mark ix. 42, 45, 47. The expression of it in the positive, *good*, is a Hebraism, and carrieth emphasis, and it is here fitly translated according to the letter of the original.

This is a strong inducement to observe the duty here set down, that it is good so to do. This inducement is oft and much pressed by the psalmist, both on his own behalf (as where he saith, 'I will praise thy name, O Lord, for it is good,' Ps. liv. 6), and also on the behalf of others, thus, 'Praise ye the Lord, for it is good,' &c., Ps. cxlvii. 1.

The motive will appear to be the greater, if we apply it to the several acceptations of *good* before set down.

To shew wherein the power and life of the duty whereunto he exhorteth especially lieth, he expresseth this subject thereof, *the heart*. 'It is a good thing that the heart be established.'

Of the divers acceptations of this word *heart*, see Chap. iii. 8, Sec. 79.

It is here put for the whole soul of man; and the mention thereof in this place, sheweth, that the heart is especially to be looked into: that is it which ought most of all to be well settled and established. See Chap. iii. 12, Sec. 126.

#### Sec. 117. *Of grace put for the gospel.*

That whereabout the heart ought in special to be settled is here styled *grace*, *grace*. 'It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.' Grace is here metonymically put for the gospel, so Titus ii. 11. This is called 'the gospel of the grace of God,' and 'the word of his grace,' Acts xx. 24, 32.

Fifty is the gospel thus styled, in three especial respects:

1. In regard of the procuring cause, which is God's free grace, Eph. iii. 2, 8.



2. In regard of the matter thereof, for the gospel setteth out God's grace to man in Christ. The sum of the gospel is thus expressed by Christ himself, 'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son,' &c., John iii. 16.

3. In regard of the effect thereof, which is to work, increase, and perfect grace in men. Where the apostle giveth to the gospel of Christ this title, 'the word of his grace,' he addeth, 'which is able to build you up,' Acts xx. 32.

1. This is a high commendation of the gospel, to be entitled *grace, the grace of God*. This makes the word *gospel* fitly to answer the notation thereof. *Gospel*, that is, *a good spell, a good speech*; and an *Evangelium* (as the Scots, according to the Greek notation, term it), that is, good or glad tidings. See Chap. iv. 2, Sec. 16.

In this respect the gospel is styled 'the word of God,' Chap. vi. 5, Sec. 35. It is also in a like respect styled 'the gospel of peace,' Eph. vi. 15; 'the word of reconciliation,' 2 Cor. v. 19; 'the word of life,' Phil. ii. 16; 'the gospel of salvation,' Eph. i. 13; for peace, reconciliation, life, and salvation is manifested by the gospel, and the gospel is the means of making us partakers thereof.

2. By this title *grace*, given to the gospel, the gospel is distinguished from the law, for 'the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' See more of this difference, Chap. vi. 5, Sec. 25.

3. This title *grace*, put for the gospel, sheweth that the ground of faith is God's grace; for the gospel is the word of faith, Rom. x. 8, and that in this respect, because it clearly revealeth the free grace of God.

4. This ought to incite us to have the gospel in high account, in that it is grace, the grace of God, the word of his grace. They who well know the woeful plight whereunto sinners are plunged, and that there is no means to free them out of it, but the grace of God, cannot but be much affected with his word of grace.

5. This in particular is motive enough to enforce the duty here pressed by the apostle, *that the heart be established with grace*.

#### Sec. 118. Of establishing.

The Greek word, *βεβαιωθαι*, here translated *established*, is the same that is used, Chap. ii. 3, Sec. 25, and translated 'confirmed.' It is derived from an adjective, *βεβαιος*, that signifieth *firm or stable*, Chap. ii. 2, Sec. 11. Hence also a substantive, *βεβαιωσις*, which signifieth, and is translated, *a confirmation*, Chap. vi. 16, Sec. 27.

Here the word implieth such a settling of a thing as remains unmoveable, never to be taken away.

To have the heart established with grace, is to have such understanding of the gospel, and so to affect it

in the whole soul, as to be resolved never to depart from it, never to be carried about with any other doctrine which is not agreeable with this grace here spoken of.

This phrase, 'established in the faith,' Col. ii. 7, doth in effect intend as much as to be established with grace, for faith is an especial effect of grace. There the apostle addeth two metaphors, which do much illustrate this point, in these words, *ῥιζωμένοι καὶ ἐποικοδομούμενοι, rooted and built up*. The former metaphor is taken from a tree (such a one as our oak) whose root doth spread as far in the earth as the boughs in the air, so as no storms throw it. Sooner may the arms of it be rent one from another, than the tree be overthrown or rooted up. Thus he whose heart is established with grace, will sooner suffer his limbs to be pulled one from another, or his soul be parted from his body, than his heart from grace, or grace from his heart.

The other metaphor, thus translated, *built up*, is taken from an edifice well settled upon a sure foundation: like to that house whose foundation is laid on a rock, which could not be shaken by rain, floods, or wind, Mat. vii. 25, Luke vi. 48. Thus no persecution, nothing that the devil or devil's instruments can do, will unsettle or overthrow that man's heart which is established with grace.

This phrase, of having *the heart established with grace*, doth in effect intend the same thing that was intended under this phrase, 'hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end,' Chap. vi. 6. Both phrases require perseverance. Of motives thereto, and means thereof, see Chap. iii. 6, Sec. 68-70.

#### Sec. 119. Of distinction of meats.

Because *meats* were, as many then used them, contrary to *grace*, the apostle here sheweth the unprofitableness of them, and opposeth them to grace, as is evident by this negative, *not*; so as he denieth that to meats which he ascribed to grace: as if he had more fully said, it is not good that the heart be established with meats. Hereby he implieth that he would not have them think that meats can establish the heart, or quiet the conscience, as grace can.

The noun, *βρώματα*, translated *meats*, is derived from a verb, *βρώωμαι*, that signifieth to *eat*, John vi. 13. It is indefinitely put for all manner of food, even for whatsoever one eats for nourishment, Rom. xiv. 15.

Here it is put for such meats as were by the law accounted clean, in opposition to such as were unclean; for many in the apostles' time (though by the gospel the distinction of meats were taken away), made conscience of eating such meats as by the law were prohibited, and thought that they did please God therein. But that the observation of that distinction of meats could not establish a man's heart,

the apostle here affirmeth they could not do it under the law, nor under the gospel. Not under the law, because they were in the number of those things which bestyleth carnal, Chap. vii. 16, Sec. 81. Much less could they do it under the gospel, by which that distinction of meats is taken away, as is evident by this divine answer to Peter, 'What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common,' Acts. x. 15. On this ground the apostle thus adviseth, 'Let no man judge you in meat,' Col. ii. 16; 'for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink,' Rom. xiv. 17.

Unwarrantable in this respect is the distinction which papists make betwixt flesh and fish in matter of religion. They make a religious fast to consist in abstaining from flesh, though they glut themselves with fish, sweetmeats, and wine. These fasts are mere mock-fasts; and that both in the substance, and also in the end of them. A true fast is an abstinence from all manner of food, whether flesh or fish, and drink also, during the time of the fast. 'Fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink,' saith Esther, Esth. iv. 14. At the proclamation of a fast, this charge was given, 'Let neither man nor beast taste anything,' &c., Jonah iii. 7.

As for the end of a fast, it is to subdue the flesh; which eating of fish can do no more than eating of flesh.

But why should this distinction of meats be made in matter of religion, seeing Christ saith, ' whatsoever entereth into the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? ' And again, 'To eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man,' Mat. xv. 17, 20. And an apostle saith, 'Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving,' 1 Tim. iv. 4. And again, 'Unto the pure all things are pure,' Titus i. 15. On these and other like grounds he reckoneth abstinence from some meats among 'doctrines of devils,' 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3.

Under this one particular of meats synecdochically is comprised the whole ceremonial law, and all the external rites thereof; for neither legal meats, nor other parts of the law, bring any profit to the soul of a man. They do no good at all about pacifying the conscience, or edifying the soul, as is shewed, Chap. vii. 18, Sec. 85.

That it is not good to seek to have the heart established by meat, the apostle proveth by an argument taken from experience, thus expressed, *which have not profited them that have been occupied therein*; as if he had said, experience sheweth that none ever received any spiritual profit by meats. Of the Greek word, *ὡφελήσαντες*, translated *profit*, see Chap. iv. 2, Sec. 18. In what respect meats and other external rites are unprofitable, see Chap. vii. 16, Sec. 63.

Sec. 120. *Of the vain diligence of superstitious persons.*

To set out the unprofitableness and vanity of the

foresaid meats, the apostle addeth this description of the persons which use them, *them which have been occupied therein*.

The verb, *περιπατούντες*, translated *have been occupied*, is a compound. The simple verb, *πατέω*, signifieth *to tread upon*, Luke x. 19. The compound, *to walk about hither and thither*.

It is oft used to set out sedulity and diligence; and that both in a good and bad sense: for it setteth out Christ's sedulity for the good of his church, 'He walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,' Rev. ii. 1. It also setteth out the sedulity of the devil about destroying men, 'The devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour,' 1 Peter v. 8.

It here implieth the diligence of superstitious persons about external carnal rites. So it is used in this phrase, 'Why walk not thy disciples according to the traditions of the elders?' Mark vii. 5; and in this phrase, 'Walk after the customs,' Acts xxi. 21.

Our English doth well express the emphasis of the Greek word, thus, *them that have been occupied therein*.

Hereby we are given to understand that superstitious persons much busy themselves about their external rites. They are occupied therein; they much employ themselves thereabout; they are as men ever walking about, never resting, never quiet, never satisfied.

The reason hereof is evident; they have no certain settled rule.

The rule that they have is either their own invention, or the tradition of others; both which are uncertain, and have no limits.

Herein lieth a main difference betwixt true religion and vain superstition. The ground and rule of true religion is God's word, which hath its limits, and is sure and inviolable; it never altereth, but ever remaineth the same. He that guideth himself thereby knoweth what to do, how far to go, and where to stay; and herein his conscience is satisfied and quieted.

But the superstitious person hath no such certain rule. As there are many inventions and traditions of men in former times, so they who live in present times still add more and more; and more is like to be added in succeeding times.

Well, therefore, might the apostle add this negative, *not*, to meats, and thereby imply that the heart cannot be established with meats.

This is a strong motive against this carnal doctrine, and against all other of the like kind.

Sec. 121. *Of the resolution and observations of* Heb. xiii. 9.

Ver. 9. *Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be estab-*

*lished with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.*

The sum of this verse is in two words, *saints' stability*.

Hereof are two parts :

1. A dehortation from levity.

2. A commendation of stability.

In the former is set down,

1. An act forbidden, *be not carried about*.

2. The subject whereabout it is conversant, *doctrines*.

This is distinguished by two adjuncts, 1. *Divers* ; 2. *Strange*.

In the other we have,

1. The thing commended.

2. The kind of commendation.

The kind of commendation is thus expressed, *it is good*.

The thing commended is,

1. Propounded.

2. Illustrated by the contrary.

In the proposition is expressed,

1. The matter commended, *grace*.

2. The subject where grace is seated, *the heart*.

3. The manner of settling it, *established*.

In the illustration,

1. The contrary is set down negatively, *not with meats*.

2. It is confirmed by the unprofitableness of it.

This confirmation is aggravated two ways :

1. By experience, in this phrase, *which have not profited*.

2. By the persons that reap no profit thereby, *them that have been occupied therein*.

*Observations.*

I. *Men are prone to wander in their opinions*. The dehortation presupposeth thus much. See Sec. 114.

II. *Doctrines are a means of seducing men*. The mention of doctrines in this place implieth this point. See Sec. 114.

III. *There are divers kinds of doctrines*.

IV. *Many doctrines are strange*.

These two epithets, *divers*, *strange*, are here expressly applied to doctrines. See Sec. 115.

V. *The doctrine that bringeth good to the professors thereof, is especially to be embraced*. This phrase, *it is good*, is here alleged for that purpose. See Sec. 116.

VI. *The gospel is a word of grace*. That is it which is here styled *grace*. See Sec. 117.

VII. *The word of grace must enter into the heart*. For this end mention is here made of the heart. See Sec. 117.

VIII. *The word of grace is able to establish the heart*. It can so satisfy and quiet it, as it will steadfastly abide therein ; else it were in vain to exhort to have the heart established with grace. See Sec. 118.

IX. *Doctrines about meats are contrary to grace*. They are here opposed to grace. See Sec. 119.

X. *Doctrines of meats cannot establish men's hearts*. This negative *not*, denieth that to meats which it ascribeth to grace. See Sec. 119.

XI. *Doctrines of meats never profited any man's soul*. This is here expressly set down. See Sec. 119.

XII. *Men use much to busy themselves about external rites*. This phrase of being occupied, intends thus much. See Sec. 120.

XIII. *All the pains that men take about external rites doth not profit them*. Though they be occupied thereabouts, yet they are not profited thereby. See Sec. 120.

Sec. 122. *Of the Christian's altar.*

Ver. 10. *We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle*.

11. *For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp*.

12. *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate*.

The apostle here produceth another argument to draw the Hebrews from doating upon legal rites. The former argument was taken from the unprofitableness of them, Ver. 9, Sec. 119. This other is from the damage they bring to themselves thereby. They deprive themselves of all benefit which they might otherwise receive from Christ.

Of the notation of the word, *Θυσιαστήριον*, altar, see Chap. vii. 13, Sec. 72.

It is here taken tropically, and that in a threefold respect :

1. By a metonymy of the subject. The altar is put for the sacrifice laid thereon. This is evident by the act of eating attributed thereto, thus, *'we have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat'*. The Israelites did eat of the sacrifice, not of the altar. Thus, metonymically is altar used in these phrases : *'they are partakers with the altar'*, and *'partakers of the altar'*, 1 Cor. ix. 13, and x. 18, that is, of the sacrifices offered upon the altar.

2. By a synecdoche, one of the legal rites, namely, altar, is put for all the rest, as meats were, Sec. 119.

3. By a metonymy of the adjunct, a type is put for the truth, a shadow for the substance, an earthly altar and sacrifice for the celestial altar and sacrifice, which is Jesus Christ. Thus much may be inferred from the singular number, altar, here used, not altars. The apostle maketh a like collection from the word seed, in the singular number, thus : *'He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ'*, Gal. iii. 16.

In this respect, we Christians, who profess the gospel of Christ, and believe on him, are said to have this altar. As it was ordained before the world, so

in this latter age of the world it is exhibited, and by the gospel offered, and by faith received. Thus believers have it.

There is no other altar in the New Testament warranted to Christians, but Jesus Christ, the truth of the legal altars.

The Jews themselves at this day have no earthly altar.

For Christians to frame to themselves earthly altars, as papists do, is worse than Judaism.

True it is, that the ancient fathers make frequent mention of an altar and a sacrifice, which titles they give to the table of the Lord, and to the sacramental bread and wine set thereon; but metaphorically, not properly.

The apostles never use this word, *altar*, in reference to the Lord's table (but this phrase, 'the Lord's table,' is expressly used, 1 Cor. x. 21); nor this word, *sacrifice*, in reference to sacramental bread (yet this word *bread* is expressly used in that respect, 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.)

*Altar* and *sacrifice*, in reference to the Lord's table and sacramental bread, have been abominably abused by antichristians, even unto plain and palpable idolatry. As they pretend true altars and sacrifice, so also true, real, sacrificing priests, which title is not once—no, not metaphorically—attributed to a minister of the gospel, as he is a minister; yet in a metaphorical and spiritual sense, it is oft attributed to believers, in regard of spiritual sacrifices of prayers and praises, which they offer to God, 1 Pet. ii. 5, Rev. i. 6.

But Christ, who is the truth and substance of legal priests, sacrifices, and altars, and in that respect most truly and properly a priest, sacrifice, and altar, hath these titles in the New Testament attributed to him.

1. He is styled a priest, Heb. v. 6. This he is in his person, as he is God-man.

2. A sacrifice, Eph. v. 2. This he is in his human nature; for his body was the offering, Heb. x. 10.

3. An altar, Rev. viii. 3. This is in regard of his divine nature; for his human nature, the sacrifice, was laid upon the divine nature, being united unto it; and the divine nature sanctifieth the human nature, which is the property of an altar, Mat. xxiii. 19.

It hath been shewed, Chap. vii. 3, Sec. 25, that there were many types of Christ. Among others, the altars were special types. Of them there were two sorts:

One was the great brazen altar for sacrifice, Exod. xxvii. 1, &c.

The other was the altar of gold for incense, Exod. xxx. 1, &c.

Christ was typified by the former, in regard of the sacrifice of himself, Eph. v. 2.

He was typified by the latter, in regard of his intercession, whereby he maketh our persons, prayers, and other holy services, acceptable to God, Rev. viii. 3.

1. This truth of Christ being our altar, doth much commend the state of the Christian church above the state of the ancient Jewish church: and amplifieth the goodness of God towards us above that which was shewed to them.

2. This directeth us to be well informed in that sacrifice which was offered up upon this divine altar: that we may with greater confidence rest thereupon.

3. This phrase, *we have an altar*, encourageth us to bring all our warrantable, spiritual sacrifices thereunto; and to offer them thereupon: and in faith in Christ's intercession to offer up all our prayers and praises; and to rest for acceptance thereupon. This use the apostle himself teacheth us to make hereof, ver. 15. As a type hereof, the Jews were to offer up their sacrifices on the altar in the tabernacle, Lev. xvii. 4, Josh. xxii. 16, &c.

Sec. 123. *Of having no right to eat of the Christians' altar.*

There is a fearful doom denounced against all such as adhere to the ceremonial law in the time of the gospel. The doom is this, *they have no right to eat of the foresaid altar*. Hereby is implied, that they deprive themselves of the greatest benefit that God ever afforded to children of men: even of Jesus Christ himself, and of the benefit of his passion and intercession, typified by the Jewish altars.

This metaphor, *εσθίν, to eat*, hath reference both to the legal rites, and also to the evangelical truth.

Under the law the priests did eat of the sacrifices offered upon the altar, Deut. xviii. 1.

Under the gospel all that are spiritual priests eat of Christ the true sacrifice, John vi. 53, 54.

The eating here meant intendeth a participation of Christ. It is a metaphor taken from our usual nourishment of our bodies. By eating meat we partake of the benefit thereof: our life is preserved thereby. Thus by eating Christ we live a spiritual life here, and are preserved to eternal life hereafter. Now we eat Christ by faith, 'Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith,' Eph. iii. 17. Where Christ saith, 'He that believeth on me hath everlasting life,' he addeth by way of illustration, 'whose eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life,' John vi. 47, 54. This is the benefit of eating of the foresaid altar, 'eternal life.' Thus to have no right to eat of the altar here mentioned, is an exceeding great damage; they lose Christ, they lose eternal life.

The noun, *ἰσθία*, translated *right*, is derived from a verb impersonal, *ἔσθην*, that significeth *it is lawfully*.

This noun is variously used. For it significeth,

1. Authority to command, Mark i. 27.

2. Authority that carries grace and majesty with it, Mat. vii. 28, 29.

3. Authority that compriseth government under it, Mat. viii. 9, Rom. xiii. 1.

4. Power or ability to do what one undertakes, John xvii. 2.

5. Power or liberty to do as one will, Rom. ix. 21.

6. Power as it intendeth a privilege or prerogative, John i. 12.

7. Jurisdiction, Luke xxiii. 7.

8. A right or property to a thing. Thus it is here fitly translated. The negative, *no right*, implieth, that though they profess themselves to be Christians, and in their own conceit may lay claim to Christ, yet in truth they have no right at all to him: nor to the things which he had done and endured for man's redemption and salvation.

This phrase, *they have no right to eat*, giveth proof that men may deprive themselves of Christ and all his benefits. For they that eat not of him, reap no benefit by him; and they that have no right to eat of him, shall not partake of him. Such were they of whom the apostle saith, 'they deny the Lord that bought them,' 2 Pet. ii. 1. And they to whom it is said, 'Christ shall profit you nothing,' Gal. v. 2.

It is in this respect an especial point of wisdom to inquire, and learn who in particular they be that have no right to eat of this altar: for our direction herein, the apostle giveth his instance, *they which serve the tabernacle*.

Sec. 121. *Of serving the tabernacle.*

The *tabernacle*, *σκήνη*, here meant is that which was made by Moses his direction, Exod. xxxvi. 8. &c. It was the place where all public divine services were performed under the law, from Moses his time till Solomon had built a temple. See more hereof, Chap. viii. 2, Sec. 5.

The Greek word, *λατρεύοντες*, translated *serve*, is the same that is used, Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 12.

To serve the tabernacle, or in the tabernacle—for this word is of the dative case—is to addict one's self to all the legal rites which were used in the tabernacle, and belonged to the ceremonial law.

The apostle here speaks of such as lived after Christ was exhibited on earth, and taken into heaven, and had accomplished the substance and truth of all the legal shadows and types. They by addicting themselves to the service of the tabernacle, did that which presupposed that Christ was not come. For the shadow and substance, the type and truth could not stand together: or if they granted that he was come, they presupposed that Christ, and what he had done and endured, was not sufficient for man's salvation; but that it was necessary to add an observation of the legal rites thereunto. For many taught this doctrine, 'Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved,' Acts xv. 1. Under circumcision they comprised other legal rites.

In these two respects, that they made void the exhibition of Christ, or impeached the sufficiency of

his merit, they deprived themselves of all right to him. On these grounds, saith the apostle, 'if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. Christ is become of no effect unto you.' The apostle's reason is this, 'he is a debtor to do the whole law,' Gal. v. 2-4. As 'he that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole law,' James ii. 10; so he that addicteth himself to one rite of the law, to be justified thereby, bindeth himself to the whole law: and thereupon maketh Christ useless and fruitless unto him.

Sec. 125. *Of the popish mass-altar.*

If the Jews, who in the apostle's time served the tabernacle, and waited on the altar therein, had no right to Christ, what right may they be imagined to have to him, who addict themselves to ordinances of mere human invention, placing God's worship therein, and expecting salvation thereby?

Among millions of other inventions that make Christ to be fruitless to the observers of them, popish mass-altars may be reckoned. Papists have in all their churches, chapels, and other places of devotion, material altars of stone to offer thereon the very body of Christ, as they pretend.

So blind or impudent they are, as they stick not to produce this text for a warrant of their mass-altars,<sup>1</sup> which thus they express, 'We have a very altar in the proper sense, to sacrifice Christ's body upon.' This they speak of the altar of the mass, which can no way be intended in this place; for,

1. Their altars of the mass are many; this is but one.

2. Their altars are visible, material, of stone; this altar is a mystical, spiritual, heavenly altar.

3. Their altars in the outward matter of them, are like the altar under the law; but this altar is directly opposed thereunto.

4. This altar is styled a golden altar before the throne, Rev. viii. 3; their altars cannot be imagined to be such.

5. They themselves do grant<sup>2</sup> that Christ is the altar under which the souls of martyrs lay, Rev. vi. 9; but this is that altar.

6. Mass-altars were not in the apostle's days; this was.

7. Their altars make this altar to be of no use, or at least insufficient. For, to use our apostle's argument, if the altar here meant be sufficient, what further need is there of other altars? chap. vii. 11, and viii. 7.

On these grounds we may well conclude, that they have no right to eat of this altar, who sacrifice upon mass-altars.

Of papists' carnal service in other points of religion, see Chap. vii. 16, Sec. 82.

<sup>1</sup> Rheim. Annot. on Heb. xiii. 10, Sec.

<sup>2</sup> Rheim. Annot. on Rev. vi. 9, Sec. 1.

Sec. 126. *Of the meaning of Heb. xiii. 11.*

Ver. 11. *For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp.*

The causal conjunction *γὰρ*, *for*, in this place, intendeth both a proof, and also an illustration, which is taken from a solemn rite under the law, which was a burning of a sacrifice without the camp, so as the priest who served in the tabernacle nor might, nor could eat thereof.

The illustration is by way of resemblance, thus; as the priest under the law serving in the tabernacle neither might nor could eat of that sacrifice which was burnt without the camp; so they who under the gospel serve the tabernacle cannot partake of Christ, who was the truth of that type.

The apostle, writing to the Hebrews, who were well acquainted with the legal rites, and too much addicted unto them, doth oft strike on this string of the Judaical law, both in shewing the impotency of those rites, and also in framing arguments from them, to alienate their minds from them. Thus he fighteth against them with their own weapons. See Chap. ix. 13, Sec. 68.

The word, *ζῷα*, translated *beasts*, according to the notation thereof, signifieth a *living creature*; for the sacrifices, before they were slain, were living.

Our English, according to the Latin, calls them *animals*, and we style a man that wants understanding, an *animal*. This word is applied to those living spirits which attend the throne of God, Rev. iv. 6. By reason of their resemblance in courage, in strength, in speed, and other like excellencies, to some particular beasts. But here it is taken in the most usual sense, for brute beasts; for such were offered up for sacrifice.

The beasts here meant were such clean beasts as were appointed for sacrifice.

In particular here may be understood:

1. The red heifer, of whose ashes the purifying water was made, Num. xix. 2, &c.

2. The bullock that was offered for the priest's sin, Lev. iv. 3, &c.

3. The bullock that was for the sin of the whole congregation, Num. iv. 14, &c.

4. And that most especially, the bullock and the goat that were both slain on the solemn annual day of atonement, Lev. xvi. 27.

The *bodily*, *σώμα*, of these beasts are expressly mentioned, because their life was taken away before they were burnt, for they were slain at the altar, Num. iv. 4. So as by their bodies he means their carcases, under which these particulars are expressed, 'the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head, and with his legs, and his inwards, and his dung,' Num. iv. 11.

As for the *blood*, *αἷμα*, of these beasts, it is here said to be *brought into the sanctuary*.

Of the word *sanctuary*, *τὰ ἅγια*, see Chap. viii. 2, Sec. 4.

Here, under the word *sanctuary*, both parts thereof are intended, both the outward part, called the 'holy place,' and also the innermost, called the 'most holy.' For the blood here mentioned was brought into both, and sprinkled in them both, Lev. xvi. 14-16.

This blood did typify the blood and death of Christ, whereby satisfaction was made for sin. Therefore it is here said that the blood was brought *for sin*—namely, to cleanse and take away sin: both from the priest himself, and also from the people; for it is expressly said that 'he shall offer his bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and make an atonement for himself and his house,' Lev. xvi. 6. It is also added, that 'he shall make an atonement for the people,' ver. 24.

Of the priest's offering for himself and the people, see Chap. v. 3, Sec. 14. Yea, it is said that he should make an atonement for the holy place, and the tabernacle, and the altar, Lev. xvi. 16, 20. For this end the blood was sprinkled 'before and upon the mercy-seat,' Lev. xvi. 15, to shew the concurrence of divine justice and mercy. For that blood did typify the blood and death of Christ, whereby satisfaction was made for sin. God's justice being satisfied by Christ's blood, way was made thereby for approaching to the mercy-seat, and obtaining mercy.

The things in the holy place, and the altar, were sprinkled with blood, to take away that guilt of sin which man brings upon himself, and upon all that he useth, or is used for his good.

The word, *εἰσφέρειν*, translated *brought*, is a compound, and to express that composition it may be translated *brought in*, thus, *brought in into the sanctuary*. For the preposition *in* is twice used—1. With the verb in composition, and then joined with the noun *sanctuary*. It sheweth that the beast was slain, and so his blood shed without those two holy places—namely, at the altar, and from thence carried into those places.

Thus Christ was offered up on earth, there was his blood shed; but he carried it with him into heaven, and there presents it to his Father at the throne of grace. Hereupon it is that his blood or death hath a virtue and efficacy to cleanse away our sins, and to take away the guilt and curse which we have brought upon all things that we use, and upon all things that we do and undertake.

The foresaid blood is here said to be brought by *the high priest*.

Of a high priest, see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 172.

The high priest is said to carry in this blood,

1. Because none else might enter into the most holy place, chap. ix. 7.

2. Because high priests were 'ordained for men in things pertaining to God,' Heb. v. 1.

3. Because the high priest was an especial type of

Christ, who, by presenting his own blood at the throne of grace, maketh atonement for the sins of all God's people.

Of the resemblances betwixt a high priest and Christ, see Chap. viii. 1, Sec. 4.

Sec. 127. *Of burning beasts without the camp.*

The noun, *παρέμωτον*, translated *camp*, is derived from a double compound verb. The simple verb, *παύω*, signifieth to *cast*. The single compound, *ἐμπαύω*, to *cast in*. The double compound, *παρέμωτον*, to *cast about*. It is used to set forth a pitching of tents, or settling soldiers in array. The noun is oft used for a castle, wherein soldiers lie in garrison, Acts xxi. 34, 37. It is also put for an army, which consisteth of soldiers set in array, Heb. xi. 34. And likewise for a camp, wherein soldiers lie together in their several tents, Rev. xx. 9.

In this place it hath reference to Israel's abode in the wilderness, where they dwelt in tents; and their tents were pitched by several standards, as the tents of soldiers used to be in a camp.

The bodies then of the foresaid beasts were carried beyond all their tents, and burnt in a void place, where were no tents; and in this sense are said to be burnt without the camp. The Lord, who commanded the bodies of the beasts so to be burnt, did thereby manifest that he would not leave the priests to feed on those sacrifices as they did on others; and therefore to take away both liberty and possibility of eating thereof, he caused them so to be burnt; and that in a type, as the apostle sheweth in the next verse.

As these, so other sacrifices (especially those which are styled burnt-offerings, Lev. i. 3, &c.) were burnt, to typify the tormenting death of Christ. For what is more tormenting than burning? The paschal lamb was roasted, to typify as much, Exod. xii. 9. Of the outward and inward torments which Christ endured at his death, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 76.

By this instance, we may observe that not only the sacrifices themselves, but also the manner of offering them up, the places where they were offered and burnt, and other like circumstances, were typical. So in other types, both the substance and circumstances prefigured their truths. The paschal lamb typified Christ's sacrifice, 1 Cor. v. 7; and the prohibition of breaking a bone, Exod. xii. 46, foreshewed that not a bone of Christ should be broken, John xix. 36.

Of rules to find out the truth of types, see Chap. iv. 8, Sec. 50.

Sec. 128. *Of Christ fulfilling types.*

Ver. 12. *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

From the former legal rite of burning the beasts'

bodies without the camp, the apostle maketh this inference, *wherefore Jesus also, &c.*

This particle of inference, *ὅθεν, wherefore*, implieth a reason why Christ suffered as he did, namely, because so much was under the law prefigured concerning him. So as Christ purposely did and endured what was before signified of him, and that by types, promises, prophecies, or any other way. Hereupon it is that the evangelists do oft use this phrase, 'that it might be fulfilled,' of the things which were done by and about Christ.

Israel's coming out of Egypt was a type that Christ should come out from thence; and the Nazarenes were types of Christ. Therefore Christ was brought out of Egypt, and dwelt in Nazareth, that those types might be fulfilled, Mat. ii. 15, 23. Christ was born of a virgin, that the promise thereof might be fulfilled, Mat. i. 22. Christ commanded them whom he cured, that they should not make him known, that a prophecy tending to that purpose might be fulfilled, Mat. xii. 16, 17.

This was to shew that—

1. Christ was the truth and substance of types, promises, and prophecies.

2. Christ was of old prefigured to the Jews, though obscurely.

3. Jesus, in whom we believe, is the true Messiah whom the ancient Jews expected.

4. God is true and faithful in the accomplishment of what he makes known beforehand.

This gives good ground of searching into the legal types, to find out the truth comprised under them. Hereof see Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 13.

The like may be applied to promises and prophecies of Christ.

This actual, plain, clear accomplishment of the types, promises, and prophecies under the law, concerning the Messiah, in Jesus, doth much aggravate the blindness of mind and hardness of heart that hath possessed the Jews that have lived since these accomplishments.

Sec. 129. *Of the meaning of Heb. xiii. 12.*

The truth of the legal types is here styled *Jesus*, for all of them did in something or other prefigure Christ. So many were the offices which Christ undertook, so many were the things that he did, so many were his sufferings in soul and body, so many are the benefits that we reap by Christ, as it is not possible for one type to set them all out. Therefore there were very many, some to set forth one thing, others to set forth other things. See Chap. vii. 3, Sec. 22.

Of this title *Jesus*, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 73, and Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 29.

The particle, *καί, translated also*, is the ordinary copulative conjunction, *and*. In this place it carrieth emphasis, and implieth that not only the type, but the truth also was carried without, even Jesus him-

self. Though he were Jesus the Saviour of man, yet was he so basely dealt withal, as to be carried out of the city.

The end of Christ's suffering, and that according to the type, is thus expressed, *that he might sanctify the people with his own blood*. Of this word, *ἀγιαζω, sanctify*, see Chap. ii. 11, Sec. 101.

Christ is said to sanctify, both by purging them from their sins, Chap. i. 3, Sec. 27, and also by conferring grace upon them, John i. 16.

Both these joined together under this phrase, 'Purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God,' chap. ix. 14. For there is a merit and a virtue that issueth from the death of Christ. By the merit sins are purged, by the virtue grace is conferred. So as both justification and sanctification are here comprised under this word *sanctify*.

They who partake of this benefit are styled, *τοὺ λαόν, the people*. Of the notation of the Greek word, see Chap. iv. 9, Sec. 57. Of the reasons of using this title, see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 181.

The means whereby the foresaid blessing was obtained, is said to be *blood*, namely, blood shed, which implieth death; for 'life is in the blood,' Lev. xvii. 10. So as Christ died to sanctify us. See chap. ix. 12.

The blood wherewith he sanctified us, is said to be *his own*, even that which came out of his own body. This is here expressly set down, to put a difference between the type and the truth, and that in two respects—

1. In that the priests used other blood than their own.

2. In that that other blood was the blood of beasts.

But Christ's blood was his own, and that was the blood of God, Acts xx. 28. Of this difference, see chap. ix. 12-14. Thus is this phrase, *his own blood*, answerable to this, *himself*. Whereof see Chap. i. 3, Sec. 20.

This word, *παρά, suffered*, being spoken of Christ's death, sheweth that it was a suffering death. See Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 76.

The place where Christ suffered, is said to be *without the gate*.

A gate is taken for that which affords a passage for ingress into, and egress out of a place, which is compassed about with walls or other fences.

It is taken—

1. Properly, for a material gate, Luke vii. 12.

2. Metaphorically. Thus a gate is applied to heaven and hell, Mat. vii. 13, 14.

3. Metonymically, for such as pass through a gate, Mat. xvi. 18.

4. Synecdochically. For that whole place wherof it is a gate. So here, for the city Jerusalem; for Christ suffered without that city.

The visible occasion of Christ's suffering without the city, was the Jews' malice against him, who accused him of high treason against Caesar, and would

give Pilate, the judge, no rest till he had adjudged him to be crucified. By this means it was that Christ suffered without the gate. For all notorious malefactors (as they judged Christ to be) were put to death without the city; instance the two thieves that were crucified with Christ, Mat. xxvii. 38.

The Jews themselves did use to put to death notorious malefactors without their tents before they dwelt in walled cities, and without their cities when they dwelt in them. God himself commanded that a blasphemer should be stoned without the camp, Lev. xxiv. 14. Achan was put to death in the valley of Achor, which was without the camp, Josh. vii. 24. So Naboth, 1 Kings xxi. 13. So Stephen, Acts vii. 58.

As for Christ, the evangelist expressly notes that they brought him unto 'a place called Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull,' Mat. xxvii. 53, Mark xv. 22. But though those malicious Jews did what they did in spite, yet God so overruled their practices, as he thereby brought his own counsel to pass, as it is said of the Jews crucifying, 'Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain,' Acts ii. 23. And, as here in this text is implied, an especial type concerning him was fulfilled.

Thus we see how God can turn the malicious and mischievous plots and practices of Satan and his instruments to the accomplishment of his own blessed will.

This gives us good ground to support our spirits against secret plots and open practices of the enemies of God and his church, and to rest upon the divine providence, and believe that God hath a work to be effected even by them, for his own glory and church's good.

This suffering of Christ without the gate, was in the world's eye a matter of ignominy and reproach, which is evident by the apostle's explication thereof, in this phrase, 'bearing his reproach,' ver. 13. Hereby is verified that which the apostle hath affirmed concerning Christ, that he 'endured the cross, despising the shame,' chap. xii. 2.

Of the shame wherunto Christ was put, see Chap. vi. 6, Sec. 42.

Sec. 130. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 10-12.*

Ver. 10. *We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.*

11. *For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burnt without the camp.*

12. *Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

The sum of these verses is, a declaration of the damage which ariseth from addicting one's self to legal rites.



The damage is a depriving himself of that benefit which comes from Christ.

This is,

1. Propounded, ver. 10.

2. Illustrated, ver. 11, 12.

Of the proposition, there are two parts :

1. A declaration of the point.

2. A description of the persons here concerned.

The point holds two things :

1. The kind of benefit, in this metaphor, *altar*.

2. The means of partaking thereof, in this other metaphor, *eat*.

The persons are of two sorts :

1. Such as partake of the benefit, in this phrase, *we have*.

2. Such as miss of it.

In setting down the latter is noted—

1. The cause of their missing of the benefit, *they serve the tabernacle*.

2. A consequence thence arising, *they have no right*.

The illustration is by applying the truth to a type.

Hereof are two parts :

1. The type, ver. 11.

2. The truth, ver. 12.

The type was the manner of burning certain sacrifices.

Hereof are two parts :

1. A description of those sacrifices.

2. The place where they were burnt.

They are described,

1. By the kind, *bodies of beasts*.

2. By the use of them.

Hereabout are expressed,

1. That part of them that was brought, *blood*.

2. The person by whom it was brought, *the high priest*.

3. The place into which it was brought, *the sanctuary*.

4. The end why, *for sin*.

The second part of the illustration is the truth of the foresaid type.

Whereof observe,

1. The inference, in this word, *wherefore*.

2. The substance.

Of it there are two parts :

1. The person, *Jesus*.

2. His suffering.

This is set out,

1. By the place where he suffered, *without the gate*.

2. By the end why he suffered, *that he might sanctify*.

This is set out,

1. By the subject whom he sanctified, *the people*.

2. By the means wherewith he sanctified, *blood*.

This is amplified by the kind of blood, *his own*.

Sec. 131. *Of the observations raised out of Heb. xiii. 10-12.*

I. *Christ is an altar*. He is here set down under that metaphor. See Sec. 122.

II. *Christ properly belongs to Christians*. They are they of whom the apostle thus saith, *we have*. See Sec. 122.

III. *Partakers of Christ believe on him*. This is to eat of the altar here meant. See Sec. 123.

IV. *Men may deprive themselves of all right to Christ*. This negative clause, *have no right to eat*, intends as much. See Sec. 123.

V. *Maintainers of legal rites have no right to Christ*. Under this phrase, *which serve the tabernacle*, maintainers of legal rites are meant. See Sec. 123.

VI. *Types are proofs of truth*. This causal particle, *for*, gives proof hereof. See Sec. 124.

VII. *Brute beasts were sanctified under the law*. The bodies of the beasts here mentioned were sanctified.

VIII. *Blood was a means of expiation*. Therefore was blood carried into the sanctuary on the day of expiation.

IX. *The means of expiation was presented in the place of God's presence*. This was the sanctuary.

X. *The high priest was the minister of expiation*. He carried in the blood.

XI. *Expiation was made to take away sin*. This phrase, *for sin*, implieth thus much.

XII. *Sacrifices for expiation were burnt without the place of men's habitation*. This is *without the camp*.

These six last observations are couched under the legal rites, set down, ver. 11.

XIII. *Christ purposely did and endured all to fulfil what was prefigured*. Thus much is intended under this particle of inference, *wherefore*. See Sec. 128.

XIV. *Jesus was the substance of the legal shadow*. An express instance is here given thereof. See Sec. 129.

XV. *Jesus is he that sanctifieth*. This work is here attributed to him. See Sec. 129.

XVI. *They are a peculiar people whom Christ doth sanctify*. This word, *people*, sets out such. See Sec. 129.

XVII. *Men's sanctification was an end of Christ's suffering*. For so it is said, he suffered *that he might sanctify*. See Sec. 129.

XVIII. *Blood is the means of sanctifying*. See Sec. 129.

XIX. *Christ offered his own blood*. These two last doctrines are comprised under this phrase, *his own blood*. See Sec. 129.

XX. *Christ's was a suffering death*. This word, *suffered*, intends as much. See Sec. 129.

XXI. *Christ's was a reproachful death*. It was *without the city*, where malefactors were put to death. See Sec. 129.

XXII. *God turned men's mischievous plots to the*

*fulfilling of what he had prefigured.* Christ was by the malice of his adversaries put to death without the city, but thereby the type of burning the beast without the camp was fulfilled. See Sec. 129.

Sec. 132. *Of imitating Christ.*

Ver. 13. *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.*

From Christ's accomplishing the forementioned type by suffering *without the gate*, the apostle raiseth a tropological use concerning Christians' imitating Christ therein. This is manifested two ways.

1. By this illative conjunction, *τοίνυν, therefore*; because Christ did so, Christians must do the like.

2. By following that metaphor of *going out of the camp*.

This particular giveth instance that Christ is a pattern to Christians. 'I have given you an example,' saith Christ, John xiii. 15; and again, 'learn of me,' Mat. xi. 29. We must learn both by the word of his mouth, and also by the course of his life. This latter is especially intended. So much also is intended under this phrase, 'lest thou learn his ways,' Prov. xxii. 25. And under this, 'learn not the way of the heathen' (Jer. x. 2); walk not in their way, be not like them.

Concerning the point itself, the church undertaketh for herself, and those that belong to her, to follow Christ, Cant. i. 3. So did Paul, and therein makes himself a pattern to others, saying, 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ,' 1 Cor. xi. 1. Oft doth he exhort Christians hereunto, as Eph. v. 2, Phil. ii. 5, Col. iii. 13. In this respect is Christ styled 'a way;' yea, 'the way, the truth, and the life' (John xiv. 6); the only true way that leadeth unto life.

1. This is one principal end of registering those things which Christ did and endured in the days of his flesh. As they were 'written that we might believe' (John xx. 31), so also that we might walk in the right way to life. In this respect he is styled 'the captain of our salvation.' See Chap. ii. 10, Sec. 95.

2. Christ is the best and most perfect pattern that we can have, and that in three respects: as he is, 1. Man; 2. God; 3. God-man.

1. As man, he is a visible pattern, and may be seen; and what he did and endured was seen. Thus he might be the better followed.

2. As God, he was a perfect pattern; he could not err. Thus we shall not be deceived in following him.

3. As God-man, he communicateth his Spirit to us, and enableth us to follow him.

1. This gives us information of the benefit of Christ's incarnation; whereby he came to be God-man in one person. By this means as he is a perfect pattern, so we make the better use of him, in

that we may cast our eye upon him, and see him going before us, and also be quickened and put on by his Spirit to follow him unto life.

2. This gives a demonstration of Christ's great care of his church. He thought it not enough to declare the way to life, and shew how we may walk therein, but also puts himself into that way, and goes before us therein. Thus is he a true captain and guide unto us; thus he sheweth that he requireth no more of us than he hath done and endured himself, John xvii. 13-15, Phil. ii. 6, 7.

3. This directs us how to keep steady in the Christian race, so as we turn neither to the right hand nor to the left: 'Look unto Jesus,' Heb. xii. 2. Say to him, as Ruth did to her mother-in-law, 'Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee,' Ruth i. 16. And in this case say with such a resolution as Elisha did, 'As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee,' 2 Kings ii. 2. Yea, if Christ should say to us, as he did to the twelve, 'Will ye also go away?' answer as Peter did, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life,' John vi. 67, 68. Therefore let our eye be upon him, as the eyes of mariners are on the light of the admiral's ship. Lose not the sight of him, hold as close and near to him as you can; so you shall be sure not to wander in by-paths, but to walk in that way which will bring you to life.

That we mistake not our mark herein, it will be meet to consider wherein we are to follow Christ; for though all things that are written of Christ are for our instruction, yet not all for our imitation. All are for us to look on Jesus; but in some things to look on him by the eye of faith; in others, by the way of obedience.

We must, therefore, wisely weigh the forementioned distinction of Christ being God, man, and God-man.

As God, he did sundry things by a divine power and prerogative. Thus:

1. He wrought miracles, John xv. 24.
2. He gave the Holy Ghost, John xx. 22.
3. He forgave sins, Mat. ix. 6.

None of these are imitable.

*Obj.* 1. The apostles did all these. For,

1. 'By their hands were many signs and wonders wrought,' Acts v. 12.

2. 'They laid their hands on men, and they received the Holy Ghost,' Acts viii. 17.

3. Paul was appointed an apostle to the Gentiles, 'that they might receive remission of sins,' Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

*Ans.* 1. They did none of these things as Christ did: by their own power, or in their own name.

Concerning miracles Peter thus saith, 'Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? Christ's

name through faith in his name hath made this man strong,' &c., Acts iii. 12, 16.

2. For giving the Holy Ghost, they 'prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost,' Acts viii. 15. Thereby they acknowledged that that gift came from above, even from the Father of lights.

3. Concerning forgiveness of sins, the apostle acknowledged that through Jesus is preached unto men the forgiveness of sin, Acts xiii. 38.

*Obj.* 2. Christ saith, 'Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted,' John xx. 23.

*Ans.* Christ speaketh of a ministerial and declarative act of forgiving sins.

All the forenamed points of working miracles, giving the Holy Ghost, and forgiving sins, cannot be done by mere men, nor ought to be attempted by any. The very heathen did imagine that one was east into hell for feigning to thunder like God.<sup>1</sup>

Papists blasphemously challenge a power in all these. For,

1. Beside their many feigned miracles, they say that by a priest bread is turned into flesh, and wine into blood.

2. Their Council of Trent<sup>2</sup> denounceth *anathema* against all that shall deny the Holy Ghost to be given by sacred ordination.

3. The said Council<sup>2</sup> denounceth *anathema* against such as shall say that a sacramental absolution is not a judicial act, but a mere ministry of pronouncing and declaring that sins are forgiven, &c.

*Obj.* 3. We are commanded to be followers of God, Eph. v. 1.

*Ans.* How far God is to be imitated or not, see Chap. iv. 11, Sec. 62.

2. Christ as God-man, and mediator betwixt God and man, did works of merit, sanctification, expiation, reconciliation, and intercession. These received dignity and efficacy from the union of his human nature with his divine. But for a mere man to arrogate any such thing to himself is intolerable presumption; and to attribute it to another is abominable blasphemy.

Papists offend in all these. They ascribe merit and satisfaction to men living; expiation to their priests' mass-offering; and reconciliation and intercession to saints departed.

3. Christ as man is most imitable, even in such things as were acts of his human nature.

Yet there are two exceptions in this case:

1. Extraordinary matters. 2. Temporary.

Extraordinary things done by Christ, and not imitable, are such as these:

(1.) His fasting forty days, Mat. iv. 2. Indeed, Moses (Exod. xxiv. 18) and Elijah (1 Kings xix. 8)

did as much; but it was by an extraordinary assistance, which cannot be imitated in ordinary cases.

(2.) Christ's walking on the water, Mat. xiv. 25, which, when Peter attempted to do, he began to sink; only by Christ's extraordinary assistance he did the like, Mat. xiv. 30, 31.

(3.) Praying all night, Luke vi. 12. Though Christ called upon his disciples in that case to pray with him, yet they could not, but slept, Mat. xxvi. 40, &c.

Temporary matters were such as belonged to the time wherein he lived; as his being circumcised, celebrating the passover, observing sundry feasts, and other rites of the law.

To these may be added occasional matters; as celebrating the Lord's supper at night, in a private chamber, among men only, with unleavened bread, and sitting as at the passover. So his sitting while he preached, Luke iv. 20; his preaching out of a ship, Luke v. 3, and on a mount, Mat. v. 1. These, being occasioned by present circumstances, do not bind us to imitate him therein, but upon like occasions.

*Quest.* Wherein then is Christ to be imitated?

*Ans.* In these three cases:

1. In such general moral duties as belong to all persons at all times. Such as belong to all persons are not extraordinary. Such as belong to all times are not temporary.

2. In such particular duties as belong to the like calling.

3. In such as have the like reason and occasion for doing them.

1. General moral duties expressed in Scripture to be done by Christ for our imitation are these:

(1.) Meekness, Mat. xi. 29.

(2.) Humility, Mat. xi. 29.

(3.) Love, Eph. v. 2.

(4.) Forgiving wrongs, Col. iii. 13.

(5.) Compassion, Luke x. 37.

(6.) Patience, Heb. xii. 2.

(7.) Contempt of the world, Heb. xii. 2.

2. Particular duties which Christ did by virtue of his place and calling were such as these:

(1.) As a son, he was subject to his parents, Luke ii. 51.

(2.) As a minister, he was diligent, Luke viii. 1.

He was also faithful, Heb. iii. 2, John vii. 16.

(3.) As a husband of his church, he was loving to her, Eph. v. 25.

3. Things which Christ did upon common equity, and may be done upon like reason and occasions, were these:

(1.) Preferring mercy before sacrifice, Mat. xii. 12.

(2.) Avoiding danger, Luke viii. 59.

(3.) Refreshing himself when he was weary, thirsty, hungry, sleepy, &c., John iv. 6, &c., Mat. viii. 24.

This sheweth how requisite it is that we acquaint ourselves with the life of Christ; and that for this end, to be like him. Herein lieth the difference be-

<sup>1</sup> Salmonus simulabat non imitabile fulmen. — *Virg.*

*Æneid*, lib. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Concil. Trid. de Sacram. Ordinis, cap. iii. can. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Concil. Trid. de Absol., cap. vi. can. 9.

twixt sound and formal Christians. All may be acquainted with the story of Christ, and be able to discourse thereof, but they are the sound Christians who lay it as a pattern before them. Such virtues as became the head must needs become the members. They are unworthy such a head, who prefer honour, riches, pleasures, gay apparel, or anything else, before the virtues of their head.

Among other motives meditate on these to imitate Christ:

1. The excellency of the guide.
2. The perfection of the pattern.
3. The blessed issue that will follow thereupon.

If we be here like to our head in grace, we shall be hereafter like to him in glory.

Sec. 133. *Of going out of the camp.*

Our apostle giveth this particular instance, wherein he would have us to imitate Christ, *let us go forth unto him without the camp.*

This phrase, *let us go forth*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, ἐξέρχου, but a compound; even the same that is translated *come out*, Chap. iii. 16, Sec. 163. A double preposition is here used, as was there; and implieth a like emphasis—namely, that we readily and thoroughly do what is here required.

The word, *παρεμύδα*, translated *camp*, is the same that was used, Ver. 11, Sec. 127. But here it is used in another sense: for *camp* is here metaphorically put for the world; and that in two especial respects.

1. The world is as a place of tents, which were of no stability, nor of long continuance, 1 Cor. vii. 31, 1 John ii. 17.

2. The world is as a camp of enemies, to saints especially, James iv. 4, 1 John iii. 13.

The world in general compriseth under it all creatures, whether places, persons, or other things. In this sense the world is said to be made by Christ, John i. 10. For 'all things were created by him, that are in heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible,' Col. i. 16. And to shew that the heavens are comprised under the world, as well as the earth, the plural number is used, thus, 'He made the worlds,' Heb. i. 3, and 'the worlds were framed,' &c., Heb. xi. 3. In this respect the world is divided into two parts:

One is called 'this world,' John xii. 31, and 'this present world,' 2 Tim. iv. 10.

The other is called 'that world,' Luke xx. 35, and 'the world to come,' Heb. vi. 5.

This world is here below.

That world is above.

Both these by way of distinction are mentioned together, thus, 'Neither in this world nor in the world to come,' Mat. xii. 32, and thus, 'Not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,' Eph. i. 21.

It is this present world that is here meant by this Vol. III.

metaphor of a *camp*; and by a metonymy the honours, promotions, profits, pleasures, and other like allurements, which are in this world. These are styled 'the things of this world,' and comprised under these three titles, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,' 1 John ii. 15, 16, that is, concupiscence, covetousness, and ambition.

To *go*, then, *out of the camp*, as here intended, hath respect to the mind, more than to the body; and to the inward affections rather than to the outward actions; though these be not altogether excluded.

To 'go out of the camp,' is to withdraw our mind, heart, and affections from the world; so as 'not to love' it, 1 John ii. 15; 'not to be conformed to it, but rather transformed,' Rom. xii. 2.

Thus the duty required doth not so much respect the place where we live, as the grace of the heart: as they are said to 'have their conversation in heaven,' Phil. iii. 20, whose heart and affection is on heavenly things; so they are said to go out of the world, whose hearts and affection are alienated from the world.

The grace here intended, is commonly called contempt of the world; whereby a man's heart is so taken off from the world, as no allurements thereof, under the pretence of honour, profit, or delight, nor any terrors thereof, under the pretence of the loss of goods, good name, liberty, or life itself, can put one on to do that which is sinful, or to omit a bounden duty. Thus Christ himself went out of the camp, when upon Satan's promise to 'give him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, if he would worship him,' Christ with indignation said, 'Get thee hence, Satan,' Mat. iv. 8-10; and when he used a like speech to Peter, who dissuaded him from suffering, Mat. xvi. 22, 23. Abraham went out of the camp, when upon God's command he went 'from his country, kindred, and father's house,' Gen. xii. 1. So did Isaac and Jacob, who continued in a strange land. So did Moses, Heb. xi. 24-27. So the apostles, who forsook all for Christ's sake, Mat. xix. 27.

Motives to stir us up so to go out of the camp, are these that follow, and such like:

1. 'The whole world lieth in wickedness,' 1 John v. 19. So as we cannot in heart abide therein, but that we must needs be tainted therewith.

2. Christ 'gave himself that he might deliver us from this present evil world,' Gal. i. 4. And shall not we go out of that from which Christ by his death hath delivered us?

3. The world hateth Christ, John xv. 18. And shall we abide with them that are haters of our Saviour?

4. The world hateth such as are Christ's, and believe in him. How then may we in heart abide with it?

5. 'Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,' James iv.

4. 'If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,' 1 John ii. 15. What more forcible motive can we have to drive us out of the world?

6. By having our hearts set upon the world, the safety of our soul is endangered. Now, 'what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' Mat. xvi. 26. Such is the vanity of the world, as it cannot be enough undervalued: and such is the excellency of the soul and of eternal life purchased for it, as they cannot be overvalued too much.

7. The world is not only 'vanity of vanities,' but also ' vexation of spirit,' Eccles. ii. 17.

Oh the folly of all such as embrace this present world! which is the disposition of most men in the world, even of those who have professed the true religion. If the state wherein men live do alter the true religion into idolatry, most men will leave their religion rather than the world. Witness the practice of England in Queen Mary's days. Few they were that came out of the camp to Christ. Yea, [some] of them who seemed to go out of the camp, and to suffer for Christ in Queen Mary's days, being preserved to Queen Elizabeth's days, did then like Demas embrace the present world.

#### Sec. 134. *Of going to Christ.*

In every motion there are two terms: one *from* which, the other *to* which one tendeth. As in a race there are two goals, one from which, the other to which the runner maketh haste.

Two such terms or goals are here noted in this text: that *from* which a Christian goeth, is the *fore-said camp*; or the world; that *to* which he goeth, is *Christ*. For this relative, *him (unto him)*, hath reference to Jesus, ver. 12, so as in taking our heart from the world, we must set it upon Jesus, for there is no other sure and safe subject to set it upon. We must believe on Jesus: we must love him, and submit ourselves to him and his gospel, and conform ourselves thereunto, and maintain the same with the uttermost of our power, though it be to the loss of all that we have, even of life itself. Therefore before denying ourselves the Lord premises this clause, 'come after me,' and after it addeth this, 'and follow me,' Mat. xvi. 21, and to bearing one's cross he addeth, 'come after me,' Luke xiv. 27. Now by 'denying one's self,' and 'bearing his cross,' the same thing is meant, that 'going of the camp' intendeth.

By going unto Christ a superabundant recompense is made for all that can be left by going forth out of the camp. For Christ is that treasure and that pearl for which if a man sell all that he hath, he can be no loser, Mat. xiii. 11-16. Christ can supply all our wants, and ease all our griefs, and comfort us in all our troubles, and in the end bring us to eternal

happiness. 'Come unto me,' saith he, 'all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' Mat. xi. 28. 'He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst,' John vi. 35. 'In the world ye shall have tribulation:' but 'I leave with you peace, my peace I give unto you,' John xiv. 27, and xvi. 33.

Knowledge of Christ and faith in him cannot but draw men out of the camp, and stir them up to make speed to this other goal, which is Christ.

All the benefit of going forth out of the camp is lost if they go not to Christ. The best that can be said of them, is that which the Lord said of hypocrites, 'they have their reward,' Mat. vi. 2, that is, some vain applause of vain men. This was all the reward that many of the heathen had for their seeming contempt of the world.

This was the reward that Diogenes had for having no other house than a tub; and Bias for accounting nothing his but the endowments of his mind; and which Socrates and Phocion had for refusing such great gifts as time after time were sent unto them; and which King Codrus had for casting himself into his enemies' power in the habit of a beggar. These and sundry others seemed to go out of the world, but none of them went to Christ: and thereupon had no other reward but vain applause of men.

The like may be said of Franciscan friars, who use to go barefoot and wear shifts of hair: and friars flagellant, who use to whip themselves: and friars mendicant, who go up and down to beg their food: and hermits, who live in desolate places: and anchorites, who mure themselves up within stone walls. Though these and other like them profess themselves to be Christians, and seem to go forth out of the camp, yet they do not go to Christ, in that Christ requireth no such thing of them, as they do to themselves. These have their reward here in this world, out of which they seem to go: but they can look for none in the world to come.

I might apply this same to many that profess the true reformed religion, and seem to go far in contemning the world, but the ends which they aim at do plainly demonstrate that they go not unto Christ.

These two opposite terms, *without the camp*, and *unto Christ*, give us to understand that Christ is not to be found in the camp. Christ himself expressly saith, that he is 'not of the world,' John xvii. 16. The world hateth him, John xv. 18. Hereupon saith the Lord, 'whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple,' Luke. xiv. 33.

#### Sec. 135. *Of reproach.*

Because they who go forth without the camp to Christ, are by the world accounted very fools and plain idiots, and many ways reproached, the apostle addeth this clause, *bearing his reproach*, whereby he giveth them to understand that they have cause to

look for reproach, and to arm themselves against it.

The verb, *ἐπιτιμᾶω*, which is derived from this noun, *ἐπιτιμία*, *reproach*, is sometimes taken in a good sense, and sometimes in a bad.

In a good sense, when one justly upbraideth unto another ingratitude, or an unworthy carriage towards benefits received: then it is translated *upbraid*. Thus 'Christ began to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not,' Mat. xi. 20. Thus he 'upbraided his disciples with their unbelief,' Mark xvi. 14.

It is used in a bad sense, when one unjustly seeketh to disgrace another for that which is good. Thus it is translated *revile*. In this sense, 'they that were crucified with Christ reviled him,' Mark xv. 32. In this sense, Christ pronounceth them blessed, 'whom men shall revile for his sake,' Mat. v. 11.

But this noun is always used in a bad sense, as where Christ is brought in thus complaining, 'The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me,' Rom. xv. 3, and where the apostle saith, 'Lest he fall into reproach,' 1 Tim. iii. 7. It is three times more used in this epistle, as chap. x. 33, and xi. 26, and in this text.

The object of reproach is a man's good name. This is that white or mark at which reproachers do aim, in shooting out their venomous arrows of reproach. Now a good name is the most precious thing that a generous mind hath. He preferreth it before wealth, health, liberty, or life itself. The wounds of a good name do pierce deep into a man's soul. In this respect reproaches which wound a man's good name are very grievous. Christ himself putteth reproach into us, by way of persecution, Mat. v. 11. So these and I think they v. 14, 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. This is to persons; but ample of Ishmael, who is said to be a reproach, Gen. xvi. 12.

1. To persons; but ample of Ishmael, who is said to be a reproach, Gen. xvi. 12.

The many complaints which holy men of God have made hereof, do evidently demonstrate that reproach is a very bitter pill and fulsome potion. Among the complaints of other, such as David made, do evidently demonstrate the point. He resembleth reproachful words to sharp, deadly instruments of war, as arrows, swords, spears; and to the deadly poison of serpents and adders, or asps. Read for this purpose, Ps. lviii. 4, lviii. 4, and xli. 3, Rom. iii. 13.

It is supposed that this was one of the most venomous arrows that Satan shot against Job, namely, the reproach wherewith his friends reproached him. He doth much complain hereof, Job xix. 2, 3, and in other places.

Though reproach be very grievous, yet it hath been in all ages the portion of the upright and righteous, who have least deserved it. 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer' this kind of 'persecution,' 2 Tim. iii. 12.

For reproaches are manifested and cast upon persons many ways:

1. By words. This is the most ordinary and usual manner of reproaching one, Job xix. 2, 3.

2. By signs: as wagging the head, Mat xxvii. 39 wagging the hand, Zeph. ii. 15; shooting out the lip, Ps. xxii. 7; laughing, Job xii. 4; and by other like means.

3. By writing. Thus Sennacherib reproached Hezekiah, all Judah, and the Lord himself, by a letter, 2 Kings xix. 14.

4. By disgraceful deeds, such as were done to Christ; whereof see Chap. vi. 6, Sec. 42.

There are, among others, two especial reasons of reproaching such as go out of the camp to Christ:

1. That envy, malice, and hatred that is in the world against them, John xv. 18, 19.

2. That proneness which is in men to misjudge the upright. This was the fault of Job's friends, and of many who lived in David's time, which provoked him oft to appeal unto God to be judged and tried by him, Ps. xxvi. 1, 2.

#### Sec. 136. Of bearing reproach.

Upon the forenamed point concerning reproach (that it is,

1. A kind of persecution.

2. A sword that pierces deep into the soul.

3. The portion of all saints in all ages.

4. Cast upon saints without their defect, either by reason of the malice or undue suspicion of reproachers), —upon these and other like grounds, the apostle fitteth addeth this word, *ὑπομένετε*, *bearing*, so as Christians must bear reproach.

Of the divers acceptions of the word translated *bearing*, see Chap. i. 3, Sec. 34. It is applied to them who did bear a sick man with his bed to lay him before Christ, Luke v. 18.

It here intendeth two things:

1. Willingness to undergo what is laid upon us. See Chap. vi. 1, Sec. 4.

2. Courage and constancy in going through with that which belongs unto us, notwithstanding the reproach that is laid upon us for it.

A porter that must bear a burden, will both willingly take it upon his shoulders, and also constantly go on in his course, and not turn back or go out of the way by reason of his burden.

Reproach is that 'cross' (as well as other things) which he that will follow Christ must take up. Mat. xvi. 24. This phrase, to 'take up' a cross, is a participle, *οὗ*, willing subjection to that which is a cross, in the It putteth a difference betwixt *οὗ* and *ἐκ*, in the necessity, because they can't *οὗ* there be no stable thing, and such as, by *οὗ* one in the world to come, duty to God, and *οὗ* thus described, 'A city which them, willing,' Heb. xi. 10. 'It is so stable as them, willing,' Heb. xii. 28. 'Itfadeth not This is man

1 See Chap. iii. 13, Sec. 142.

1. By an inward meek disposition, which keepeth the passion from being disturbed, and the mind from being vexed and perplexed, yea, and from wishing revenge against the reproacher.

2. By an outward answerable carriage; and that either by silence, not returning reproach for reproach (which the apostle noteth of Christ, 'who, when he was reviled, reviled not again,' 1 Pet. ii. 23), or by returning a mild answer, as he who said, 'Being reviled, we bless; being defamed, we entreat,' 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. It was the answer which Gideon returned to the Ephraimites, Judges viii. 2.

The second thing intended under bearing of reproach is courage and constancy in persisting in that which is good, notwithstanding we be reproached for the same. Thus did David bear his wife's reproach when she accounted him as a vain fellow for manifesting his zeal in dancing before the Lord, and said, 'I will yet be more vile than thus,' 2 Sam. vi. 16, 20, 22.

This is to bear reproach aright.

#### Sec. 137. Of Christ's reproach.

The particular reproach which the apostle here adviseth to bear, is thus expressed, *τὴν ὀνειδισμὸν ἀνθρώπων*, *his reproach*, meaning the reproach of Christ.

It is called Christ's reproach in sundry respects; as,

1. The union that is betwixt him and his church. The church is that mystical body whereof he is the head. In this respect head and body are styled *Christ*, 1 Cor. xii. 12; so as the reproach of the body, or of any member thereof, is the reproach of Christ himself.

2. The sympathy which is betwixt Christ and every of his members. He is sensible of that reproach which is cast upon any of them. In this respect he said to Saul, 'Why persecutest thou me?' Acts ix. 4.

3. The account which Christ hath of the reproaches of his saints. He doth account them as reproaches cast upon himself, even as he did account the neglect of mercy to saints a neglect of mercy to himself, Mat. xxv. 45.

4. His undertaking to revenge such reproaches and wrongs as are done to his members; for he hath said, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay,' Rom. xii. 19.

5. The cause of the reproach which is here meant, and that is Christ himself, a profession of his name, self, andning of his gospel, and holding close to his that 'going on. In this sense an apostle calleth suffer-

By going untoes 'Christ's sufferings,' 1 Pet. iv. 14, is made for all that c.

the camp. For Christ is *in* us betwixt the reproaches for which if a man sell all that can source be laid a loser, Mat. xiii. 44-46. Christ canot formerly laid wants, and ease all our griefs, and comb-21.

our troubles, and in the end bring t him all his

life-long, especially at the time of his death. Whereof see Chap. vi. 6, Sec. 42.

This reference of reproach to Christ, in this phrase, *his reproach*, is for limitation, direction, consolation, and incitation.

1. It affordeth a limitation, in that it restraineth it to a distinct kind of reproach, which is Christ's reproach. It is not every kind of reproach that can be counted a matter of glory, wherein a man may rejoice, but Christ's reproach. I may in this case say of reproach, as the apostle doth of buffeting, 'What glory is it if, when ye be reproached for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?' 1 Pet. ii. 20.

2. It affordeth a direction, in shewing how we ought to bear reproach, even as Christ did; for we are in this case to 'look unto Jesus,' who 'despised the shame.' Hereof see chap. xii. 2.

3. It ministereth much comfort, in that no other thing is done to us than what is done to our head before us. Herewith doth Christ comfort his disciples, Mat. x. 25, John xv. 20. The comfort hence arising is the greater, in that Christ our head hath a fellow feeling of our reproaches, and accounts them as cast upon himself, and answerably will recompense us, and revenge our reproachers.

4. What greater motive can we have to incite us willingly and contentedly to bear reproach than this, that it is Christ's reproach? If honour, if profit may be motives to incite us to a duty, these motives are not wanting in this case. What can be more honourable than to be as Christ was? And if we be reproached with him here, we shall enjoy with him hereafter a crown of glory. What more honourable? What more profitable?

I might hereupon further note the folly and madness of such as reproach the saints. They? Christ re-have to do but with mean, contemptible pe to them-it appears that they have to do even with his world Christ himself, who can take sore vengeance in them even in this world, and after throw them into eternal perdition; for it is Christ's reproach.

#### Sec. 138. Of believers having no continuing city here.

Ver. 14. *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*

This verse is added as a reason to enforce the former duty of going forth out of the camp, as is clear by this causal particle, *γὰρ, for*. The reason is taken from the instability of the things of this world. The reason is of great force to enforce a withdrawing of a man's heart from the world. For what wise man will set his heart upon that which is uncertain and unstable?

The adverb, *ἔδῃ*, translated *here*, is sometimes indefinitely used for a note of demonstration or admiration; thus, 'Here is the patience of the saints;' 'here are they that keep the commandments of God,' Rev.

xiv. 12. It is also put for the time of doing a thing (as Chap. vii. 8, Sec. 51), and for place; and this more strictly for the particular place where one is (as for that place where Peter was, when he said, 'It is good for us to be here,' Mat. xvii. 4); or more largely for the whole earth, as here, for it is opposed to heaven; yet it may also be applied to the time of men's abode in this world.

A *city*, πόλις, is here put for that which is firm and stable;<sup>1</sup> for a city consisteth of houses which are built upon their foundations, and useth to be fenced about with strong walls. Thus it is opposed to a *camp*, which consisteth of tents, which are moveable. That the word *city* is here so used, is evident by this epithet, μόνιμον, *continuing*, added to it. This here implieth a present stability and an everlastingness therein. Thus our substance in heaven is called 'an enduring' or 'continuing substance;' that is, everlasting, Heb. x. 34. For such a one is the city to come which we seek.

The negative particle, οὐ, *no*, sheweth that there is no such city to be found here in this world. In this world there is no firm and stable estate. The wise man hath largely proved this in Ecclesiastes, and experience of all ages hath evidenced as much. How are states, that seemed to be most stable, clean ruined! This is lively set forth in that image which was shewed to Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, Dan. ii. 31. Where is Nineveh? where Babylon? where Jerusalem? These were strong and stately cities in their time. Soon are the things of this world removed from men; witness Job's case, Job i. 14, &c. And soon may men be taken from the things of this world; witness his case whom Christ styled fool, Luke xii. 20.

This, by the divine providence, is so ordered, on these and other like grounds:

1. To put a difference betwixt the things of this world and of the world to come. By a like evidence doth this apostle put a difference betwixt Christ and creatures, Chap. i. 11, Sec. 139.

2. To wean us from this world and the things thereof. This motive doth the wise man use to draw men's minds from riches, Prov. xxiii. 5.

3. To make us the more to inquire after the things that are durable. This the apostle here exemplifieth, in these words following, *but we seek one to come*.

The manner of expressing this point under this verb, ἐζητοῦμεν, *have*, further sheweth that we are in this world as pilgrims out of our country. We have here no sure dwelling-place. The patriarchs of old 'acknowledged themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth,' Heb. xi. 13; and answerably carried themselves. We must use this world only for necessity's sake, making use of such things as in it are needful for us, not placing our happiness therein.

The number and person in which this verb *we have* [is used], is observable. These seem to restrain this

condition to such as the apostle was, and they to whom he wrote, as if saints and believers were the only persons that have here no continuing city.

The truth is, that no men at all, whether in the church or out of the church, whether believers or infidels, have a continuing city here; yet is this in special appropriated to believers in two especial respects.

One in regard of the world's dealing with them.

The other in regard of their esteem of the world.

1. The world doth what he can to drive believers from place to place, to unsettle their abode, and to make them weary of the world.

2. Believers use the world as an uncertain, unstable estate. They knowing that 'there remaineth a rest for the people of God,' namely, in another world, 'study to enter into that rest,' Heb. iv. 9, 11.

Hereby a worldling and a believer may be distinguished:

The worldling, in his imagination, hath here a city, a place whereon he setteth his heart and setteth his abode;

The believer hath here no continuing city.

Sec. 139. *Of seeking a city to come.*

Of the forementioned instability of this world believers make this use, to seek that which is stable.

This particle of opposition, ἀλλὰ,<sup>1</sup> *but*, intendeth such an inference or use.

The verb, ἐζητοῦμεν, translated *seek*, is a compound. The simple, ζητέω, signifieth to *seek*, and that with earnestness. It is used to express our earnest prayer to God, Mat. vii. 7. This compound carrieth an emphasis, and implieth a seeking with a desire to obtain, and is thereupon translated to 'desire,' Phil. iv. 17. It is used to set forth the Gentiles' seeking after the things of this world, Mat. vi. 32, which is with great desire to obtain them. It is also used of Herod's seeking for Peter when he was delivered out of prison, Acts xii. 19, which was with such a desire to find him, as he commanded the keepers of the prison to be put to death, because he found him not. Finally, it is used in such a sense as here, namely, of the patriarchs' 'seeking a country to come,' Heb. xi. 14. So as the things above are with such diligence to be sought, as we may at length enjoy them, we must 'labour to enter into the rest' to come. See Chap. iv. 11, Secs. 63, 64.

The opposition betwixt the former part of the verse and this, plainly proveth that there is a stable estate. Our English expresseth it under this particle, *one*; and it is implied under a relative particle, ὅτι, in the Greek: as if he had said, though there be no stable estate here, yet there is one in the world to come. This stable estate is thus described, 'A city which hath foundations,' Heb. xi. 10. It is so stable as 'it cannot be moved,' Heb. xii. 28. 'It fadeth not

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. xi. 10, Sec. 47.

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. iii. 13, Sec. 142.



away,' 1 Pet. i. 4. 'Nor moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thief steal' the treasures that are there, Mat. vi. 20.

1. That city is the place of God's own abode, Mat. vi. 9, Ps. cxliii. 1.

2. It is the place and state prepared for the unalterable condition of saints; and in these respects stable.

1. Though 'the children of this world' may seem about the things of this world to be 'wiser in their generation than the children of light,' Luke xvi. 8; yet herein their egregious folly appeareth, that they so doat upon this world, where there is no stable estate, as they clean lose that stable estate which is to come; like those Israelites who, upon some hardness in the wilderness, would return into Egypt, and so neglect Canaan, Num. xiv. 4. Men here in this world can prefer perpetual inheritances before uncertain tenures; yet the most sure inheritances that men can make are uncertain.

2. This demonstrateth the wisdom of such as, being enlightened by God's word, and guided by his Spirit, have learned to discern betwixt the camps in this world and cities in the world to come, and answerably prefer these before them. The world many times wondereth at their choice, but it is because they are blind, and cannot rightly judge betwixt things that differ. They who have their eyes rightly enlightened, will say, 'Surely this is a wise and understanding people,' Dent. iv. 6.

3. This may stay us against the uncertainty of all things here below; against losses, casualties, yea, and death itself; because we have in heaven 'a better and an enduring substance,' Heb. x. 34.

This stable estate is here said, *ἀντίδοτον, to come*; for it is not here enjoyed, but prepared and reserved for us. In this respect this apostle said, 'there remaineth a rest.' See Chap. iv. 9, Sec. 56.

They have the right to this city to come who have no city in this world; for the same person is used in both parts of the text, namely, the first person plural, *we*; 'we have no city, but we seek one to come.' They who account this world to be a city, will not seek a city to come, which sheweth that they have no right thereunto; but the seeking of believers giveth evidence of that right which God hath given them unto that which they seek; for it is the Spirit of God which worketh in them a mind to seek.

Hereby men may know their right to that city that is to come.

Sec. 140. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 13, 14.*

Ver. 13. *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.*

14. *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*

These two verses set out the contempt of the world. This point is,

1. Propounded, ver. 13.

2. Confirmed, ver. 14.

In propounding the point is set down,

1. An inference upon that which went before, in this word, *therefore*.

2. The substance.

Herein is to be considered,

1. The manner of propounding the point, and that by way of exhortation, *let us go forth*.

2. The matter whereof it consisteth.

Hereof are two parts:

1. A duty to be done.

2. A burden to be borne.

In the duty is expressed,

1. An act, *go forth*.

2. The object of that act, which is of two kinds:

(1.) From what we must go, *without the camp*.

(2.) To what we must go, *unto him*.

In setting out the burden, is set down,

1. The kind thereof, *reproach*: amplified in the subject thereof, in this relative, *his*, that is, Christ's.

2. An act on our parts, *bearing*.

The proof is taken from the difference betwixt this world and the world to come.

The main difference is about stability, which is denied to this world, but asserted to the world to come.

The denial is brought in as a reason of the foresaid duty, as appears by this word, *for*.

It is set forth,

1. By a metaphor, *no city*.

2. By the place, *here*.

3. By the persons to whom in special it is appropriated, *we here*.

In the assertion there is,

1. The point granted, by implication, in this word, *our*, meaning a city; and amplified by the time when it is to be enjoyed, *to come*.

2. The act of believers, *we seek*.

Sec. 141. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xiii. 13, 14.*

I. *Christ is to be imitated*. This particle of inference, *therefore*, intends thus much. See Sec. 132.

II. *This world is unstable*. It is as a camp. See Sec. 133.

III. *Our hearts must be taken off from the world*. This is to go forth without the camp. See Sec. 133.

IV. *They who leave the world must go to Christ*. This phrase, *unto him*, hath reference to Christ. See Sec. 134.

V. *Reproach followeth upon leaving the world*. This is here taken for grant. See Sec. 135.

VI. *Reproach for Christ's sake is Christ's reproach*. So it is here called. See Sec. 137.

VII. *Christ's reproach must patiently be endured*. This is to bear. See Sec. 136.

VIII. *There is no stability in this world*. As this was implied in the former verse under this metaphor camp, so it is here again intended under this negative, *no city*. See Sec. 138.

IX. *The things of this world are most unstable to believers.* They are they that say, *we have here no city.* See Sec. 138.

X. *The instability of the world makes believers to leave it.* This condition of the world being added as a reason of saints going out of it, proves the point. See Sec. 138.

XI. *There is a stability.* This is here taken for grant. See Sec. 139.

XII. *Stability is to come.* It is a city to come. See Sec. 139.

XIII. *Believers seek future stability.* They seek the city to come. See Sec. 139.

Sec. 142. *Of offering the sacrifice of praise to God by Christ continually.*

Ver. 15. *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.*

16. *But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

These two verses have an especial reference to the tenth verse, where Christ is set forth to be the only true altar in the Christian church; thereupon the apostle exhorteth us to make use of that altar, which is to offer sacrifice thereon. This relative particle, *ὧς*, therefore, implieth as much.

A like relative in the thirteenth verse did set out Christ as a pattern for our imitation. This sets him out as the object of our faith, and means of acceptance with God.

The word which the apostle useth is of the first person, and plural number, and compriseth under it both the apostle himself, as he was a professor of the true faith, and all other professors of the same faith; whereby he giveth us to understand, that all sorts of believers, ministers and others, are spiritual priests. So they are expressly styled, Rev. i. 6, and they are said to be 'an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice,' 1 Pet. ii. 5. It is the proper function of a priest to offer sacrifice. In that respect, therefore, wherein they are required to offer sacrifice, they are declared to be priests. Of the several kinds of priests, see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 172.

Of the verb, *ἀνατίθωμεν*, translated *offer*, see Chap. v. 1, Sec. 6.

Of this noun, *θυσία*, sacrifice, see Chap. v. 1, Sec. 7.

These two, *offer*, sacrifice, are legal terms; which are applied to evangelical duties, to shew.

1. That in legal rites there was, beside the type and truth, an evangelical equity, for Christians to observe. Incense was a type; Christ's intercession, the truth; Christians' prayers, the equity, Mal. i. 11. So in other things.

2. That Christians should have as great care about evangelical ordinances as the Jews had about theirs.

3. That God will accept evangelical performances of duty, as much as he did the legal.

Two evangelical duties are here set out by this rite of *offering sacrifice*: one is praise; the other is beneficence, ver. 16.

The Greek word, *αἰνῶμεν*, translated *praise*, is here only used in the New Testament. Another like word, *αἰνέω*, is twice used, Mat. xxi. 16, Luke xviii. 43. A verb, *αἰνέω*, thence derived, which signifieth to *praise*, is oft used, Luke xix. 37. But a compound noun of the same root, *ᾠδὴ*, is most frequently used, Rom. ii. 29, Eph. i. 6, 12, 14.

By the express mention of *praise*, the apostle giveth us to understand, that praise is an evangelical sacrifice, yea, and one of the best sacrifices that can be offered up to God. See *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 12, Sec. 85.

In what respect praise is styled a sacrifice, is shewed in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 17, Secs. 110, 111.

Of praise, what it is, and of motives thereto, see my *Explanation on the Lord's Prayer*, entitled *A Guide to go to God*, Secs. 238, 239.

God is in special the object of praise, as is here implied under this phrase, *offer, τῷ Θεῷ, to God*. Hereof see *The Guide to go to God*, Sec. 240, in the end. See also *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. Treat. 3, Of Prayer, Part 2, Secs. 60, 61.

In offering praise to God, the apostle adviseth that it be done *by Christ*. For this relative, *αὐτῷ*, him, hath reference to Jesus, mentioned ver. 12. Of the particle, *ᾧ*, translated *by*, see Chap. iii. 16, Sec. 164. It may here also be translated *through*. It implieth the mediation of Christ, and that betwixt him that praiseth, and God that is praised. Herein the apostle continueth his resemblance to the legal custom of the people of God; for they were enjoined to bring their sacrifice to the priest, by whom it was to be offered to God, Lev. i. 9, and xvii. 5. Herein was the priest an especial type of Christ; for Christ is the only true priest of the new testament, and by his mediation are our services made acceptable to God. Of offering praise to God through the mediation of Christ, see *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 3, Of Prayer, Part 2, Sec. 62.

There is yet another point which the apostle inserteth about praising God, which is the continuance of it, under this word, *ἀετῶς*, continually.

The Greek word translated *continually*, is a kind of a compound adjective, which word for word signifieth *through all*. If herunto we add that which is understood, namely, *χρόνον*, time, thus, *through all time*, the sense will be full.

This word is used of the demoniac, who was 'always, night and day, in the mountains,' Mark v. 5; and of the apostles, who were 'continually in the temple,' Luke xxiv. 53; and of Cornelius, who 'prayed to God always,' Acts x. 2; and of Paul, who 'exercised him-

self to have always a conscience void of offence,' Acts xxiv. 16; and of the priests, who 'went always into the first tabernacle,' Heb. ix. 6, Sec. 38.

By these instances it is evident that this circumstance of time, *continually*, is not simply to be taken without any limitation or restriction, but respectively, as is in particular exemplified in *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 3, Of Prayer, Sec. 72.

Sec. 143. *Of praising God with the voice.*

The apostle, to manifest his mind to the full, concerning praising God, further addeth, *that is, the fruit of our lips, &c.*

This phrase, *καὶ τὸ φῶς*, *that is*, implieth an explanation of that which goeth before. Now the explanation here intended is not to clear difficult words or phrases; for the former part of the verse is more clear and plain than that which followeth. But it is here to shew the extent of his intent in praising God; which is, that we content not ourselves with inward thoughts of praising God; but that we must also manifest and testify as much even by the words of our mouth; which he here calleth *the fruit of our lips*.

In this phrase the apostle alludeth to a phrase which the people of God are brought in thus using, 'We will render the calves of our lips,' Hosca xiv. 2. That which the prophet there calleth, *כֶּרֶס*, *calves*, the apostle here styleth, *καρπὸς*, *fruit*; for the LXX on that place so translate it. In Hebrew, the word, *כֶּרֶס*, that signifieth *fruit*, and that also, *כֶּרֶס*, that signifieth a *calf*, or a young heifer, come from one and the same root, *כָּרַח*, which signifieth to *bear fruit*, Ps. cxviii. 3; and to *grow*, Isa. xi. 1. In this respect the LXX might put one for the other; so they have translated this word, Jer. i. 27.

Now because the word used by the LXX was as pertinent to the point in hand as the word *calves*, used in Hebrew, the apostle writing in Greek, retained the same word, namely, *fruit*.

In this phrase, *calves of the lips*, the prophet hath reference to the legal rite of offering calves or young heifers for a gratulatory sacrifice, implying that the people of God would do that by the words of their mouth, coming through their lips, which was intended by offering up of calves by way of thanksgiving.

The word, *καρπὸς*, *fruit*, used by the apostle, signifieth an effect, or that which should proceed from the lips; for as fruit proceedeth from a tree, so words, as fruit from the lips.

*Lips*, *χείλη*, are here synecdochically taken for the whole mouth, they being a part thereof; as it were, two leaf-doors, which let into the mouth, and let out from the mouth. This synecdoche is frequently used, thus: 'My lips shall praise thee,' Ps. lxxxiii. 3; 'With my lips have I declared,' &c.; 'My lips shall utter praise,' Ps. cxix. 13, 171. 'The like is used of the tongue, thus: 'God was exalted with my tongue,' Ps. lxi. 17; 'My tongue shall sing aloud of thy

righteousness,' Ps. li. 14. The like also is used of the mouth, thus: 'My mouth shall shew forth thy praise,' Ps. li. 15; and thus, 'I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth.'

All these phrases do evidently declare, that it is not sufficient to have an inward affection of praising God, but that the same also must be outwardly manifested. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. Secs. 86, 118.

Among other means, the voice is an especial one to set forth the praises of God, Ps. xxvi. 7, and xlii. 4. In this respect the tongue is styled 'glory,' Ps. xxx. 12, and lvii. 8; because it is the fittest instrument to set forth the praise and glory of God. For this we have the example of Christ himself, Ps. xxii. 25, compared with Heb. ii. 12, and Ps. xl. 9, 10, compared with Heb. v., &c. That which is said of voice in prayer (in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 1, Sec. 10), may be applied to praise.

Sec. 144. *Of giving thanks to God's name.*

The apostle doth yet more clearly declare his mind, in this phrase, *giving thanks to his name*.

The Greek word, *ὑπομνησκόμενοι*, translated *giving thanks*, is a compound. The simple verb, *λέγω*, signifieth to *speak* or *utter* a thing. The preposition, *ὑπό*, with which it is compounded, signifieth *together*. It may have reference to many persons consenting together in the expression of their mind; or to the heart and voice consenting together. For 'with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,' Rom. x. 10.

I find this word to set out three things in the New Testament.

1. To profess, Mat. vii. 28. Hence is derived that noun, *ὑπομνησκω*, which is translated *profession*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. Hereof see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 27.

2. To promise or protest, Mat. xiv. 7.

3. To confess, Mat. x. 32. In this sense is this word most frequently used in the New Testament.

Because praising God, or giving thanks to God, consisteth especially in confessing God to be what he is, to give what he giveth, and to do what he doth, therefore in Hebrew a word<sup>1</sup> which signifieth to *confess*, is much used to set out praising of God, or giving thanks to God. Hereof see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 17, Sec. 110.

In imitation of that Hebrew phrase the apostle here expresseth praise or thanksgiving, under this word that signifieth *confessing*. Our English hath pertinently expressed the apostle's mind by translating it *thanksgiving*.

In grammatical construction this word is here added as an epithet to *lips*, thus, *καὶ τὸ φῶς τῶν χειλέων μου*, *lips confessing*; so as here he meaneth such lips as confess or give thanks; or the lips of those that con-

<sup>1</sup> מִן מַנְהִיט *manavit*: inde מְהִיט *confessus est*, מְהִיט *confessio*, Ps. cxxxvi. 1, and l. 11.

fess and give thanks. Hereby is evidenced, that the fruit of the lips here intended is thanksgiving.

Of thanksgiving, see *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 3, Part 2, Sec. 59, &c.

The object of thanksgiving is thus expressed, *τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, to his name.*

The name of God is that whereby God is made known to us. See *The Guide to go to God*, or an *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, on Petit. 1, Secs. 20, 21.

This word *name* in reference to God, is used when prayer is made, or thanks is given to him, to shew that God is to be prayed unto, and praised, as known by name. See *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 4, Sec. 24.

The particular points noted concerning praising God are to be applied to praying unto God. These two are especial parts of God's worship. They are as two twins which are born together: which live and die together: which are nourished and preserved by the same means; and to be ordered after the same manner.

The apostle's interpretation of his own sense and meaning, implied under this general phrase, *that is*, is an evident demonstration of the false collection of Rhemists and other papists,<sup>1</sup> who infer from this phrase, *sacrifice of praise*, that their host—namely, the great sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ—is the proper host here meant. Their host, in their imagination, is the very flesh and blood of Christ, a real propitiatory sacrifice: but the apostle here declareth that the sacrifice of praise which he intendeth is the fruit of the lips, a thanksgiving to the name of God.

Sec. 145. *Of care in doing good and communicating.*

Ver. 16. *But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

The other evangelical sacrifice, which hath reference to men, is inferred upon the former, which had reference to God, by this particle, *ὁ, but*: which is commonly used as a note of opposition betwixt two contraries. But being set betwixt two duties, it intendeth an especial care about the latter: implying a neglect therein. To manifest this more evidently, a particle of emphasis, 'especially,' is sometimes added, thus, 'let us do good unto all men, but especially, *μάλιστα ὁ, unto them who are of the household of faith*,' Gal. vi. 10.

In this place a great care is required, not in regard of the duty itself, as if this were the more excellent: but in regard of men's backwardness hereunto, and negligence herein. For many who seem forward in offering sacrifice of praise to God, are very backward in offering the sacrifice of charity to men.

The apostle doth further intend thus much, under this phrase, *forget not*; implying that the Hebrews had forgotten, or might forget this duty.

<sup>1</sup> Rhem. Annot. on Heb. xiii. 15.

The Greek phrase, *μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι*, translated *forget not*, is the very same that is translated 'be not forgetful,' Ver. 2, Sec. 12. As that was there spoken in a particular reference to hospitality, this may be here applied in a general reference to charity: and the same emphasis every way here intended as was there.

There are two words here used to set out the duty of charity: both of them nouns, *ἐσθλότης*, and *κοινωνία*, though by our English they are translated as verbs, thus, *to do good*, and *to communicate*.

The former, *ἐσθλότης*, is a compound derived from a simple verb, *ποιέω*, which signifieth *to do*, and compounded with an adverb, *εἰ*, that signifieth *well*: so as it implieth a *well-doing*. The Latin hath a word, *beneficentia*, that answereth it to the full, which our English according to the Latin thus express, *beneficence*. The Greek useth two other words, compounded with two adjectives, *ἀγαθός* and *καλός*; both of which signify *good*; and the compound of one of them, *ἀγαθοποιέω*, is translated, as here, to 'do good,' Luke vi. 33, 35. The compound of the other, *καλοποιέω*, to 'do well,' 2 Thess. iii. 13.

The first word here used setteth out the general nature of charity; and that in three particulars:

1. Charity manifesteth itself by doing good, 1 John iii. 18.

2. Charity doth that which is good or profitable to others. In this respect the fruits or deeds of charity are called 'good works,' because thereby good is done to others: as the good things which Dorcas did to poor widows, Acts ix. 46, 49.

3. Charity is a good and commendable act. God himself approveth the alms of Cornelius, Acts x. 4.

The other noun, *κοινωνία*, translated *to communicate*, signifieth a *communication* to others of such things as God bestoweth on us. The Greek word here used cometh from a verb, *κοινωνέω*, which signifieth *to distribute to others*, Rom. xii. 13: *to communicate*, Gal. vi. 6, and to make others partakers of that which we have, Rom. xv. 27. Answerably the word here used is translated 'contribution,' Rom. xv. 26: 'distribution,' 2 Cor. ix. 13; 'fellowship,' 2 Cor. viii. 4; 'communication,' Philen. 6.

The meaning of this word sheweth that charity maketh others partakers of that which is one's own. They who communicate must have of their own: and having of their own they must impart some part thereof to others, and so make it common to others with themselves.

Of these and other branches of charity, see my Treatise on Luke xii. 33, of *The Rule of Charity*.

Sec. 146. *Of God's being well pleased with spiritual sacrifices.*

The reason to enforce the foresaid duties of charity to man, and praise to God, is thus expressed, *for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

The causal particle, *γὰρ*, for, giveth proof that this last clause is added as a reason of the former points.

*Sacrifices, θυσιαί*, being a word of the plural number, hath reference either to the two words, *benevolence* and *communication*, which are the fruits of charity; or to the sacrifices of *praise* and *charity*.

I incline to this latter, because it is the most extensive.

That praise is a sacrifice, was shewed, Ver. 15, Sec. 142.

Charity and the works thereof, are also styled a sacrifice, Phil. iv. 18.

In setting down these sacrifices, the apostle useth this relative, *τοιούτους*, such; which may have reference to other sacrifices like to these. Of such other sacrifices, see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 175. The main motive to press these duties consisteth in these words, *God is well pleased*.

The Greek verb, *εὐαγαρεῖται*, translated *well pleased*, is a compound. The simple verb, *ἀγαρεῖν*, signifieth to *please*, Gal. i. 10. The preposition, *εὐ*, with which the verb here used is compounded, signifieth *well*. The compound verb carrieth much emphasis. It is used to set forth the effect of Enoch's walking with God, and as a cause of God's translating him, that 'he pleased God,' Heb. xi. 5. There is an adjective, *εὐαγεστος*, derived from the same root, which signifieth 'accepted,' or 'acceptable,' Rom. xii. 1, 2 Cor. v. 9. Now such persons and things are acceptable to God, and accepted of him, which do well please him.

Concerning praise it is said, that 'it pleaseth the Lord better than an ox or bullock,' Ps. lxxix. 31. Thereupon, where God rejecteth external legal sacrifices, it is said, 'offer unto God thanksgiving,' Ps. l. 14. That sacrifice which pleaseth God more than the sacrifices under the law, must needs be well pleasing unto him.

Concerning charity and the fruits thereof, the apostle saith, that it is 'an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God,' Phil. iv. 18. It is said in this case, that 'God loveth a cheerful giver,' 2 Cor. ix. 7; yea, 'if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath,' 2 Cor. viii. 12. Therefore to do good and to communicate must needs be well pleasing to God.

A forcible motive this is to enforce the foresaid duty. Who would not do that which is well pleasing to God? Every ingenious person that is under the command of another, will be ready to do that which is well-pleasing to him that hath authority over him, if at least he bear any good respect to him. So will a dutiful servant, an obedient child, a loyal subject. Should we not much more to God, who is our Master, Father, and supreme governor; who is just and righteous in all that he enjoins us; who is wise in considering our strength and ability; who is gracious in accepting our desire and endeavour; who is bountiful in rewarding the least good? Upon his being well

pleased, and an approbation of what a faithful servant doth, followeth a bountiful remuneration: witness that which was said not only to him that well improved five talents, but also to him that did the like in two talents, 'Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,' Mat. xxv. 21, 23.

Papists do utterly enervate and make void the force of this argument, by setting it upon a matter of merit; for, to do a thing which God requires of us, to merit thereby a reward of God, is so far from well pleasing God, as it makes it most abominable in his sight.

The ground of their gross error resteth upon a phrase of the vulgar Latin, *deus promeretur*, which is incongruous and barbarous. The Rhemists thus translate it word for word, *God is promerited*. Hence they infer that good works are meritorious. As the phrase, both in Latin and also in English, is such as no true and skilful grammarian would use, so their observation thereupon is such as no sound and orthodox divine would raise.

Against this arrogant position of merit, see *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 2, Part 4, on Eph. vi. 14, Sec. 7.

Sec. 147. Of the resolution and obscursions out of Heb. xiii. 15, 16.

Ver. 15. *By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.*

16. *But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

These two verses declare evangelical sacrifices.

Thereabout observe:

1. The inference, in this word of reference, *therefore*.

2. The substance; which setteth out,

1. Duties to be performed.

2. A motive to enforce the same.

The duties are of two sorts:

One respecteth God, ver. 15.

The other respecteth man, ver. 16.

That which respecteth God is, 1. Propounded; 2. Expounded.

In propounding the duty, six points are expressly set down:

1. The kind of duty, *sacrifice of praise*.

2. The act, or performance of it, *offer*.

3. The persons who are to perform it, all sorts of Christians, *let us*.

4. The object, or person to whom it is to be performed, *to God*.

5. The mediator by whom it is to be tendered, *Christ, by him*.

6. The time, how long, *continually*.

The exposition is,

1. Generally hinted, in this phrase, *that is*.
2. Particularly expressed : and that,
1. Metaphorically, in this phrase, *calves of our lips*.

2. Plainly : wherein we have,  
 (1.) The act enjoined, *giving thanks*.  
 (2.) The object, *to his name*.  
 In setting down the duty which respecteth men, we may observe,

1. The connexion of this duty with the former, by this particle, *but*.

2. The description of the duty itself ; wherein we have,  
 1. A caution, *forget not*.  
 2. A distinction of the duty, in two phrases :  
 (1.) *Do good*.  
 (2.) *Communicate*.

The motive is implied in this causal particle, *for*, and expressed in the words following : wherein is set down,

1. The kind of motive, *God is well pleased*.
2. The object thereof, *with such sacrifices*.

#### Doctrines.

I. *Use must be made of Christ*. That is, Christ must be so used as he undertaketh for us. He undertaketh to be an altar, therefore we must offer on him.

II. *Saints are priests*. These are they to whom this duty of a priest is enjoined, *let us offer*.

III. *There are spiritual sacrifices*. These words, *sacrifice*, ver. 15, and *sacrifices*, ver. 16, are spiritually to be taken.

IV. *Praise is a special evangelical sacrifice*. It is here so set down in the first place, *sacrifice of praise*.

V. *God is the proper object of praise*. It must be offered to God.

VI. *Praise is to be given to God through the mediation of Christ*. This phrase, *by him*, bath reference to Christ.

VII. *Praise is a duty to be performed continually*. So much is here plainly expressed.

Of all these seven observations, see Sec. 142.

VIII. *An instructor's mind is fully to be expressed*. This phrase, *that is*, intendeth as much.

IX. *Praises of God must be published*. They must be the fruit of our lips. See Sec. 143.

X. *Confessing God is a giving thanks*. The expression of the Greek word, which signifieth to confess, by giving thanks, intends as much. See Sec. 144.

XI. *Thanks must be given to God as known by name*. This expression of the object of thanksgiving to his name, implies thus much. See Sec. 144.

XII. *One duty must not cause another to be neglected*. This is gathered from this particle, *but*. See Sec. 145.

XIII. *Men are backward to works of charity*. This made the apostle say, *forget not*. See Sec. 145.

XIV. *Charity is a good work*. It is here styled to do good. See Sec. 145.

XV. *What we have we must communicate to others*. This other phrase, *to communicate*, intends as much. See Sec. 145.

XVI. *God is well pleased with what he requireth*. This is a general, intended under this phrase, *God is well pleased*. See Sec. 146.

XVII. *Praise and charity in special please God*. These are the particulars which are here said to please God. See Sec. 146.

XVIII. *All manner of Christian duties please God*. This particle of reference, *such*, implieth other like duties besides those which are named. See Sec. 146.

XIX. *We must aim at pleasing God*. This is the main scope of inducing this reason, implied under this causal particle, *for*. See Sec. 146.

Sec. 148. *Of obedience and subjection to spiritual guides*.

Ver. 17. *Obeys them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you*.

The apostle here returneth to the duty of people towards their spiritual guides. Somewhat he spake thereof before, ver. 7, but that was in reference to such guides as were departed. The guides which here he speaketh of, were such as were then living among them.

Fitly he puts the duties to these guides in the last place, because they might further instruct them in other points, which were not set down in this epistle. This epistle is a very large one, and the duties which we owe to God and man are very many; therefore the apostle, having set down such as he thought most meet to be set down in an epistle, for others refers them to their living guides, to be further instructed by them, as occasion should serve; and thereupon adviseth them to obey such.

The word, *ὑποτασσέσθαι*, translated *them that have the rule over you*, is the very same that was used, Ver. 7, Sec. 96. The points there noted thereabouts may here be applied.

The verb, *πείθεσθαι*, translated *obey*, properly signifieth to be persuaded of a thing,<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 38. This may have reference either to the mind, or to the will of man. He that is persuaded in his mind, believes the truth of it, Acts xvii. 4.

He that is persuaded in his will, obeys it, Acts v. 36.

It implieth such obedience as ariseth from a man's being persuaded of the truth, equity, and goodness of the thing; for a man in his will yieldeth to that which to him seemeth good.

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. vi. 9, Sec. 56.

The other word, *ὑπακούω*, translated *submit yourselves*, is a compound. The simple verb, *ὑάω*, signifieth to *yield*, or *give place*, as Gal. ii. 5. The preposition, *ὑπὸ*, with which it is compounded, signifieth *under*. This compound implieth such a subjection as an inferior, who counts himself under another, yields to him who is over him. This word is here only used in the New Testament. It being added to the other, may imply the manner of obedience, which is, a reverent and due respect towards him whom we obey.

Under these phrases all the duties of honour, love, maintenance, or any other respect may be comprised.

Just and weighty grounds there are for people to yield the foresaid obedience, and that in the manner aforesaid, to their ecclesiastical governors. For,

1. They are appointed of God, and stand in his room : they are his ambassadors ; so as the obedience which is yielded unto them, is yielded unto God, John xiii. 20.

True it is, that civil magistrates are ordained of God, and bear his image ; but there is a great difference betwixt a civil magistrate, and a minister of the word. God gives the civil magistrate authority to command obedience in his own name, and to be performed to himself. But the authority of a minister so resteth in Christ, as in Christ's name only he may require obedience to be performed to Christ himself.

2. The matter whereunto a minister requireth obedience, is God's word. Ministers may not, as magistrates do, make laws of their own head, or by the counsel and advice of other men, but they must deliver the word of God. Hereof see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 19, Treat. 1, Part 7, Sec. 181.

3. The end of ministers' function is the salvation of their people's souls. Good reason, therefore, that obedience be yielded to them, by those who desire to have their own soul saved. Of that respect which people ought to shew to their ministers, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 20, Sec. 176.

The foresaid respective obedience required of people to their minister, by just consequence implieth, that ministers carry themselves so, as their people may with good conscience obey them. Where the law requireth that inferiors honour their superiors, it intendeth also that superiors carry themselves worthy of honour. Of ministers walking worthy their place, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 20, Secs. 179, 180, &c.

Sec. 119. *Of a minister's watching.*

The apostle renders this reason of people's performing the foresaid duty of obedience to their ministers, and that in the manner aforesaid, *they watch for your souls*.

The *ὄρεω*, *ἀγρυπνέω*, translated *watch*, is in Greek a compound<sup>1</sup>. The noun, *ὄρεω*, whence it is derived,

signifieth *sleep*. This compound being with a privative particle, signifieth *not to sleep*, that is, *to watch*.<sup>2</sup> It is for the most part applied to prayer, 'Watch and pray,' Mark xiii. 33, Luke xxi. 36, Eph. vi. 18. These, together with my text, are the only places of the New Testament wherein this Greek word is used. There is a noun, *ἀγρυπνία*, thence derived, and translated 'watchings,' twice used, 2 Cor. vi. 5, and xi. 27. There is another Greek word, *γρηγορέω*, of a like notation, very frequently used, and translated 'watch.'

This act of watching is attributed to sundry functions ; as,

1. To nurses, who watch sick persons, and that day and night, and must be ready to give them what they need, to ease them wherein they do complain, to minister unto them what may be needful or useful for them. The apostle resembles himself, as he was a minister, unto a nurse, 1 Thess. ii. 7.

2. To shepherds : they are said to 'keep watch over their flock by night,' Luke ii. 8. Now they watch to keep their sheep from danger ; to espy the sores and diseases of the sheep, that they may cure them ; to provide good pasture for them ; to bring them in season to their fold. Ministers are oft styled 'shepherds,' Cant. i. 8, Eph. xxxiv. 2.

3. To sundry officers, and that both in time of peace and war ; as to such as in the night time watch city gates, go up and down the streets, watch in high-ways ; which they do to discover thieves and robbers, and to prevent sundry dangers. Likewise to sentinels in time of war, and to such as are placed in high watch-towers, either to descry afar off if any enemy approach ; or in case a city be besieged, if any succour be coming to them. When David's soldiers were sent out against Absalom, he had a watchman, 2 Sam. xviii. 24 ; so had king Jehoram, 2 Kings ix. 17. In reference to such a watchman, God expressly saith to a prophet, 'I have made thee a watchman,' Ezek. iii. 17.

These, and other like resemblances, do set out the care and duty of faithful ministers towards their people ; and that in these, and other like particulars :

1. Ministers are oft awake when their people are asleep, and study and pray for their good, when they have no other witness but their candle by them, which wasteth itself to give them light : teaching them thereby to be willing to spend and be spent for the instruction, edification, and salvation of their people. This was the apostle's mind, 2 Cor. xii. 15.

2. As a tender nurse, they take great care of their people's weakness. Upon their people's complaint of their trouble and disquiet in conscience, they are ready to ease and quiet them in what they can : and to minister unto them what they know to be needful for them, and useful to them.

3. As faithful shepherds, they protect and defend

<sup>1</sup> *ἀνορεω*, *Insomnie*, *Vigil*. Inde γρ per epenthesis interpositis, *ἀγρυπνέω*, *Vigilo*.

their people from such as are as ravening wolves; even from the devil himself, who 'as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom to devour;' and from the devil's ministers, heretics, idolaters, and profane persons, who else would infect them. They are further observant of their people's maladies, to heal and cure them. They are careful to provide good pasture for their sheep, and in seasonable times to keep them in their folds. They are also careful to go before them, that so their people may follow them in the right way where they should go, John x. 4.

4. As vigilant watchmen, they desery the dangers wherunto their people are subject, and give them warning, that so they may prevent the same; and in case their people be as a city besieged, they will espy what succour is coming to help them, and encourage them to hold out, and not yield to the enemy.

The care and duty of faithful ministers, set out under this metaphor, *they watch*, giveth proof of the necessity and utility of the ministerial function. As necessary as nurses are for sick persons, and shepherds for sheep, and watchmen to prevent danger, so necessary are ministers for people. For people are subject to many spiritual maladies, and to sundry ravening wolves, and to all sorts of dangers, against which God hath instituted the ministerial function.

The utility of this function is manifested by the many benefits that accrue to people thereby. Thereby they are enlightened and directed to walk in the safe way, out of which, like straying sheep, they would otherwise wander; thereby wholesome food is provided for them; thereby they are eased and quieted in their troubled consciences; thereby they are protected from all manner of enemies, and preserved from manifold dangers.

Good reason therefore upon these grounds there is that people have their ministers in high account; that they obey them, and shew all manner of good respect unto them.

#### Sec. 150. *Of men's souls, for which ministers watch.*

This point, concerning a minister's watching, is very much illustrated by that proper subject wherabout they watch, here styled *souls*. The soul is the principal part of a man; that whereby a living man is distinguished from a dead carcass, and a reasonable man from a brute beast. Upon the soul of a man depends the happiness or misery of the body. A holy soul makes a happy body: a wicked soul, a miserable body. If the soul, when it departs from the body, be assumed to celestial glory, the body, when it is raised, shall be made a glorious body; but if the soul, upon departing from the body, be cast into hell, the body at the resurrection will likewise be cast thereinto.

This object, *the soul*, of a minister's watching, puts a difference betwixt the ministerial function and other functions, whereof some are for the outward estate of

man. Civil magistrates are for maintaining outward peace: judges, justices, all sorts of lawyers, for maintaining men's rights in their lands, inheritances, goods, and chattels; the manifold trades of people, for apparel, and such like things, as are needful for the body; physicians, for preserving the health of the body, and curing the diseases thereof; but ministers, for their souls, for the present edification and future salvation of them.

From hence we may well observe, that of all functions the ministerial function is the most excellent in the kind thereof, the most needful and the most beneficial. As the soul is more excellent than the body, than men's outward estates, than their corporal food, apparel, and other needful things; so is the function of a minister more excellent than other functions. The like may be said of the need and benefit of a minister's function.

#### Sec. 151. *Of ministers giving an account.*

A motive to put on ministers to watch for their people's souls, is thus expressed, *as they that must give account*. Giving an account is the motive. The particle, *as*, implicitly the manner of performing the duty, even so *as they that must give account*.

The Greek word, ἀποδοῦναι, translated *give*, is a compound. The simple verb signifieth to *give*, Mat. v. 42. The compound signifieth to *return*, or *render a thing*; and so it is oft translated: the lord of the vineyard letteth out his vineyard to such as will 'render him the fruits thereof,' Mat. xxi. 41. So here, the Lord appointeth ministers to be guides to his people, and they return or 'render' that due which he requireth of them.

Of the word, λόγον, translated *account*, see Chap. iv. 13, Sec. 79.

This giving of an account is set down as a matter of duty. The word *must*, is not expressed in the Greek, but implied under a participle, thus, *as giving an account*; that is, as knowing that an account is to be given, and as willing to give up their account; so as there is both a necessity and also a duty implied under the foresaid phrase.

That which as a necessity lieth upon them, and they cannot avoid but must do, that willingly they submit unto, and as a duty will do, and so turn a necessity into a virtue.

This motive of *giving an account*, is of great force to stir up all sorts to be diligent and faithful in well employing and improving to the best advantage that they can, the talent that is committed unto them: this moved him that had received five talents to do his best endeavour to gain other five talents, and him that had received two to gain other two, 'for every one of us shall give account of himself to God,' Rom. xiv. 12. Every one of us, sooner or later, shall hear this charge, 'Give an account of thy stewardship,' Luke xvi. 2. Not only the faithful, but also the



slothful, shall do this. The slothful servant was called to his account, Mat. xxv. 24. Upon this account followeth the unalterable doom of everlasting bliss, or everlasting woe, Mat. xxv. 21, 30. It must needs therefore make them who duly consider it, diligent and faithful. It was upon this account that the apostle said, 'Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men,' 2 Cor. v. 11.

It will be in this respect very useful to have the account which we are to give unto our Lord in mind, and seriously to think thereon beforehand, that we may be the rather moved to diligence in doing what is committed to our charge, and in doing it after a right manner; so diligently, so faithfully, so sincerely, so zealously, so constantly, as they who in giving their account look to be accepted and rewarded of God; as the two faithful servants were, Mat. xxv. 21, 23.

This account to be given of souls, giveth proof of the weighty burden that lieth upon a minister's shoulders: he is to answer and account for their souls who are under his charge. Now, 'who is sufficient for this?' The consideration hereof hath made many afraid to enter upon this calling, as Moses (Exod. iv. 10), Jeremiah (Jer. i. 6), and others.

Many ministers, though well fitted and enabled unto this calling by God, yet enter upon it with much fear and trembling, not daring to take it upon them till they have sure evidence that they are called of God thereunto, that so they may cast their whole burden upon God, and so do their best endeavour that no soul may perish through their negligence. If any so perish, their blood will be required at the minister's hands. But if ministers do their best endeavour to establish the righteous, and to convert the wicked (yet prevail nought), then the minister hath delivered his soul, though his people perish, Ezek. iii. 19, 21. When a prophet complained that he had 'laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought,' he comforted himself with this, his 'judgment was with the Lord, and his work with his God,' Isa. xlix. 4.

See, 152. Of these words, 'that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.'

This phrase, *that they may do it with joy*, is set down in manner of an end, even of an end of something going before. Now, it may have a double reference; either to the duty of obedience required of people to their ministers, or to the watching of ministers over their people.

The former reference implieth, that people should to this end obey their pastors, that the pastors may with joy give up their account concerning their people.

The latter intendeth that pastors do the more carefully watch over their people's souls, that in respect to themselves, whatsoever the issue be to their people, they may give up their account with joy.

I suppose the former reference to be here especially meant, and that by reason of this last clause in the verse, *for this is unprofitable for you*. So then, the obedience of people to their ministers is an especial means of moving them to give up their account with joy: to give it up comfortably and cheerfully, much rejoicing that they have an occasion to give up such an account as they do—namely, an account of bringing people unto Christ, and of saving their souls. Hereupon the apostle exhorteth Christians to 'hold forth the word of life, that he might rejoice in the day of Christ, that he had not run in vain, nor laboured in vain,' Phil. ii. 16. In this respect he saith to other Christians, 'I rejoice that I have confidence in you in all things,' 2 Cor. ii. 16. And another apostle thus, 'I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth,' 2 John 4. On this ground St Paul styles such as were obedient to the gospel his 'joy and crown.' Nothing (except the spiritual and eternal good of a minister's own soul) can make a minister more rejoice than his people's obedience to the gospel preached by him: and that,

1. In regard of the Lord Jesus, who is much honoured when his gospel is obeyed.

2. In regard of people themselves, whose salvation is promoted thereby.

3. In regard of the minister himself, who obtaineth thereby that which he doth most of all desire in his labours and watchings—namely, his people's edification.

To amplify this motive, the apostle addeth the contrary, thus, *and not with grief*. There is no mean betwixt these contraries. A faithful minister, that cannot rejoice in his people's proficiency under his ministry, will grieve for their non-proficiency. 'Lot's righteous soul was vexed from day to day,' because his ministry was not regarded by them amongst whom he dwelt, 2 Pet. ii. 8. Jeremiah wished 'that his head were waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night' for the disobedience of his people, and the judgments that followed thereupon, Jer. ix. 1. Paul speaking of such professors as by their walking shewed themselves enemies of the cross of Christ, thus expresseth this complaint, 'I tell you even weeping,' Phil. iii. 18. Christ himself was 'grieved for the hardness of the people's heart,' Mat. iii. 5.

That which is contrary to a man's earnest desire, and to that end which he mainly aimeth at, cannot but much grieve him.

This doth much aggravate the disobedience of people to their pastor's ministry, that thereby their pastors are so far from rejoicing, as they are exceedingly grieved, and forced with grief to complain to God.

Hereupon the apostle addeth this consequence, *for that is unprofitable for you*.

The Greek word, ἀνευφηλός, translated *unprofitable*,

is here only used in the New Testament. It is a double compound. The root, *τίλος*, from whence it is derived, among other things, signifieth *cost*, or *charge*. The first compound, *λειτουργία*, is of a verb, *λύνω*, that signifieth to *pay*, or *lay out*, and the foresaid noun, *τίλος*, which signifieth *cost*, and in composition signifieth *profitable*. This second or double compound, *ἀλειτουργία*, is with the privative particle, and so signifieth *unprofitable*.

This implieth that no good at all can come to people by the grief of their ministers, but rather much discommodity and great damage, and that in these respects :

1. They lose all the benefit which they might have received by their minister's watchful care and pains for them.

2. They turn the hearts of their minister from them, and so damp his spirit, as he can have no encouragement to continue his watchful care towards them.

3. They provoke God either to take away their minister from them, and with him means of further edification, or to take them from the minister and means.

4. They do as much as in them lieth to forfeit that salvation which by the word is brought unto them, and to incur eternal perdition.

In these and other like respects, it must needs be unprofitable to people to disobey their ministers, and that word preached by them, and to cause their ministers to grieve for them.

Though this be in the extent thereof a very heavy doom, yet the apostle hath set it down in mild and remiss terms; for what could he have said less than, *This is unprofitable for you?* He doth not say, *This is detestable, this is damnable, but only unprofitable*. He speaks to such as he had great hope of, as he himself testifieth, chap. vi. 9; and he was persuaded that that very intimating of the judgment was sufficient to make them take heed of this sin.

Sec. 153. *Of praying for conscionable ministers.*

Ver. 18. *Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.*

Here is another duty required of people towards their ministers—that is, to pray for them.

Of prayer in general, and of praying for ministers in particular, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 18, 19, Treat. 3, Parts 1, 7, Secs. 4, &c., and 151, &c.

A reason to enforce this duty, is thus expressed, *for we trust we have a good conscience, &c.*

The first particle, *γὰρ*, *for*, being a causal conjunction, giveth evidence that that conscience which ministers have in performing their duty for their people's good, should the rather quicken and stir up the spirits of people to pray for them. Such a minister was Paul, who desired them to whom he

wrote to 'strive together with him in their prayers to God for him,' Rom. xv. 30. Such a one also was Peter, for whom 'earnest prayer was made of the church,' Acts xii. 5. These are the ministers by whom people receive most good, and in that respect they ought to be prayed for. Both gratefulness to their minister, and also providence to themselves, requires as much, that so their ministers may be continued the longer over them, and they themselves reap the more benefit by them.

Sec. 154. *Of one's persuasion of his own good conscience.*

The substance of the reason consisteth in this, that their ministers had a *good conscience*, the evidence whereof he expresseth in this word, *συνείδησιν*, *we trust*. This is the same word, though of another tense, which was used Chap. vi. 9, Sec. 56. There it is translated 'we are persuaded;' and so it might be translated, for the *trust* which the apostle here speaketh of is such as ariseth from a full *persuasion* of a thing. See Chap. ii. 13, Sec. 119.

The persuasion that is intended, chap. vi. 9, can be no other than according to the judgment of charity, because it was of other men; but the persuasion here meant may be according to the judgment of certainty, because it is of a man's own self: for 'the spirit of man which is in him, knoweth the things of himself,' 1 Cor. ii. 11. A believer may know that he hath a sound and true faith, as is proved in *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 6, Of Faith, Secs. 36, 37, &c. In like manner may a man of a good conscience know that he hath a good conscience, and in that respect say with confidence, *We trust we have a good conscience*.

Thus this phrase, *we trust*, giveth evidence of the apostle's modesty on the one side, and confidence on the other.

Of his modesty, in that he doth not peremptorily say, *We have a good conscience*, but *We trust we have*.

Of his confidence, in that he useth a word which implieth a full persuasion.

It is further observable, that in setting down this confidence of a *good conscience*, he useth the plural number, thus, *we trust*, shewing thereby that he hoped of others as much as he knew of himself; for the rule of charity puts us on to 'believe all things, and to hope all things,' 1 Cor. xiii. 7.

Sec. 155. *Of a good conscience in all things.*

The word, *συνείδησιν*, translated *conscience*, is a compound. The simple verb, *ᾔδω*, from whence it is derived, signifieth to *see* (Mat. ii. 2), and to *know* (John xiii. 18), and a preposition, *σύν*, which signifieth *with*; so as conscience implieth *knowledge with*, namely, with some other thing. The Greek, Latin, and our English composition imply as much. Our English is taken from the Latin.

Conscience then implieth a double knowledge. One of the mind, which is a bare understanding of a thing. Another of the heart; so as the heart's witnessing of a thing together with the mind, is conscience. Where the apostle saith, 'What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him?' 1 Cor. ii. 11; by *spirit* he meaneth *conscience*. Hence it is that some make the notation of conscience in Latin to be *cordis scientia*, the *knowledge of the heart*.

Or the double knowledge that is comprised under conscience may be of God, and a man's own self. God knoweth all things, even the most secret thoughts, Ps. cxxxix. 2; and every man knoweth the most secret things of himself, 1 Cor. ii. 11. The testimony, therefore, of a man's heart with his mind, or rather with God, is conscience. In this respect conscience is said to 'bear witness,' Rom. ix. 1. And the apostle rejoiced in the testimony of his conscience, 2 Cor. i. 12.

Conscience is seated within a man, for it is applied to the heart, Heb. x. 22; yea, it is styled 'the heart,' Prov. xv. 15, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5; and it is also styled 'the spirit,' 1 Cor. ii. 11.

It is so seated within a man, that it may the better perform the function which belongeth unto it. It, being within, may see all within and without; as a man within a house full of windows, may see what is within the house, and what is without it. Where Solomon saith to Shimai, 'Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father,' 1 Kings ii. 44, he appealeth to the conscience of Shimai. That the conscience cannot be discerned by others without, is evident by these phrases, 'Who can know the heart?' Jer. xvii. 9. 'What man knoweth the things of a man?' 1 Cor. ii. 11.

The function of conscience is to witness, Rom. ii. 15. For this end it hath ability to know the things of a man. The witness of conscience is the surest witness that can be. It is a 'faithful witness that will not lie,' (Prov. xiv. 5). In courts of men a man's own conscience is a witness beyond exception; yet may a man with his tongue belie himself, but he cannot do so with his conscience.

The witness which conscience giveth, is of two kinds: either to accuse, or to excuse, Rom. ii. 15. To accuse of evil; to excuse by freeing from evil unjustly laid to one's charge. The conscience of the Jews accused them, John viii. 9. St Paul's conscience excused him, Acts xxiii. 1.

From this principal function of the conscience followeth trouble or peace to a man's soul. Trouble, if his conscience accuse him, as in the case of Judas, Mat. xxvii. 1, 5. Peace, when it excuseth, Rom. v. 1.

Herby know that a man shall never want authentic witness, wheresoever he be, whether alone or in company, in light or dark.

The conscience which the apostle here speaketh of is styled, *καλή συνίστασις*, a *good conscience*.

Three things especially concur to make up a good conscience:

1. The matter whereupon it worketh.
2. The proper act thereof.
3. An effect or consequence following thereupon.

1. The matter whereupon a good conscience worketh, is a conformity in the whole man to the holy will of God. God's will, made known to man, is man's rule, whereunto all his thoughts, words, and actions ought to be conformable.

2. Where this matter is to be found, the conscience will bear witness thereunto, and give a true testimony thereof. This is the proper act of conscience.

3. The consequence that followeth hereupon is peace and quietness in the soul; for that conscience which can give true testimony to a man's full conformity will quiet the soul, and keep it from doubts, fears, and vexation of spirit.

Such a good conscience was perfect in man's entire estate; but by his fall it was clean lost, and became an evil conscience. For,

1. 'Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually,' Gen. vi. 5.

2. Man's evil conscience exceedingly faileth in the proper work thereof; and that sometimes in a defect, sometimes in an excess.

(1.) In the defect, when it suffereth a man to run into all evil, and doth neither check nor trouble him for the same. This is styled 'a scared conscience,' 1 Tim. iv. 2.

(2.) The excess is, when it doth so out of measure trouble him, as it takes away all hope of pardon, and hinders sound and true repentance; yea, and makes his very life a burden unto himself. Such a conscience had Judas, Mat. xxvii. 3-5. In this respect, 'the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,' Isa. lvii. 20, 21.

Since man's fall a good conscience must needs be a renewed conscience.

Two things concur to the renovation of the conscience, and making it good.

One is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the conscience is purged and purified from that natural defilement which it had; for 'the blood of Christ doth purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God,' Heb. ix. 14. Hereupon we are exhorted to 'draw near with a pure heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,' Heb. x. 22. See *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 26, Treat. 2, Part 6, Of Faith, Sec. 51.

The other is a sanctified work of the Spirit, whereby the heart is alienated from sin, and made watchful against it; and withal it is put on to conform itself

to the holy will of God. This conformity being true and entire, without hypocrisy, moveth the conscience to bear witness thereunto, Rom. ix. 1, 2 Cor. i. 12.

This is the conscience that is styled a 'pure conscience,' 1 Tim. iii. 9, 2 Tim. i. 3, and 'a conscience void of offence,' Acts xxiv. 16.

That then is accounted, since man's fall, a good conscience, which,

1. Giveth true testimony of a man's faith in Christ, for the pardon of his sins, and reconciliation with God, Heb. x. 22.

2. Which beareth witness to his conformity in the whole man to the holy will of God, in all manner of duties to God and man (Acts xxiv. 16), particularly and especially in those duties which belong to his particular calling, whereof he is to give an especial account, Mat. xxv. 21. This is it that will especially move people every way to respect their ministers, both to obey them, and also to pray for them.

3. That which worketh peace and quiet in the soul, Rom. v. 1, 2 Cor. i. 12.

This is that good conscience which is here meant, and which ministers and others must give all diligence to get.

This good conscience is here amplified by the extent thereof, in this phrase, *in all things*. This is so set as it may have reference either to the former or latter clause. Our English referreth it to the former, by placing a comma after it, thus, *a good conscience IN ALL things*. Many Greek copies, if not most of them, refer the phrase to the latter clause, placing the comma before that phrase, thus, *in all things willing to live honestly*.

The sense will remain the same whether way soever we read it. For according to the former reading, it plainly sheweth, that a good conscience extends itself to all manner of duty. According to the latter reading, it sheweth, that he that is careful of every duty hath a good conscience.

The Greek word, *ἐν παντί*, is so indefinite, as it may be also referred to times and places: as if he had said, *At all times, in all places*.

Of the extent of a man's obedience to all things, see Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 16. See also *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 16, Treat. 2, Part 6, Of Faith, Sec. 57.

#### Sec. 156. *Of willingness to do good.*

That that which is intended under a good conscience might not seem to be an impossible task to our weak flesh, the apostle thus explaineth the point, *willing to live honestly*.

This word, *willing*, is in general the proper meaning of the Greek word, *ῥηθιμι*, Mat. i. 19; yet it doth also imply under it a desire of a thing; and our translators do turn the participle thus, 'desirous,' Luke xxiii. 8, 2 Cor. xi. 32. Yea, further, it impli-

eth such an extent of will and desire, as putteth one on to endeavour the best he can to accomplish the same. That therefore which the apostle doth here intend under this word, *willing*, he thus expresseth in his apology before Felix, 'Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence,' Acts xxiv. 16.

Willingness in this extent is the highest perfection that in this world we can attain unto. For no man can exactly and fully conform himself in all things to God's will while he lives. We all fail in the best things we undertake. God therefore accepts the will for the deed, 'If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.' The Holy Ghost doth therefore express the deed under the desire of doing it, as in this phrase, 'Who desire to fear thy name,' Neh. i. 11, and in this, 'The desire of our soul is to thy name,' Isa. xxvi. 8.

God is a very indulgent Father, and well knoweth the weakness of his children, and their disability to accomplish their duty to the full. If therefore he observe them willing to do what is required, and earnestly desirous thereof, and withal faithfully and diligently to endeavour to do what they can, he accepteth the same, as if it were perfectly done.

How should this put us on to put out our best endeavour! Hereof see Chap. iv. 11, Secs. 63, 64.

#### Sec. 157. *Of living honestly.*

That which the apostle professeth himself and others to be willing unto, is thus expressed, *to live honestly*. The word, *ἀναστίζεσθαι*, translated *to live*, is a compound, whereof see Ver. 7, Sec. 108. It is usually put for ordering a man's conversation, and thus translated, 'we have had our conversation,' 2 Cor. i. 12, Eph. ii. 3, and thus, 'pass the time,' 1 Pet. i. 17. This English word, *to live*, is oft used in the same sense, namely, for ordering a man's conversation. In this sense it is said, 'they live in error,' 2 Pet. ii. 18. It implieth a due respect to the whole course of a man's life, and that in all manner of duties towards God or man, Acts xxiv. 16.

This adverb, *καλῶς*, translated *honestly*, is a very comprehensive word. It properly signifieth *well*, and is so for the most part translated. Where it is said of Christ, that 'he did all things well,' this word is used, Mark vii. 37. This hath respect to the manner of doing good things; so as he intendeth that their whole course of life was rightly and duly ordered.

Of the right manner of doing duty, see Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 17.

By this due manner of ordering their conversation, he giveth proof that they had a good conscience; so as a man's outward conversation is an evidence of his inward good conscience. It doth give a visible evidence to others; and also doth the more assure per-

sions themselves of the integrity of their conscience. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 59.

Sec. 158. *Of praying more and more fervently.*

Ver. 19. *But I beseech you rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.*

The foresaid general motion of praying for their ministers, the apostle doth here in particular make for himself; that they would pray for him in special. This is evident by the reason following, which concerned himself alone, thus expressed, *that I may be restored*.

In ordering this motion he doth, as it were, cast himself at their feet, and useth a word of great humility and great fervency, *παράκαλῶ, I beseech*. Of the composition and divers acception of this word, see Heb. iii. 13, Sec. 143.

This conjunction, *but*, carrieth here such an emphasis, as it did, Ver. 16, Sec. 145.

It appears hereby that he believed the prayers of the church to be very prevalent with God, which moved him thus earnestly to crave them. This earnest desire in this case is thus more fully expressed, 'Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,' Rom. xv. 30. What could have been more said than is here said, to move the bowels of any to grant a request?

This should move every congregation to be earnest with God in prayer for their minister.

He further thus presseth it, *the rather to do this*.

The Greek word, *περισσότερον*, translated *the rather*, is very emphatical.

Of the emphasis hereof, see Chap. ii. 1, Sec. 5. It sheweth that there may be occasions of enlarging the heart in prayer, and of performing the duty more carefully and more fervently at some times than at others. It is noted of Christ himself, that in his agony he prayed once, and twice, and thrice, Mat. xxvi. 39, 42, 44. Yea, that he prayed, *ἐκτενέστερον*, 'more earnestly,' Luke xxii. 44. And it is noted concerning Peter, that 'prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him,' Acts xii. 5. This is further evident by long continuance in prayer, as Christ 'continued all night' therein, Luke vi. 12; and by joining fasting with prayer, Acts xiii. 3.

They who content themselves with set forms of prayers, never varying their course, do not take that notice of the different occasions of prayer, which they should; nor yet of the power and efficacy of prayer, and how it may, like powder, by adding more store, be much more prevalent.

Sec. 159. *Of restraining and restoring ministers.*

The particular reason which the apostle renders of his earnest desire of their more than ordinary prayers

for him, was his restraint at that time, implied under this phrase, *that I may be restored*. The word, *ἀποκαταστάω*, translated *restored*, is a double compound. The simple verb, *ίστημι*, signifieth *to set*. The single compound, *καθίστημι*, to *constitute or settle*. Hereof see Chap. v. 1, Sec. 3. This double compound, *ἀποκαθίστημι*, signifieth a *restoring* of a thing or person from a restraint. It is used of Christ's restoring a withered hand, Mark iii. 5; and of restoring his kingdom, Acts i. 6. Hereby it appeareth that the apostle was at this time restrained from them, either by imprisonment, or some other way. He was 'in prisons frequent,' 2 Cor. xi. 23.

Here is implied, that the best of ministers may be restrained and kept from their people. If extraordinary prophets, such as Micajah was (1 Kings xxii. 27), and Jeremiah (Jer. xxxviii. 6), and the apostles, (Acts v. 18), be proofs hereof, proofs are not wanting.

This is so both by God's wise permission, and also by the malice of Satan and his instruments, who cannot endure the light of their ministry, but seek to hinder the shining of it forth by restraining their persons.

The foresaid restoring is amplified by their desire of the speediness thereof, in this word, *τότον, the sooner*.

The Greek word is used sometimes positively, and translated 'shortly,' ver. 23, and 'quickly,' John xiii. 27; and sometimes comparatively, as here, and John xx. 4. There is a proper positive of the word, and that in sundry terminations, as Luke xviii. 8, Mat. v. 25, Luke xiv. 21.

This circumstance of the time is used, to shew that people ought to be desirous of enjoying the presence of their ministers as much as may be; and thereupon, if by any occasion they be kept from them, to desire a restoring of them as soon as may be.

This reason is thus pressed by the apostle, 'that I may come unto you with joy, and may with you be refreshed,' Rom. xv. 32.

A speedy restoring of ministers when they are restrained, is to be desired by people, both in regard of their ministers, and also in regard of themselves.

1. Restraint of liberty is one kind of those crosses which 'for the present seem not to be joyous, but grievous,' Heb. xii. 11. And in this respect a speedy release is to be desired in behalf of ministers restrained.

2. The presence of ministers with people procureth abundance of blessing, and that by their wholesome instructions, by their savoury exhortations, by their useful admonitions, by their pithy persuasions, and by their sweet consolations. Hereupon people have just cause, when their ministers are absent, to desire their speedy return.

Can it now be imagined, that they who care not how long their ministers be restrained from them, or be otherwise absent from them, do either tender their

ministers as they should, or respect their own spiritual good as becometh them? Surely such savour not the things of the Spirit of God.

Sec. 160. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 17-19.*

Ver. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.*

18. *Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly.*

19. *But I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner.*

In these verses, special duties of ministers are declared.

The duties are two:

One, *obedience*, ver. 17.

The other, *prayer*, vers. 18, 19.

In setting down the former,

1. He layeth down the duty itself.

2. He enforceth it with a reason.

In laying down the duty,

1. He manifesteth the persons to whom it is to be performed, *them that have the rule over you.*

2. He expresseth the duty, in two phrases.

The first pointeth at the matter thereof, *obey*.

The other at the manner, *submit yourselves*.

The reason is taken from their ministers' faithfulness, which is set out,

1. By the matter thereof.

2. By the manner of performing it.

The matter is manifested,

1. By their act, *they watch*.

2. By the subject of that act, *for your souls*.

The manner is,

1. Generally hinted, in this particle of resemblance, *as*.

2. Particularly expressed, by having an eye upon their account.

This is,

1. Propounded, in this phrase, *they must give an account*.

2. Amplified, by the manner of giving their account, which is set down two ways:

(1.) Affirmatively, *that they may do it with joy*.

(2.) Negatively, *and not with grief*.

The negative is aggravated by the damage following thereupon, *for that is unprofitable for you*.

The other duty is prayer. This is,

1. Desired, ver. 18.

2. Enforced, ver. 19.

In the desire there is,

1. The thing desired.

2. The reason why it is desired.

The thing desired is set out by the act, *pray*; and by the object, *for us*.

The reason is taken from their minister's conscionable performing of their duties. This is,

1. Propounded. 2. Proved.

In the proposition, there is,

1. The assertion of their conscionableness, *we have a good conscience*.

2. The evidence of it, *we trust*.

3. The extent of it, *in all things*.

The proof is taken from their course of life, in this word, *to live*.

It is amplified,

1. By the ground thereof, in this word, *willing*.

2. By the manner of it, in this word, *honestly*.

The enforcement of the foresaid duty of prayer, is implied in this particle, *but*, and expressed in the words following. Wherein are manifested,

1. His desire.

2. The end thereof.

His desire is set out,

1. Simply, *I beseech you*.

2. Relatively, *the rather to do this*.

In setting down the end, one thing is implied, which is, that he was restrained.

The other is expressed, that he might be *restored*.

This is amplified,

1. By the persons to whom, *to you*.

2. By the time, *the sooner*.

Sec. 161. *Of the observations raised out of Heb. xiii. 17-19.*

I. *Ministers are rulers in God's church.* They are comprised under this phrase, *them that have the rule over you*. See Ver. 7, Sec. 96.

II. *Obedience is to be yielded unto ministers.* People are here commanded to obey them. See Sec. 148.

III. *Obedience must be yielded with due respect to ministers.* This is intended under this phrase, *submit yourselves*. See Sec. 148.

IV. *Ministers are watchmen.* They are here said to watch. See Sec. 149.

V. *Ministers watch especially for men's souls.* So much is here expressed. See Sec. 150.

VI. *Ministers must give an account.* This is here implied. See Sec. 151.

VII. *Faithful ministers have an eye to their account.* They watch as they that must give an account. See Sec. 151.

VIII. *People's proficiency makes ministers give their account with joy.* See Sec. 152.

IX. *People's not profiting makes ministers grieve.* See Sec. 152.

X. *Grief of ministers for people's not profiting is discommunion to people.* See Sec. 152.

XI. *Prayer is to be made for others.* So much is here intended under this word, *pray*. See Sec. 153.

XII. *Prayer is especially to be made for ministers.* Ministers are comprised under this phrase, *for us*. See Sec. 153.

XIII. *Conscienceable ministers are most to be prayed for.* This is the reason that the apostle here renders for performing this duty. See Sec. 153.

XIV. *A man may know that he hath a good conscience.* The apostle asserteth thus much of himself. See Sec. 154.

XV. *Christians may in charity judge of others what they know of themselves.* These phrases of the plural number, *we trust, we have*, give evidence hereof. See Sec. 154.

XVI. *A good conscience extends itself to all duties.* It is here said to be *in all things*. See Sec. 155.

XVII. *A man of a good conscience will well order the whole course of his life.* So much is intended under this phrase, *to live*, being here brought in as the proof of a good conscience. See Sec. 156.

XVIII. *A willing mind is a note of a good conscience.* The apostle expresseth as much under this word, *willing*. See Sec. 156.

XIX. *Respect must be had to the manner of ordering our life.* This is intended under this word, *honestly*. See Sec. 157.

Sec. 162. *Of ministers praying for their people.*

Ver. 20. *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,*

21. *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

That which the apostle required of the Hebrews on his behalf, he here performeth for them, which is prayer; for this text containeth an effectual prayer for them. This is an especial part of a minister's function. It is that which the apostles do in all their epistles. So did the prophets use to pray for their people. Samuel accounteth it a sin against the Lord to cease to pray for the people, 1 Sam. xii. 23. Our Lord Christ much used this duty in the days of his flesh for his church. He did sometimes spend a whole night therein, Luke vi. 12. An effectual prayer of his for his church is registered, John xvii. 6, &c.

Prayer is the means of obtaining all manner of good things, not for ourselves only, but for others also; and prayer is very powerful for these and other like ends. Of these and other motives to this duty, see *The Whole Armour of God*, on Eph. vi. 18, Treat. 3, Part 1, Of Prayer, Sec. 15, &c.

Let such ministers as desire the prayers of their people for themselves, imitate this and other faithful ministers of God in praying for their people earnestly, frequently, in public and private, ordinarily and extraordinarily. Thus will their watching and painstaking for their people be more acceptable to God, and profitable to their people.

A greater part of the apostle's prayer is spent in

describing him to whom he makes his prayer, and that by two of his eminent properties—namely, his goodness, in this phrase, *the God of peace*; and his greatness, in this, *which brought again from the dead*. So as a serious consideration of his excellencies on whom we call, and particularly of his goodness and greatness, is an especial means to quicken up the spirit unto due prayer. See more hereof, on the *Guide to go to God*, or, *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, Secs. 4, 6.

Sec. 163. *Of the God of peace.*

The title *God* is here especially to be applied unto the first person, in regard of that special relation which it hath to *Jesus Christ*, whom God the Father brought again from the dead. Yet this property of *peace* here applied to him, is not so proper to the first person, as it excludeth the other two; for the second person is the Prince of peace, Isa. ix. 6, and the third person is the Spirit of peace.

This, then, is the property of the divine nature, rather than of any one particular person exclusively.

God is here and elsewhere thus styled, 'the God of peace,' in that he is the primary fountain and author of all peace, and the worker and finisher thereof; and there is no true peace but of God, as is evident by this phrase, 'the peace of God,' Phil. iv. 7, Col. iii. 15. And God's ambassadors have 'the ministry of reconciliation,' 2 Cor. v. 19, and their message, the 'gospel of peace,' Rom. x. 15.

*Peace*, *signify*, according to the notation of the Greek word, signifieth a knitting in one.<sup>1</sup> It is God, the Creator of all, that doth properly knit things in one.

At first, God created all things in perfect concord and peace.

When by man's transgression, disunion and discord was made betwixt God and man, man and his own conscience, and betwixt one man and another, God made up all these breaches.

1. God gave his Son to make reconciliation betwixt himself and man, 2 Cor. v. 19.

2. God, by faith in Christ, and the renovation of the Holy Ghost, worketh peace of conscience in man, and so maketh peace betwixt a man and himself, Phil. iv. 7.

3. God communicateth to his children such a spirit of union, as they thereby are at peace one with another, Isa. xi. 5.

4. *Peace* being a comprehensive word, compriseth under it all manner of blessings which come from above, even 'from the Father of lights,' James i. 17.

The apostle, in the beginning of his prayer, giveth this style, *the God of peace*, to him on whom he calleth, to strengthen both his own and their faith, in a steadfast expectation of obtaining the blessings which he prayeth for. For what may not be expected

<sup>1</sup> *παρὰ τὸ ἐπένε ἐκ τῆς.*

from the God of peace, from him that is the fountain of all blessing, from him who is reconciled and at peace with us, from him that pacifieth our conscience, from him that knitteth us together by the bond of peace?

To meditate heron when we go to God and call upon him, would much enlarge our spirits in praying to God, and strengthen our faith in obtaining that which we pray for.

This title, *God of peace*, should so work on us, who profess ourselves to be servants and children of this God, as to follow peace; that as he is the God of peace, we may be children of peace, Mat. v. 9.

See. 164. *Of God's raising his Son from the dead.*

The person on whom the apostle calleth is further described by an act of his power in raising his Son from the dead.

This phrase, *he brought again*, is the interpretation of one Greek compound verb. The simple verb, *ἀγαθω*, signifieth *to bring*; the compound, *ἀναγαθω*, *to bring again*. Our English doth fitly and fully answer the Greek. The enemies of Christ brought him to death, but God his Father brought him again from death.

This phrase sets forth the resurrection of Christ. It is frequently attributed to God his Father, as Acts ii. 32, iv. 10, v. 30, x. 40, and xiii. 30.

Indeed, this act is oft attributed to Christ himself. In reference therunto thus saith Christ, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,' John ii. 19. And again, 'I lay down my life, that I may take it again. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again,' John x. 17, 18.

*Ans.* The very same act may be applied to the Father and the Son, for they are both one (John x. 30) in regard of the divine nature. 'What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise,' 'As the father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will,' John v. 19, 21.

This point of the resurrection of Christ is a great mystery, the ground of our resurrection; and thereupon typified and prophesied of before Christ was incarnate, foretold by Christ himself in the days of his flesh, distinctly recorded, with sundry evidences thereof, and much published after it was accomplished.

1. Many were the types thereof, as—

(1.) Adam's waking out of a dead sleep. 'God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and took one of his ribs, and made a woman,' Gen. ii. 21, 22, and then the man awoke. Thus by Christ's death was the church made a fit spouse for him, and then was he raised.

(2.) Isaac's delivery from being sacrificed, Gen. xxii. 12, Heb. xi. 19.

(3.) Israel's passing through the Red Sea, Exod. xiv. 29.

(4.) Aaron's dead rod, which 'budded and brought

forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds,' Num. xvii. 8.

(5.) The bird that was dipped in blood, and let go, Lev. xiv. 51, 53, and the scape-goat, Lev. xvi. 21.

(6.) The translation of Enoch, Gen. v. 24, and rapture of Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 11.

(7.) The raising of the son of the widow of Zarephath, 1 Kings xvii. 22, and of the Shunammite, 2 Kings iv. 33.

(8.) The restoring of dry bones to living men, Ezek. xxxvii. 10.

(9.) The building of the second temple, Ezra vi. 14.

(10.) Jonah his coming out of the whale's belly, Jonah ii. 10, Mat. xii. 40.

2. There were also sundry prophecies of Christ's resurrection, as these: 'He shall prolong his days;' 'He shall see of the travail of his soul;' 'He shall justify many,' Isa. liii. 10, 11. This phrase, 'This day have I begotten thee,' Ps. ii. 7, is applied to Christ's resurrection, Acts xiii. 33. So is this, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,' Ps. xvi. 10, Acts ii. 31; and this, 'The sure mercies of David,' Isa. lv. 3, Acts xiii. 34.

3. Christ foretold his resurrection, not only in dark terms, as John ii. 19, but also plainly, Mat. xii. 40, 41, xvi. 21, and xvii. 23.

4. The distinct narration of Christ's resurrection is set down by all the evangelists with sundry circumstances thereabouts.

5. There were many eye-witnesses thereof, as angels, Luke xxiv. 4; women, Mat. xxviii. 5; all sorts of men, foes, Mat. xxviii. 11; friends, John xx. 19; he was 'seen of about five hundred brethren at once,' 1 Cor. xv. 6. Those 'bodies of the saints which came out of the graves after his resurrection,' were also witnesses thereof, Mat. xxvii. 52, 53.

6. Christ's resurrection was a principal point that the apostles' sermons published in planting churches, Acts ii. 24.

7. This is one of the articles of the Christian faith, expressly set down in all Christian creeds, and believed by every true Christian.

1. God brought again his Son from the dead, to manifest the brightness of his glory. Christ's passion was as a cloud that overshadowed his divine glory. That it might not be thought that his glory was either extinguished or eclipsed, but only hid for a time, it began to shine forth at his resurrection; for he was 'declared to be the Son of God, with power, by the resurrection from the dead,' Rom. i. 4.

2. He did it to declare that full conquest which his Son had over all his enemies. The last enemy was death, so as his rising from death was a full demonstration of his full conquest. In this respect the apostle saith that he was 'raised again for our justification,' Rom. iv. 25. The apostle having cleared the point of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, maketh this holy exultation against death itself, 'O



death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 1 Cor. xv. 55.

3. Christ was raised from the dead to make way for the finishing of the work of his priesthood, which was by ascending into heaven, and then making continual intercession for us, Rom. viii. 34. This he could not have done, if he had not been brought again from the dead.

4. Christ was raised to give assurance of our resurrection, both former and latter. Our former resurrection is our regeneration, concerning which it is said that 'God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,' 1 Pet. i. 3. Our latter resurrection shall be of our bodies; for Christ rose as a head, to make way for the resurrection of all his members. Hereupon saith the apostle, 'Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that sleep,' 1 Cor. xv. 20.

1. This gives an instance of the greatness of God's power, which the apostle thus to the life expresseth, 'The exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead,' Eph. i. 19, 20. Where the apostle maketh mention of Christ's resurrection, he ordinarily addeth a word of power thereunto, as Rom. i. 4, and vi. 4, 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Experience declareth the raising from death to be a work of almighty power. For what are armies of men or beasts, to death? If death seize on them, what are they? Death so brings down the lion, as the fearful hare may pull him by the beard. Where death hath seized on any, we say there is no hope of life; yet this instance sheweth the contrary. The devil is said to have the power of death, Heb. ii. 14. The devil, therefore, and all the power of hell, are manifested to be vanquished by Christ's resurrection. Of all evidences of God's power, meditate on this, because of the greatness, clearness, and manifold fruits thereof.

2. We have proof hereby of the perfection of Christ's sacrifice. The grave was the prison into which Christ, as our surety, was cast. By coming out of that prison, he giveth proof that the debt is discharged, and justice satisfied.

3. This ministereth much comfort to us against our natural bondage under sin, Satan, death, grave, and hell. By Christ's resurrection we are freed from all that bondage; for he rose as our surety. Therefore we are said to be raised up together in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 6. And we may be assured that we also shall be raised.

4. The apostle, from the resurrection of Christ, inferreth this duty, we should 'walk in newness of life,' Rom. vi. 4; and taking it for grant that we are risen with Christ, exhorteth to 'seek those things which are above,' Col. iii. 1.

This mystery of Christ's resurrection is in other places amplified by the circumstance of time, that it

was within the space of three days. This was answerable to the type, Mat. xii. 40.

This time was sufficient to give evidence of the truth of his death, and withal to keep his body, according to the course of man's nature, from putrefaction; for it is said of the body of Lazarus, 'By this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days,' John xi. 39. But God 'would not suffer his holy One to see corruption,' Ps. xvi. 10, Acts ii. 27.

Christ's members may hereupon, with much confidence, rest upon God's care in a seasonable providing for them, and in keeping them from utter destruction. Nor death, nor any other affliction, shall clean swallow them up. 'After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up,' Hosea vi. 2. On this ground saith the apostle, 'We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed,' 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9.

#### Sec. 165. Of our Lord Jesus.

He whom the Father brought again from the dead, is set out by his dominion, and by his title, *our Lord Jesus*. *Lord* (*Kύριος*) is a word of supreme sovereignty, as was shewed, Chap. i. 10, Sec. 128.

The relative *ζωών, our*, compriseth under it such as are of the church of God, of whom Christ is in special the Lord, as hath been declared, Chap. vii. 14, Sec. 74.

*Jesus* was the proper name of the Son of God incarnate, and signifieth a *Saviour*, as is proved, Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 73.

This part of the description sheweth how much it concerneth us to know and believe the forementioned resurrection; for he was raised from the dead who was in special manner our Lord, under whom we are, and to whom we are subject, yea, he who is our Saviour; for 'there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' Acts iv. 12. All the good that we can any ways expect resteth in this, *our LORD JESUS, whom God raised from the dead*.

#### Sec. 166. Of Christ a shepherd.

Our Lord Jesus is further set forth under the resemblance of a shepherd.

The Greek word, *ποιμήν*, hath its notation from a verb, *ποιμαίνω*, that signifieth to *feed*; so also the Latin, *pascor*: for it is the special part of a shepherd to feed his sheep, John xxi. 16. Christ was of old foretold to be a shepherd, Isa. xl. 11, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, Zech. xiii. 7. Christ himself professeth himself to be a shepherd, John x. 11, 16, Mat. xxvi. 31; answerably he was so styled by his apostles, as here, and 1 Pet. ii. 25, and v. 4.

There are sundry respects wherein this metaphor may fitly be applied to our Lord Jesus; for,

1. A true shepherd 'entereth in by the door,'

John x. 2—that is, he is lawfully called and appointed by God ; so was our Lord Jesus, Heb. v. 5.

2. 'The porter openeth' to the shepherd, John x. 3 ; so the ministers of the church acknowledge Christ to be sent of God, and answerably entertain him, John vi. 69, 1 Pet. ii. 25.

3. A shepherd 'calls his sheep by name,' John x. 3 ; so 'the Lord knoweth them that are his,' 2 Tim. ii. 19.

4. A shepherd knoweth his own sheep, John x. 3. Thus Christ 'judgeth between cattle and cattle,' Ezek. xxxiv. 17.

5. A shepherd leads out his sheep, John x. 8 ; so Jesus is a guide to his sheep. He is 'the way, the truth, and the life,' John xiv. 6 ; that true way wherein his sheep may attain unto life.

6. A shepherd ordereth the affairs of his sheep in season ; he 'puts them forth,' John x. 4, namely, when it is time for them to go out of the fold. Christ doth things when it is time, John vii. 6.

7. A shepherd goeth before his sheep, John x. 4. In this respect Christ is styled our captain, Heb. ii. 10.

8. A shepherd provides for his sheep, 1 Chron. iv. 40 ; so doth Christ, John x. 9, Ps. xxiii. 2.

9. A shepherd procures safety for his sheep. This is implied under this phrase, which Christ applyeth to himself, 'he shall be saved, and shall go in and out.'

10. A shepherd hazardeth his life for his sheep, 1 Sam. xvii. 35 ; so doth Christ, John x. 17.

11. A shepherd so acquainteth himself with his sheep, as they know his voice, John x. 4 ; so the church knoweth the voice of Christ, John x. 14.

12. A shepherd so governs his sheep, as they follow him, John x. 4 ; so doth Christ govern his church, 1 Cor. xi. 1.

13. A shepherd useth to mark his sheep, so as he may know them from others. Thus Christ by his Spirit 'sealeth' his, Eph. iv. 30.

14. A shepherd watcheth over his sheep, Gen. xxxi. 40, Luke ii. 8. Thus doth Christ, John xvii. 6.

15. A shepherd tenderly healeth his sheep. Thus doth Christ, Ezek. xxxiv. 16, Mat. viii. 16.

16. A shepherd keeps his sheep together, that they stray not, Gen. xxx. 29. For this end Christ hath his assemblies and ordinances.

17. A shepherd seeks out the sheep that stray ; so doth Christ, Mat. xviii. 11, 12.

18. A shepherd will carry such sheep as are feeble and cannot go ; so Christ, Luke xv. 5.

19. A shepherd will be accountable for his sheep, Gen. xxxi. 39 ; so also is Christ, John xvii. 12.

20. A shepherd will keep the infected from the clean ; so Christ, 1 Cor. v. 4, &c.

1. Take Christ for thy shepherd, Ps. xxiii. 1.

2. Hearken to Christ's voice, John x. 27, Mat. xvii. 5.

3. So acquaint thyself with Christ's voice as thou mayest know it, John x. 4, 14, Luke xxiv. 35.

4. Follow him, John x. 4, 27, Rev. xiv. 4.

5. If by occasion thou hast gone astray, return to him, 1 Pet. ii. 25.

6. If thou beest brought into any danger, cry to him, Mat. viii. 25.

7. If wounded, hurt, or diseased, seek cure of him, Ps. vi. 2.

8. Expect from Christ whatsoever may be expected from a good shepherd.

#### Sec. 168. *Of Christ the great shepherd.*

The foresaid shepherd is here styled *great*, yea, with an emphasis, *that great shepherd*.

There is in Greek a double article—one prefixed before the word *shepherd*, the other before the epithet *great*—thus, τὸν ποιμένα, τὸν μέγαν, *that shepherd, that great one*.

Christ may well be styled *that great shepherd*, in sundry respects :

1. In regard of the dignity of his person ; for he was God-man.

2. In regard of his superiority : he was the Lord of all.

3. In regard of his power, which is an almighty power. He is able to do whatsoever may be expected from a shepherd.

4. In regard of his goodness. As he is infinitely good in himself, so the fruits and effects of his goodness are very great ; such as bring his sheep to eternal happiness.

5. In regard of the great price wherewith he purchased his sheep, here styled *the blood of the everlasting covenant*.

This epithet is here added to distinguish him from other shepherds ; for in Scripture both magistrates and ministers are styled shepherds.

But none ever were such as Christ is : he only is the great shepherd. In this respect he is also styled, ἀρχιποιмену, 'the chief shepherd,' 1 Pet. v. 4. As he is called 'the great high priest,' Heb. iv. 14, to distinguish him from other high priests (see Chap. ii. 17, Sec. 173), so here 'a great shepherd,' to distinguish him from all other shepherds ; and to move us every way to esteem him above others, and to prefer him before others.

All other shepherds are under this great shepherd, and to give an account to him, and to depend on him.

#### Sec. 169. *Of the sheep of Christ.*

To shew that Christ is a shepherd, not at random for any sheep, but that he hath a peculiar flock belonging unto him, he is thus set out,—that great

#### Sec. 167. *Of duties due to Christ, as he is a shepherd.*

The duties that we are to perform to Christ as a shepherd, are these and such like :

shepherd of the sheep. In this respect, where Christ calleth upon Peter to feed those that were committed to his charge, he useth three times this appropriating relative, *my*: 'feed *my* lambs,' 'feed *my* sheep,' 'feed *my* sheep,' John xxi. 15-17. So as this great shepherd hath a peculiar flock, according to that which he saith of the relation betwixt him and these sheep, 'there shall be one fold' (or flock, *ποίαν*) 'and one shepherd,' John x. 16.

The flock of sheep that belongeth unto Christ are of such as the Father hath elected, the Son redeemed, and the Holy Ghost in some measure sanctified. The Greek word, *πρόβατον*, seemeth to be derived from a verb, *προβαίνω*, that signifieth to *go on*, and may fitly be applied to saints' progress.

These are called sheep in a double respect:

1. In regard of their reference to Christ. It was shewed, Sec. 166, that Christ was a shepherd; now these are they over whom Christ as a shepherd sets himself; and of whom, as of a peculiar flock of sheep, he taketh special care.

2. In regard of that fit resemblance that is betwixt them and sheep; and that in sundry excellent qualities: as,

(1.) Meekness. Sheep are of all creatures the most meek. They are freest from rancour and revenge. Clap them on the back, set them on by all means you can, yet you cannot move them to fly in the face of a man, or to bite him, no, not to snarl against him. These are doggish properties. Such as have the Spirit of Christ in them, have a meek spirit. It is said of Christ, 'He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth,' Isa. liii. 7. Such is the disposition of the members of Christ.

(2.) Harmlessness. Of all creatures they are the least harmful. Though they suffer much, they do no wrong.

(3.) Patience. 'As sheep are dumb before the shearers' (Isa. liii. 7), yea, before their slaughterers, so are holy martyrs.

(4.) Dependence. Sheep do altogether depend upon their shepherd's care. Thus believers cast themselves upon Christ, upon his protection and provision.

(5.) Obedience. Sheep follow their shepherd, John x. 4. They flock together, or go this way and that way according to the whistle or other direction of the shepherd; so do Christ's sheep, John x. 16.

(6.) Contentedness. They will feed upon any pasture; yea, even upon the fallow ground. Thus are believers content with any state wherein the Lord shall set them.

(7.) Cleanliness. They are not like swine, that delight to wallow in the mire; but if by occasion they fall thereto, they will, as soon as they can, get out of it. Herein lies a difference betwixt a natural man, and one that is truly regenerate. The former wilfully runneth into sinful mire, and with delight

walloweth therein. The latter may, by temptation, fall into such filth; but through shame he will quickly recover himself, and seek to be cleansed.

(8.) Sociableness. Sheep love to flock together and to feed together. So saints love the society one of another.

(9.) Profitableness. They are in everything profitable. Their wool and skin for clothing, their milk and flesh for food, their guts for strings, their dung for manuring ground. They are profitable being alive, and profitable after death.

By these properties we may make trial of ourselves whether we be the sheep of Christ or no. It becomes us therefore duly to apply them to ourselves.

Hereby, also, proof is given of the benefit that saints bring to those among whom they live, which may easily be gathered from the forementioned properties. They ought, therefore, to be had in high account.

Sec. 170. *Of the blood of the everlasting covenant.*

By way of amplification the apostle addeth this clause, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*. There were three distinct points before noted in this verse:

1. A description of God, *the God of peace*.
2. The resurrection of Christ.
3. The office of Christ, to be a *shepherd of the sheep*.

To each of these may the foresaid amplification have reference; for,

1. The Lord is the God of peace, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*.

2. God brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, because by his blood he had sealed and ratified *the everlasting covenant*.

3. By virtue of the everlasting covenant sealed by the blood of Christ, Christ became the great shepherd of the sheep.

Of a covenant in general, see Chap. vii. 22, Sec. 94, and Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 39, &c.

The covenant here meant must needs be the new covenant of grace; because this epithet, *everlasting*, is attributed thereunto. Of the difference betwixt the old and new covenant of grace, see Chap. viii. 8, Sec. 52. This new covenant was made with Christ as the head of the mystical body. It was in and by him established and ratified; and thereupon it is here added as the ground of the three forementioned points.

The word, *αἰώνιος*, here translated *everlasting*, is in Greek the same that is translated 'eternal,' Chap. v. 9, Sec. 51. It implieth a continuance without date. It is here attributed to the new covenant.

1. To put a difference betwixt it and the old covenant, which had a date, and was in time abrogated, as is proved, Chap. viii. 13, Sec. 81.

2. To shew that the vigour of this covenant ever remaineth; and that therefore no other covenant is

ever to be expected : so as we may the more confidently rest hereupon, and content ourselves herewith.

By *blood* is here meant the death of Christ.

Of blood in general, see Chap. ii. 14, Sec. 137. The apostle doth not here speak of the blood of Christ as it remained in his veins ; in that respect it would set forth the life of Christ, Gen. ix. 4, 5 ; but he speaketh of it as shed out of his body, for so it signifieth death ; and withal the kind of his death, which was a sacrifice : for the blood of those beasts which were made sacrifices under the law was shed, Lev. i. 5. In reference to the blood of the beast sacrifices, frequent mention is made of Christ's blood.

It was Christ's death that ratified the new covenant, whereby it became a testament, Heb. ix. 16, 17. Thereby this covenant came to be unalterable, Gal. iii. 15.

This doth much magnify the new covenant, in that it was ratified with so great a price as the blood of Christ, which the apostle might well style precious, 1 Pet. i. 19 ; for never was there in the world anything of more worth or greater price than the blood of Christ : and that,

1. In regard of the person whose blood it was, even the blood of him that was true God ; whereupon the apostle saith that God hath 'purchased' the church 'with his own blood,' Acts xx. 28.

2. In regard of the precious effects that are wrought thereby ; which are freedom from everything that may make man miserable—as the curse of the law, the wrath of God, divine justice, the sting of death, the power of the grave, bondage under sin and Satan, and from hell and damnation.

Yea, also, participation of everything that may make us happy—as reconciliation with God, justification of our persons, and eternal salvation. All these, and other like to these, are branches of the new covenant, as it is ratified by the blood of Christ. Well, therefore, might the apostle add to the former privileges this great one, 'in (or through) the blood of the everlasting covenant.'

Sec. 171. *Of adding prayer to other means of instruction.*

Ver. 21. *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

The substance of the apostle's prayer is contained in this verse.

He had before exhorted them to sundry good works : here he prayeth that God would enable them thereunto. It is usual with the apostles to pray to God to enable their people to do those things that they exhort them to.

All exhortations, and other means which man can use, are altogether in vain without God's blessing

thereupon ; and prayer is an especial means for obtaining God's blessing.

Commendable in this respect is the custom of ministers, in making prayers after their sermons for a blessing on what they have delivered.

Little is this considered by them who in the end of their sermon, having named Christ, thus conclude all, 'to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all glory now and for evermore.' This is a good close, but too scanty in regard of that blessing that should be sought.

It is to be feared that a special reason of men's small profiting by much hearing is this, that they are not so earnest in seeking a blessing of God as they should.

Sec. 172. *Of being perfect in every good work.*

The first branch is a very large one, comprising under it every spiritual blessing that is needful for a Christian.

The first word, *καταρτίζου*, in Greek is a compound. The adjective, *ἀετιος*, whence it is derived, doth signify *sound*, *not hurt*, *not defective*. The compound wants not emphasis. It signifieth to make up a thing that is rent or defective : as where it is said, that the sons of Zebedee were 'mending' their nets, Mat. iv. 21 ; and where the apostle exhorteth to 'restore' one that is overtaken in a fault, Gal. vi. 1. Usually it signifieth, as here, to *perfect*, 1 Cor. i. 10, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. It is used to God's 'preparing' the body of Christ for a fit sacrifice, Heb. xii. 5 ; and to the 'framing' of the worlds, Heb. xi. 3. Both Christ's body, and also the worlds were perfectly made up.

It here intendeth a perfection ; and giveth evidence that perfection may be prayed for, as 1 Cor. i. 10, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Christ himself exhorteth us to be perfect, Mat. v. 48. See more hereof in *The Guide to go to God*, or, *Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, on the 3 Petit. Secs. 65, 68, 69.

The noun, *ἔργον*, translated *work*, is attributed both to that which God doth, and also to that which man doth. Of the notation of the word, see Chap. iv. 3, Sec. 28. Here it is applied to that which man doth : and is extended to every kind of work to be done by man, either in reference to God, or a man's neighbour, or himself : therefore he here addeth this general particle, *every*. For man is bound to do what work soever is required of him by God : as is proved, Chap. viii. 5, Sec. 16.

Though the extent aforesaid be very large, yet it must be limited within the compass of that that is good. Therefore this epithet, *good*, is here added, to limit and restrain that general, *every*.

The notation of the Greek word, *ἀγαθόν*, is taken from another word that signifieth *admirable*, or worthy of all admiration : for in truth nothing is so worthy of admiration as that which is truly good.

This is the commendation of every work that God

made in the beginning, that it was 'good,' yea, 'very good,' Gen. i. 4, 31. There is nothing wherein the creature can be more like his Creator than in goodness. This was that image or likeness of God after which God made man at first, Gen. i. 26, 27.

Under this word, *good*, all fruits of holiness to God, and righteousness to men are comprised.

These then are the good works whereunto we are 'created,' Eph. ii. 10; and unto which the man of God must be 'thoroughly furnished,' 2 Tim. iii. 17; and which he must learn to 'maintain,' Titus iii. 8, 14; and whereof he must be 'zealous,' Titus ii. 14. These are they that must be 'seen, that men may glorify our Father which is in heaven,' Mat. v. 16, 1 Pet. ii. 12. Doreas is commended for being 'full' of these, Acts ix. 36. These 'become women professing godliness,' 1 Tim. ii. 10. A widow that is received to do service in the church, must be 'well reported of for good works,' 1 Tim. v. 10. Rich men must be 'rich' therein, 1 Tim. vi. 18. Ministers must be a 'pattern' therein, Titus ii. 7. And we must all 'provoke one another' thereto, Heb. x. 24. See more hereof in *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Sec. 59.

#### Sec. 173. *Of doing God's will.*

That it might be the better known what is indeed a good work, the apostle thus explaineth it, *to do his will*.

Of the distinction of God's will, see Chap. ii. 4, Sec. 37. Here is meant God's revealed will, which is his word. This is the rule of every good work.

To do God's will is to obey his word. Therefore as God hath made known his will in his word for our rule, so must we conform ourselves thereto, and yield obedience unto it.

Of God's will, and that as it is our rule, and of practising God's will, see *The Guide to go to God*, or *An Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, on Petit. 3, Secs. 56, 58, 59. Of practising duty, see *The Saint's Sacrifice*, on Ps. cxvi. 9, Secs. 55, 59.

#### Sec. 174. *Of God's working that which is well-pleasing in his sight.*

The apostle further addeth in his prayer this clause, *working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight*: both to shew the ground of their ability to do a good work, and also the consequence that followeth thereupon.

1. The ground thereof is, God's working in them.

The Greek word, *ποιῶν*, translated *working*, is a word of sundry significations. It signifieth *to do*, *to perform*, *to work*, *to make*, &c. It is used not only to set forth man's making a thing out of some matter, but also God's creating of the world of nothing, as in this phrase, 'he made the worlds,' Heb. i. 2. It is a divine and mighty work that is here intended: a kind of creation. For man is utterly unable of him-

self to do that which is well-pleasing in God's sight, and thereupon to do any good work, 'We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves,' 2 Cor. iii. 5. The apostle therefore doth seasonably add this of God's working in them, to direct them whence to seek ability for doing that which he required them to do. Of man's disability to do God's will, see *The Guide to go to God*, or *An Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, on Petit. 3, Sec. 60.

Here observe a difference betwixt the godly and wicked. God worketh in the godly: the devil worketh in the other, Eph. ii. 2. Hence ariseth the difference of their works.

2. The consequence following upon a good work is thus expressed, *that which is well-pleasing in his sight*. The Greek word, *εὐαίσθητον*, translated *well-pleasing*, is the same compound that was used, Ver. 16, Sec. 146. It implieth that God doth not only like such a work, but also takes delight therein. In other places it is translated 'accepted,' 2 Cor. v. 9, and 'acceptable,' Rom. xii. 1, 2; and an adverb thence derived, *εὐαίστητως*, Heb. xii. 28.

The Greek phrase, *ὡς ἔστιν αὐτοῦ*, thus translated, *in his sight*, is the very same that is thus translated, 'unto the eyes of him,' Chap. iv. 13, Sec. 76. It implieth God's distinct discerning and perfect knowing of a thing: even as of that which is before him, and in his sight. God is not well pleased with matters upon hearsay; or upon others' approving of them; but upon his own sight. Thus is this very phrase used, 1 John iii. 22. This, therefore, ought to be our care, to order all our works as in the sight of God. This was the commendation of Zacharias and his wife, that 'they were righteous before God,' or 'in his sight,' Luke i. 6. It is said of Enoch, that 'he walked with God,' that is, 'in God's sight,' Gen. v. 24. Hereupon our apostle maketh this inference, 'he pleased God,' Heb. xi. 5.

They order their works in God's sight, who do them in truth and sincerity: for God is a searcher of the heart, Jer. xvii. 10, and that which is done in truth from the heart, is done in the sight of God.

#### Sec. 175. *Of God's continuing to work upon the regenerate.*

The prayer here made for perfecting them in every good work to do his will, and for working in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight, is for them in whom the good work of grace was begun: so as God continueth to work in and upon those that are effectually called and regenerate. Of such saith the apostle, 'It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure,' Phil. ii. 13. Thereupon we may be 'confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in us, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ,' Phil. i. 6.

Herein lieth a difference betwixt God's working on

Adam, when he had created him at first, and on such as are created again. Having made Adam perfect, he left him to himself to stand or fall. Experience being thereby given of a creature's vanity being left to itself, though it be made perfect, God now himself continues to go on in finishing that good work which he began.

This sheweth a necessity of our continual dependence on God; and that so long as we live, we seek grace and blessing from him time after time; and that we return the glory not only of our first conversion, but also of our continual edification to him, that still we praise him both for preventing and also for assisting grace; and that we use all to the glory of his name.

Sec. 176. *Of calling on God through Jesus Christ.*

The apostle thus concludes this prayer, *through Jesus Christ*. Of the Greek particle, *διὰ*, translated *through*, see Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 74.

Of these two titles, *Jesus Christ*, joined together, see Chap. iii. 1, Sec. 29.

This clause is fitly put in the last place, after the whole prayer, because it may have a just reference to every part of the prayer. For God makes us perfect *through Jesus Christ*; and that which is well-pleasing in God's sight is so *through Jesus Christ*. There can be no communion betwixt God and us, but *through Jesus Christ*. What good thing soever God doth to us, he doth it *through Jesus Christ*. Whatsoever we do acceptably to God, it must be done *through Jesus Christ*. 'God hath made us accepted in the beloved,' Eph. i. 6. 'This (saith God) is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,' Mat. iii. 17. God is not only well pleased with Christ, but also *in him*; that is, he doth rest so well pleased with Christ, as whomsoever he beholdeth in him, he also resteth well pleased with them; therefore all the good that God doth to any of his, he doth *through Jesus Christ*. Hereupon saith Christ, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you,' John xvi. 23. And we are exhorted to 'do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,' Col. iii. 17.

Of praying to God and praising God in and through Jesus Christ, see Ver. 15, Sec. 142.

Sec. 177. *Of adding praise to prayer.*

To the former prayer that the apostle made he addeth this form of praise, *to whom be glory for ever and ever*. This relative, *to whom*, may have reference either to 'the God of peace,' ver. 20, or to 'Jesus Christ,' who was mentioned immediately before. They are both one God, and fountain of all blessing; and to either of them severally, or to both of them jointly, all glory is due. To 'God the Father of Christ' is glory given, 1 Pet. v. 10, 11; and to 'God our Saviour' (which is Jesus Christ), is also glory given, Jude 25. Of God's glory, see *The Guide to go to God*, Sec. 215, &c.

Of the meaning of the word, *δόξα*, translated *glory*, see Chap. ii. 7, Sec. 60. It here intendeth praise, whereof see Ver. 15, Sec. 142.

We have a good pattern for adding praise to prayer. Hereof see *The Guide to go to God, or An Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, Sec. 238.

Of this phrase, *for ever and ever*, see Chap. i. 8, Sec. 108.

Such is the extent of these words, *for ever and ever*, as they imply, that glory is due to God beyond the continuance of this world, which shall have an end. Therefore as we must ever give glory to God in all those respects which have been declared in *The Whole Armour of God*, Treat. 3, Part 2, Sec. 72, so our desire must go beyond our own time here on earth. Our desire must be, that glory may be given to God by our posterity, generation after generation; yea, that glory may be given to him after this world is ended, everlastingly.

This word, *Amen*, compriseth under it the substance of the prayer and praise that goeth before it, and is a ratification of every particular branch in both of them.

Hereof see more in *The Guide to go to God, or An Explanation of the Lord's Prayer*, Sec. 241, &c.

Sec. 178. *Of the resolution of Heb. xiii. 20, 21.*

Ver. 20. *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,*

21. *Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

The sum of these two verses is, in one word, *prayer*.

Wherein we have,

1. An expression of the prayer.
2. A ratification thereof, in this word, *Amen*.

Of the prayer there are two parts:

1. Petition.
2. Praise.

In the petition there is,

1. A description of the person to whom it is made, ver. 20.

2. A declaration of the substance thereof.

The person called upon is described,

1. By his goodness, in this phrase, *the God of peace*.
2. By his greatness.

This is set out by an act of his almighty power.

Herein is noted,

1. The kind of act, *brought again from the dead*.
2. The object on whom it was wrought.

He is described,

1. By his dominion over us, *our Lord*.
2. By his name, *Jesus*, which setteth him out a Saviour.

3. By a special function.

This is set out,

1. By the kind of it.

2. By the ground of it.

The kind of function is,

1. Set out by a metaphor of a *shepherd*.

2. It is illustrated by the correlative, *sheep*, and by the excellency of it, *great*.

The ground of the foresaid function is a covenant ;] Which is amplified,

1. By the means of ratifying it, *blood*.

2. By the continuance of it, *everlasting*.

The substance of the prayer setteth out,

1. The matter desired.

2. The means of effecting it.

1. The matter is propounded.

2. Expounded.

In propounding the matter is expressed,

1. The main thing desired, *make you perfect*.

2. The object thereof in this word, *work*. Amplified,

(1.) By the quality, *good*.

(2.) By the extent, *every*.

In expounding the matter is set down,

1. The rule, *God's will*.

2. Obedience thereto, *to do*.

In setting down the means of effecting what is desired, is declared,

1. The kind of means, *God's working* in them.

2. The subject-matter which he worketh, *that which is well-pleasing*. Amplified,

1. By the sincerity thereof, *in his sight*.

2. By the mediator in whom it is effected, *through Jesus Christ*.

In the form of praise is noted,

1. The kind of praise, *glory*.

2. The person to whom given, *to whom*.

3. The continuance, *for ever and ever*.

Sec. 179. *Of observations raised out of Heb. xiii.* 20, 21.

I. *Prayer is to be made by such as desire others' prayers*. This ariseth from the inference of this prayer upon the apostle's desire of others to pray for him. See Sec. 162.

II. *God is the author of peace*. In this respect he is styled the *God of peace*. See Sec. 163.

III. *God can raise from the dead*. Here is a particular instance given thereof. See Sec. 164.

IV. *Christ was raised from the dead*. This is that particular instance that is here given. See Sec. 164.

V. *The Son of God was raised from the dead by the Father*. For this mighty work is here attributed to the Father in reference to his Son. See Sec. 164.

VI. *Christ is a Lord*. This title is here given unto him. See Sec. 165.

VII. *Christ is in special the Lord of believers*. Such are comprised under this correlative, *our*. See Sec. 165.

VIII. *Christ is a Saviour*. This title, *Jesus*, imports as much. See Sec. 165.

IX. *Christ is a shepherd*. So is he here styled. See Sec. 166.

X. *Christ is the chiefest of all shepherds*. In this respect he is styled the *great shepherd*. See Sec. 168.

XI. *Christ is in special the shepherd of the church*. They that are of the church are here styled the *sheep*, of whom Christ is a shepherd. See Sec. 169.

XII. *That which Christ undertakes for the church is by virtue of covenant*. This phrase, *through the covenant*, being inferred upon this office of Christ, *shepherd*, gives proof hereof. See Sec. 170.

XIII. *The new covenant hath no date*. It is here said to be *everlasting*. See Sec. 170.

XIV. *The covenant is ratified by Christ's blood*. To demonstrate this truth, *blood* is here attributed to the covenant. See Sec. 170.

XV. *Perfection may be prayed for*. The apostle prayeth God to make them *perfect*. See Sec. 172.

XVI. *Good works are to be done*. The apostle prayeth that they may do them. See Sec. 172.

XVII. *Every good work is to be endeavoured after*. So much is here intended, under this indefinite particle, *every*. See Sec. 172.

XVIII. *God's will is man's rule*. To this end it is here set forth. See Sec. 173.

XIX. *To do God's will is to do a good work*. This clause, *to do his will*, is here brought in as a declaration of a good work. See Sec. 173.

XX. *God continueth to work in his saints*. This he doth after the beginning of their regeneration. Therefore, after he had prayed that they might do God's will, he addeth this means of doing it, *working in you*, which hath reference to God's continuing work. See Sec. 175.

XXI. *That which God worketh is well-pleasing to him*. Thus much is here plainly expressed. See Sec. 174.

XXII. *That which is well-pleasing to God is done as in his presence*. With respect thereunto. This is, *in his sight*. See Sec. 174.

XXIII. *Things are well-pleasing to God through Jesus Christ*. The inference of this phrase, *through Jesus Christ*, gives a proof of this point. See Sec. 176.

XXIV. *Glory is to be given to Christ*. This relative, *to whom*, hath especial reference to Christ. See Sec. 177.

XXV. *Everlasting praise is due to Christ*. This phrase, *for ever and ever*, imports as much. See Sec. 177.

XXVI. *What is prayed for must be believed*. The addition of *Amen* intends as much. See Sec. 177.

Sec. 180. *Of the apostle's earnest desire of his people's using their best endeavour*.

Ver. 22. *And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words*.

This English copulative, *and*, is in Greek the ordinary conjunction of opposition, *ὅτι*, *but*, which implieth that something is here wanting over and above that which he had declared before, which was, that God himself wrought in them that which was well-pleasing in his sight; but here he implieth that to God's work their endeavour must be added, see Chap. iv. 11, Sec. 63; as if he had said, Though God work in you every good work, yet you also must do that which belongeth unto you; you must *suffer the word of exhortation*.

This advice the apostle enforceth by a pithy and meek entreaty, thus, *παράκαλῶ, I beseech you*. This is the very same word that he used, Ver. 19, Sec. 158. There it was used on his own behalf. He there beseecheth them to pray for his own restoring; here he beseecheth them to do that which was needful and useful for themselves, even for their own spiritual edification.

Hereby he giveth instance, that ministers must be as careful to stir up people to seek their own good, as to seek the good of their ministers. He that on his own behalf earnestly desired his people to 'strive in prayer to God for him,' Rom. xv. 30, thus expresseth his earnest desire of them to seek their own spiritual good, 'I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God,' &c., Rom. xii. 1; and in another place, 'I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,' &c., 1 Cor. i. 10.

1. There lieth as great a charge upon ministers for the good of their people's souls as of their own souls, Ezek. iii. 17, 18, &c.

2. Herein they shall shew the sincerity and ardency of their affection towards their people, as he who said, 'My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved,' Rom. x. 1. And again, 'I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren,' Rom. ix. 3. Yea further, thus, 'I will very gladly spend and be spent for you,' 2 Cor. xii. 15.

3. They shall hereby get to themselves the greater comfort in this world, Phil. iv. 4, and the greater reward in the kingdom of heaven, Dan. xii. 3.

Blessed are they who are of the mind of this apostle, to beseech their people about those things which concern their spiritual edification and eternal salvation. See more hereof on Chap. vi. 11, Secs. 76, 77.

To enforce his earnest desire herein, he useth this affectionate title, *ἀδελφοί, brethren*. Hereof see Chap. iii. 1, Secs. 3, 4.

Sec. 181. *Of suffering the word of exhortation.*

That which the apostle earnestly beggeth of those Hebrews, is thus expressed, *suffer the word of exhortation*.

The noun, *παράκλησις*, translated *exhortation*, is derived from the verb, *παράκαλῶ*, which signifieth *beseech*. Hereof see Chap. vi. 18, Sec. 144.

It is sometimes translated 'consolation,' or 'comfort,' 2 Cor. i. 3, 4; and sometimes 'exhortation,' Rom. xii. 8. This phrase, *word of exhortation*, is used, Acts xii. 15. It is called, *λόγος παρακλήσεως*, *word of exhortation*, because exhortation useth to be given by word of mouth.

Here this phrase may be taken for all manner of instruction, whether information, direction, admonition, incitation, consolation, or any other the like.

The verb, *ἀνίστασθε*, translated *suffer*, is usually applied to such things as seem to a man's affection somewhat grievous, or distasteful; but yet in his judgment suffered or borne with. It is used of Christ's suffering the weaknesses and unbelief of his disciples; it was some grief unto him, yet he suffered them, and saith, 'How long shall I suffer you?' It is sometimes translated to 'endure,' 2 Tim. iv. 8. Sometimes to 'bear with,' Acts xviii. 14. Sometimes to 'forbear,' Eph. iv. 2. Here it implieth, that they were somewhat offended at the apostle's manner of instructing them, so as they did not so well take it as they should; or at least he feared that they might distaste it. For he had been both earnest and severe in his reproofs and exhortations. He intimateth, that they had 'forgotten the exhortation,' chap. xii. 5; that they had 'need of patience,' chap. x. 36; that 'their hands hung down, and their knees were feeble,' chap. xii. 12. But especially his apostolical severity is hinted, chap. vi. 1, 2, &c., and chap. x. 25, 26, &c. Thereupon he is in the close of this epistle very earnest with them, to *suffer the word of exhortation*.

This implieth a backwardness in people to receive that word which is delivered unto them, though it be for their own spiritual good. Prophets and apostles much complain hereof, Deut. xxix. 4, 2 Kings xvii. 14, 1 Cor. iv. 18, Phil. iii. 18.

This, therefore, is a very needful caution; and for making the right use thereof, people ought to be well persuaded of their ministers, of their good-will towards them; yea, and of their desire of their best good. They ought to be like the Thessalonians, who 'received the word which they heard, not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God,' 1 Thess. ii. 13.

Sec. 182. *Of the meaning of these words, 'I have written to you in few words.'*

The reason which the apostle renders to enforce his desire, is thus expressed, *for I have written a letter unto you in few words*.

This phrase, *I have written a letter*, is the interpretation of one Greek word, which is a compound. The simple verb, *στέλλω*, signifieth to *send*. The compound, *ἐπιστέλλω*, to *send to*, Mat. xxi. 34, 36. Now, because men by letters do use to send their mind to others, this word is used to set out a man's writing of a letter, and thus translated 'write,' Acts



xv. 20. A noun hence derived, *ἐπιστολή*, signifieth a *letter*, or an *epistle*, Col. iv. 16.

Of the word, *ὡς βραχυῶς*, translated, *in few words*, see Chap. ii. 7, Sec. 59.

This noun, *words*, is not expressed in the Greek, but necessarily understood, and well supplied.

The force of the apostle's reason may sundry ways be enforced; as,

1. Though his epistles were long—for it is the longest of all the apostle's epistles, except that to the Romans, and the first to the Corinthians—yet the exhortations of this epistle were but few; for it is spent for the most part in matters of doctrine; and in that respect they might the more patiently bear his exhortations.

2. His exhortations were but few and short, in comparison of their need; for he might have filled large treatises with his exhortations, if he had enlarged them according to their need. Now seeing he had so contracted himself, and called out such only as he thought most needful and useful, and comparatively were but few, they ought the more patiently to suffer them.

3. If the whole epistle be comprised under this phrase, *word of exhortation*, it is no very long one; but may very well be styled, *a few words*.

4. This direction may be given unto them in reference to the apostle's sermons, and the preaching of other ministers; as if he had intended that they should not content themselves with this bare epistle, which was but in few words, but also suffer the exhortations of their ministers, whether himself or others, because thereby they might more largely, and more pertinently, according to several occasions, be instructed and exhorted by their ministers from time to time. The apostle's epistles lay down a foundation, which was further to be built upon by the ministry of such as God from time to time should set over them.

Sec. 183. *Of the resolution and observations of Heb. xiii. 22.*

The sum of this verse is, a direction for profiting by the ministry of the word.

We may observe,

1. The inference of it upon that which went before, in this particle, *and*, or *but*.

2. The substance of it.

In the substance is set down,

1. The matter.

2. A motive to enforce it.

In the matter, there is considerable,

1. A thing desired.

2. The manner of desiring it.

The manner is first propounded; and that in two branches,

1. A mild request, *we beseech you*.

2. The thing desired.

Herein we may distinguish,

1. An act desired, *suffer*.

2. The subject of that desire, *the word of exhortation*.

The motive is taken from the brevity of that word which he would have them to suffer; for *I have written to you in few words*.

*Observations.*

I. *To God's work man's endeavour must be added.* He had before prayed that God would work in them. Here he requirerth an endeavour on their part. See Sec. 180.

II. *What ministers desire for themselves they must endeavour for their people.* He did before beseech them to pray for him, ver. 19. Here he beseecheth them to look to their own good. See Sec. 180.

III. *Directions are to be enforced with all mildness.* Here the apostle beseecheth that which he had power to command. See Sec. 180.

IV. *Ministers and people are as brethren.* So the apostle styleth here the people under his charge. See Sec. 180.

V. *To instructions exhortations are to be added.* The word, *exhortation*, implieth as much. See Sec. 180.

VI. *The word delivered by God's minister is with much patience to be received.* This word, *suffer*, intends as much. See Sec. 180.

VII. *A minister pressing only such things as are most necessary, should make people the more to regard them.* See Sec. 182.

VIII. *Larger exhortations out of brief fundamental points, are patiently to be endured.* These two last points arise out of the last words of the verse. See Sec. 182.

Sec. 184. *Of sending true news.*

Ver. 23. *Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.*

The apostle doth here in the close of his epistle insert a matter of good news; which he thus bringeth in, *γινώσκετε, know ye*. Hereby he giveth to understand, that the news was true: and upon his word they might know it and rest upon it. In this sense, saith Christ, 'Know that it is near,' Mat. xxiv. 33. To like purpose saith the apostle, 'I would have you know,' 1 Cor. xi. 3. And again, 'I have sent unto you, that ye might know our affairs,' Eph. vi. 22. To this purpose words of credence are added unto knowledge, as 'indeed,' John vii. 26; 'assuredly,' Acts ii. 37; 'perfectly,' 1 Thess. v. 2; yea, also 'certainty,' Luke i. 4. And these two words, *believe* and *know*, are joined together, 1 Tim. iv. 3.

The news therefore which Christians send to others must be such as those others may know to be such: they must be sure and certain.

According to the news that are sent, people use to be

affected. When tidings came to the ears of the church concerning the conversion of the Gentiles: and that they were assured thereof by Barnabas, they were glad, Acts xi. 22, 23. On the other side, when news was brought to Nehemiah, of the affliction of the Jews in Jerusalem, he was much dejected, and much humbled his soul in prayer for them, Neh. i. 3, 4. This being the disposition of God's people, to be so affected with the news that they hear, according to the kind thereof, if it should not be true, they might be brought to mock God: and that by rejoicing and praising God in cases wherein there is just cause of deep humiliation: and also to be made sorrowful and humbled, when there is cause of rejoicing and praising God.

This affordeth a good direction to those that are forward in sending news, especially about church affairs, that they send such news as they to whom they send may know it to be so and so.

#### Sec. 185. Of this name *Timotheus*.

The news that was sent, was concerning the delivery of *Timothy*.

*Timotheus*, Τιμόθεος, is a name that savoureth of much piety. The former part of the name, *τιμή*, signifieth *precious* or *glorious*. The latter part of the name, *θεός*, signifieth *God*. So as the joining of them together may signify one *precious* or *glorious* to God: or otherwise it may signify one to whom God was precious or glorious. It was a name that was given to many of the heathens. It was the name of a great conqueror at Athens, and of an Athenian comedian, and of a musician, and of an excellent engraver, and of a skilful grammarian. We read also of *Timotheus*, a captain of the host of the heathen against the Jews, 1 Macc. v. 11.

I will not inquire after the first occasion of this name. It is a name well befitting Christians: and it may be that the mother of this Timothy, who is mentioned in my text, being a Jewess, and professing the Christian faith, Acts xvi. 1, 2 Tim. i. 5, might give this name unto him in pious devotion. Of giving fit names, see *Domestic Duties*, Treat. 6, Of the Duties of Parents, Sec. 20.

#### Sec. 186. Of *Timothy's* being set at liberty.

About this news, the delivery of Timothy, five questions are moved:

1. Who this Timothy was.
2. Where he was bound or other ways restrained.
3. How he was set at liberty.
4. At what time this might be.
5. Why this apostle called him *brother*.

To the first. Questionless he was that man to whom St Paul directed two epistles: even he whose mother was a Jewess and his father a Greek, whom Paul suffered to be circumcised, to prevent offence that the Jews might otherwise have taken. Him, while he

was a young man, Paul took to go forth with him, Acts xvi. 1, 3. It is said of this Timothy, that he ministered to Paul, Acts xix. 24—that is, he accompanied Paul, Acts xx. 4, and went, and returned, and abode where Paul would have him. He is styled Paul's 'work-fellow,' Rom. xvi. 21. Frequent mention is made in Paul's epistles of sending *Timotheus* hither and thither upon messages to the churches, as 1 Cor. iv. 17, Phil. ii. 19, 1 Thess. iii. 2. Yea, St Paul joins the names of Timothy with his own in sundry epistles that he wrote to the churches, as 2 Cor. i. 1, Phil. i. 1, Col. i. 1, 1 Thess. i. 1, Philem. 1; and he left him at Ephesus, where was a great church, there to water what he himself had planted, and to order the affairs of that church, 1 Tim. i. 3.

All these shew that he was a minister of the gospel, of very special note, and of singular use to the church of God: so as his liberty must needs be good news to God's church.

2. To the second. We cannot find either in the book of the Acts, or in any of the epistles where this should be; but sure it is that he was some way or other restrained: otherwise the apostle would not have said that he was set at liberty. The Greek word, ἀποδεκαήμερον, used by the apostle, is a compound. The simple verb, *λύω*, signifieth to *loose* or *unloose*, Mark i. 7. This compound signifieth to *loose from* a thing. It is used of putting away a man's wife, Mat. i. 15, and v. 31; of dismissing a company, Mat. xiv. 15; of releasing a prisoner, Mat. xxvii. 15; of the soul's departure from the body, Luke ii. 29; of forgiving a debt, Luke vi. 37; of loosing from an infirmity, Luke xiii. 12. All these shew that the verb here used doth signify some restraint from which Timothy was now freed. While he was restrained he could not, as a freeman, do the work of his ministry, nor go hither or thither for the church's service. Therefore upon this liberty and freedom the apostle implieth that he would come to them.

3. To the third, How he was set at liberty. There are many ways whereby it might be effected: for,

(1.) He might be restrained upon some accusation about civil affairs; but upon examination of the case be found not guilty: as Paul, concerning whom they said, 'This man doth nothing worthy of death,' Acts xxvi. 31.

(2.) He might be restrained for something about the Christian profession; but when the case came to be heard, the judge finding it to be a question thereabouts, might say as Gallio did, 'I will be no judge of such matters,' Acts xviii. 15, and so set him free.

(3.) There might be some prudent man among his judges, such a one as Gamaliel was, and he a means of his liberty, Acts v. 40. Or God might stir up some faithful friend for him, such a one as Ebedmelech was to Jeremiah, Jer. xxxviii. 8, &c. Many other ways might be for effecting his liberty: so as though the particular be not set down in Scripture, we may

and ought to believe the general, that he was set at liberty.

4. To the fourth, When he was delivered. This question is the rather moved, because many are of opinion that the restraint and liberty here intended was after Paul's death, yea, and after the Acts of the Apostles were written. But this would make too much against the divine authority of this epistle, which maketh mention hereof. It hath been proved that this epistle was penned by Paul: so as this must be in the time of Paul's life, and before Paul himself was imprisoned at Rome. It was while Timothy was in the strength of his age, and might do most service to the church of God.

5. To the fifth, Why Paul called Timothy *brother*. This question is moved, because Paul called Timothy *son*, 1 Tim. i. 2, 18, 2 Tim. i. 2; thereupon they do infer, that either Paul was not the author of this epistle, or that this was not that Timothy to whom Paul sent his epistles. But this is a very slender objection, for in these epistles he wrote to him as one that had a kind of charge over him; and partly in regard of their age (Paul being an old man, and Timothy a young man), partly in regard that Paul had been a means of Timothy's regeneration, he calls him *son*. But at other times and in other epistles he joins Timothy with himself in sending his epistles to the churches, and calleth him *brother*, as 2 Cor. i. 1, Phil. i. 1, Col. i. 1, 1 Thess. i. 1, and iii. 2. He styles him *brother* for honour's sake: and to make the church to have him in higher account: yea, and to testify the humility of his own mind, how he esteemed all ministers of the church, young or old, brothers, equal to himself in regard of the general function of a minister.

By this instance of Timothy's being set at liberty, it is evident that ministers may be restrained of their liberty, and restored again to their liberty, see Ver. 19, Sec. 159.

Sec. 187. *Of ministers' desire to be present with their people.*

Upon the forementioned news of Timothy's liberty, the apostle inferreth this consequence, *with whom I will see you*.

*Quest.* How could this apostle promise to see them, seeing it is implied that he was restrained of liberty? Ver. 19, Sec. 159.

*Ans.* 1. He might have sure evidence of his liberty.

2. He might promise it by divine instinct.

3. He might promise it upon reserved condition, if he should be set at liberty.

This manner of expressing his mind, *I will see you*, is not upon such a peremptory resolution of his own power to do it, as is condemned, James iv. 13, but upon an intended submission to the will of God; for true believers have that in their minds, whether

they express it or no. This apostle did oftentimes in plain terms express that condition, as where he said, 'I will return again unto you, if God will,' Acts xviii. 21; and, 'I will come unto you shortly, if the Lord will,' 1 Cor. iv. 19. The phrase of my text implieth an earnest desire of the apostle to be with these Hebrews. God had made him a means of their conversion unto the Christian faith, and of their edification therein; and this put into him an entire affection of doing yet further all the good he could.

It was shewed, Ver. 19, Sec. 159, that people ought to be earnestly desirous of the presence of their ministers among them. Here we see a like earnest desire of a minister to be present with his people. 'I long to see you,' saith the apostle, Rom. i. 11. He there rendereth an especial reason thereof, in these words, 'That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift.' By the presence of ministers with the people, they may the better discern their people's condition, and know what instructions, what admonitions, what consolations are most needful for them, or useful unto them.

If an apostle, who had a general charge over many churches, did thus desire to see such particular churches as he had planted, how much more ought special and peculiar pastors, that have the charge of one only congregation, be present therewith, and watchful over the same! How doth this condemn non-residency!

Sec. 188. *Of ministers associating themselves one with another.*

The apostle was not only desirous to see the Hebrews himself, but also to bring Timothy with him. Thus much is intended under this phrase, *with whom*; for this relative hath reference to Timothy.

1. It appeareth that Timothy had been sometime with these Hebrews before, and, as an evangelist, had watered that seed which their first planter had sown, and, through God's blessing on his labour, drawn the hearts of the Hebrews to him, which made the news of his liberty to be the more joyful unto them. This apostle, therefore, to increase their joy the more, is desirous to bring Timothy in his company to them. Both the one and the other were restrained, and, therefore, the sight of them both must needs increase their joy.

2. The apostle would go in company with him, that, as occasion was offered, he might use his ministry and service, either in tarrying longer with the Hebrews than the apostle himself could, or in sending him to some other church upon some special employment.

3. The apostle is desirous to go with him, that it might appear they two agreed in the same faith, and consented in the same doctrine; whereby the churches might be the further confirmed and edified

therein. For this end the apostle oft joined him with him in the inscription of sundry of his epistles, as 2 Cor. i. 1, Phil. i. 1, Col. i. 1, 1 Thess. i. 1, 2 Thess. i. 1.

Great is the benefit of ministers' mutual consent, and the manifestation of the same by associating themselves together, and accompanying one another as occasion serveth. It is expressly noted that Christ sent out his seventy disciples 'two and two,' Luke x. 1; and that the apostles 'sent Peter and John to Samaria,' Acts viii. 14; and that 'the Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them,' Acts xiii. 2. When upon occasion Paul and Barnabas departed asunder, Paul chose Silas to go along with him, Acts xv. 40.

As agreement and consent is very commendable and graceful among all Christians, so especially among ministers of the word; and it is more earnestly to be endeavoured after, and more carefully to be manifested.

It is here further observable, that there was great difference many ways betwixt Paul and Timothy, and that in years, in function, in esteem of the churches.

1. Paul was an aged man when Timothy was a young man, 1 Tim. iv. 12.

2. Paul was an apostle and a planter of churches; Timothy but an evangelist and a waterer of what Paul had planted, 1 Cor. iii. 6, 2 Tim. iv. 5.

3. Paul was counted a father by the churches; Timothy but an instructor, 1 Cor. iv. 15, 17. Notwithstanding these differences, Paul here speaks of him as of an equal with him; and gives him the title of brother, and maketh it a matter of as great joy to the church, that Timothy should come to them, as that himself should come. This is a worthy precedent for ministers.

Sec. 189. *Of preferring the substance before circumstance.*

In the promise of the apostle's coming to see the Hebrews with Timothy, this caution is inserted, *ὡς ἂν ἔρχῃται, if he come shortly.*

The Greek adverb, *ῥᾶν*, translated *shortly*, is the very same that is translated 'sooner,' Ver. 19, Sec. 159.

By this caution it appeareth that Timothy was not at that time present with this apostle; but he shortly expected him.

If there should fall out any occasions of keeping the apostle and Timothy one from the other (as that Timothy upon his delivery should again be restrained, or importuned there to abide with some Christians, or upon weighty occasions go to another place), the apostle would not for want of his company be kept from the Hebrews.

This circumstance, therefore, much amplifieth the apostle's desire of seeing the Hebrews. He was

very loath to go without Timothy, and greatly desirous of his company; yet herein he had rather deny his own mind and desire about Timothy than about seeing the Hebrews.

Of the two desires this latter was the more weighty. This was the main substance of his desire. The other, concerning Timothy's company, was but a circumstance. He would not, therefore, suffer a circumstance to hinder the substance. If both might stand together he accounted it the best; but howsoever, he meant himself to see the Hebrews. Nay, he would not suffer the foresaid circumstance of Timothy's company to procrastinate or put delay to his coming; and therefore saith, *if he come shortly*. It is a point of wisdom well to discern things that differ; and to prefer the things that are most needful and useful.

Sec. 190. *Of the resolution and observations of* Heb. xiii. 23.

Ver. 23. *Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you.*

The sum of this verse is, a declaration of good news.

Hereof are two parts:

1. The kind of news.
2. The consequence following thereupon.

In the kind of news is expressed,

(1.) The evidence of it, in this phrase, *know ye*.

(2.) The substance of it. Wherein is declared,

1. The person whom it concerneth. He is described,

(1.) By his name, *Timothy*.

(2.) By his relation, *our brother*.

2. The benefit, *is set at liberty*.

In the consequence there is,

1. A promise.

2. A caution.

In the promise, the persons whom it concerns, which are,

1. He that promiseth, *I*.

2. He for whom he engaged, *with whom*.

The thing promised is in these words, *will see you*.

The caution is in this phrase, *if he come shortly*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Good news is to be made known.* This ariseth out of the general sum of the first part of the verse. See Sec. 184.

II. *News is to be told upon sure grounds.* So as they to whom the news is sent may know it. See Sec. 184.

III. *Significant names are commendable.* Such a name was *Timothy*. See Sec. 185.

IV. *Ministers are brethren.* The apostle saith in reference to this Timothy, *our brother*. See Sec. 186.

V. *Ministers may be restrained of liberty.* This is here implied, in that he was *set at liberty*. See Sec. 186.

VI. *Ministers restrained may be set at liberty.* This is plainly expressed. See Sec. 186.

VII. *Faithful ministers desire to be present with their people.* This made this apostle to promise to see these Hebrews. See Sec. 187.

VIII. *Good ministers will associate themselves together.* This ariseth from this phrase, *with whom.* See Sec. 188.

IX. *Circumstances must not hinder a substance.* This is gathered out of this caution, *if he come shortly.* See Sec. 189.

Sec. 191. *Of salutation.*

Ver. 24. *Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.*

The apostle, upon testification of his desire to see them, manifesteth his inward entire affection and good-will towards many among them, yea, towards them all, by saluting them; for salutation is a manifestation of the good-will of one to another.

Our English word is taken from the Latin, *salutare*; which signifieth to wish for health or safety.

The Greek word, *ἀσπάζεσθαι*, translated *salute*, properly signifieth to embrace; and so it is translated, Acts xx. 1, Heb. xi. 13.

Men use to salute one another in presence, and in absence.

In presence, by words or gesture. This phrase, 'when ye come into an house, salute it,' Mat. x. 12, implieth a wishing well unto it; for it is thus expounded, 'Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house,' Luke x. 5.

By gesture one salutes another, when they kiss one another, 2 Cor. xiii. 12, 1 Thess. v. 26; or stretch out their hands and arms one towards another; or bow the knee, or put off the hat, or use other like gestures, according to the custom of the country. These were such greetings as the Pharisees affected, Mat. xxiii. 7.

In absence, one salutes another by message or writing. By message, when one is sent to another for that purpose; by writing, in a letter or otherwise.

Here the apostle salutes in and by a letter.

This doth justify and commend the like practice amongst Christians; and that not only in absence, as here, but also in presence, as in other places.

As they who salute testify their good-will to others, so they that are saluted may take notice thereof, and thereby be moved, as occasion is offered, to give testimony of their good-will also.

Mutual amity is hereby continued and increased.

Christians also do hereby grace their profession. Their spirits also are thus the more quickened to call upon God one for another; and likewise to praise God in one another's behalf. So as Christianity doth not take away common duties of courtesy.

Sec. 192. *Of saluting them that have the rule in the church of God.*

The persons saluted, are first, in particular, thus

expressed, *all them that have the rule over you.* The same word, *ἐγκειμένους*, is here used that was before used, Ver. 7, Sec. 96, and Ver. 17, Sec. 148. It was in those places proved that ministers of the word were especially comprised under this phrase.

It is further inferred from this general particle, *πάντας*, *all*, that not only ministers of the word, but other rulers also, or governors, whose office in the church is to be helpers unto ministers of the word in well governing the church. This interpretation may very well stand.

In that the apostle by name setteth down these, and that in the first place, it giveth evidence of his special respect to them, and of his desire to have them take notice thereof; and withal of his desire that all to whom he wrote should take special notice of them to obey them, as was shewed, Ver. 17, Sec. 148.

Sec. 193. *Of a minister's equal respect to all saints.*

The apostle thought it not enough to testify his good-will to the church governors among the Hebrews, by saluting all them, but also giveth evidence of his like good-will to *πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους*, *all the saints*, by saluting all them also.

Who are to be accounted saints hath been shewed, Chap. 6, 10, Sec. 71. All that professed the Christian faith, and were thereupon members of the visible church, go under this title.

As the title *saints*, so this general particle *all*, giveth proof of the apostle's impartial respect. Though for honour's sake he set the governors in the first place, yet the whole church and the several members thereof were in his heart. He did bear an inward good-will towards them; and he was desirous that that his inward good-will should be made known to them by saluting them; even all of them of what rank or degree soever they were. In a like extent doth the apostle manifest his impartial respect to another church, thus, 'To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints,' Rom. i. 7. Whether they were governors or subjects, great or mean, rich or poor, male or female, husbands or wives, parents or children, masters or servants, if they were saints, they were all in a spiritual respect alike to him. For 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; all are one in Christ Jesus,' Gal. iii. 28.

Of ministers' impartial respect to every one of their charge, see Chap. vi. 11, Sec. 78.

Besides the apostle useth the general phrase, *all the saints*, that is, all professors, because he could not distinguish betwixt such as were close hypocrites and upright. Hereby also he taketh away occasion of making any to think that he thought better of others than of them. To conclude, hereby he sheweth his love to them all, and his desire of the good of them all.

Sec. 194. *Of faithfulness in declaring the salutations of others.*

The apostle, having commended to them his own salutation, presenteth also the salutations of others in these words, *they of Italy salute you.*

Italy is one of the fairest regions in Europe. There are many very famous cities in that region: as Rome, Venice, Naples, Florence, Genoa, and sundry others. There were churches in many parts of Italy. It may be that there was a church of the Jews in that part of Italy where the apostle was when he wrote this epistle; and that he might mean them especially. Or if they were converted Gentiles, they were such as bore good-will to these Hebrews, and rejoiced in this, that the Hebrews embraced the Christian faith, and thereupon desire that their good-will to the Hebrews might be testified, which is to salute them. Without all question they were such Christians as well knew the Hebrews, and whom the Hebrews well knew, and thereupon the apostle thus sets them down indefinitely, *they of Italy.*

This testifieth the apostle's faithfulness in performing that which was committed to his charge. Others desired him to commend their good-will to the Hebrews; and this he doth in this word, *salute you.* The like is done concerning sundry particular persons by name, Rom. xvi. 21, &c., 1 Cor. xvi. 19, &c.

This is the rather to be noted, because many exceedingly fail in this point of faithfulness. Friends desire to have their love commended to their friends in absence, by such as write or go to them, who clean neglect to perform that Christian duty of love.

If an apostle made conscience of performing this duty, surely it is a duty whereof all Christians ought to make conscience.

Sec. 195. *Of the analysis of, and observations from, Heb. xiii. 24.*

Ver. 24. *Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.*

The sum of this text is in one word, salutations.

These are of two sorts:

1. Such as are sent by the author of this epistle himself.

2. Such as are sent from others.

In the former branch are set down,

1. The salutation itself, *salute.*

2. The persons saluted. These are of two sorts:

1. Them that were governors.

2. The saints.

Both these are amplified by their extent, in this general particule, *all.*

In the latter branch are set down,

1. The point, *salute.*

2. The persons, which are of two sorts:

1. Saluting, *they of Italy.*

2. Saluted, in this particule, *you.*

*Doctrines.*

I. *Christian salutations are commendable.* An apostle saluteth.

II. *Church governors are especially to be respected.* They are here first saluted.

III. *All sorts of governors are to be respected.* For all of them are here saluted.

IV. *Saints are to be respected.* They are also here saluted.

V. *All sorts of saints are equally to be respected.* He saluteth all the saints.

VI. *Christians are to salute one another.* They of Italy were Christians, and they who were saluted were Christians.

VII. *Salutations sent must answerably be performed.* So doth the apostle here. He maketh known to the Hebrews those who saluted them.

Sec. 196. *Of the apostle's conclusion of his epistle.*

Ver. 25. *Grace be with you all. Amen.*

This verse sets down the conclusion of this epistle. It is a conclusion which St Paul constantly useth in every epistle. Hereupon he himself thus saith, 'The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, so I write; the grace of our Lord,' &c. Sometimes it is set down more succinctly, as thus, 'Grace be with you,' Col. iv. 18, 1 Tim. vi. 21, 2 Tim. iv. 22. And 'Grace be with you all,' as here, and Tit. iii. 15. Sometimes more largely, as, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you,' 1 Thess. v. 28; and 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,' Rom. xvi. 24. 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit,' Gal. vi. 18, Philem. 25. And 'Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,' Eph. vi. 24. The fullest expression hereof is this, 'The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen,' 2 Cor. xiii. 14. This form, therefore, of salutation or benediction is for the most part used by ministers in dismissing their people from public assemblies.

By *grace* is here meant the free favour of God, which compriseth under it all manner of blessings, as hath been shewed, Chap. ii. 9, Sec. 78, and Chap. iv. 16, Secs. 96, 97.

Under this word, *grace*, he compriseth all manner of blessing which may be a fruit of the free favour of God towards them. As he desireth all good that may be needful for them and useful to them, so he desireth that it may flow out to them from the original fountain, which indeed will make every blessing sweet and comfortable unto them, and will make all rebound to their eternal happiness. This is the grace here especially meant.

Grace is also put for every gift freely wrought in us by the Spirit of God. The apostle doth thus

expressly distinguish these two, 'The grace of God, and the gift by grace,' Rom. v. 15.

The former is in God; the latter is wrought in us. The former is the fountain and root of all good, the latter is the fruit and stream that sprouteth out and floweth forth from the said root and fountain. The former is styled by the schools *gratia gratum faciens*, 'grace which makes us accepted:' the latter, *gratia gratis data*, 'grace freely given;' under which all those graces which fit and qualify us for glory are comprised.

This latter kind of grace may also by consequence be implied as flowing from the former.

Thus this salutation or benediction is very comprehensive. It containeth whatsoever may make to their true happiness, and it giveth evidence of his ample and large desire of their good.

This phrase, *μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν*, *with you all*, intendeth their participation of the foresaid grace, and also a continuance thereof. That is *with* one, which he hath and enjoyeth; yea, that which abideth with him and is never from him: so as this is a great amplification of his foresaid good-will towards them, and desire of their good.

Yet further is this illustrated by this universal particle, *all*, which giveth further evidence of his impartial respect to every one of them, whereof see Ver. 24, Sec. 193.

Of *Amen*, see Ver. 21, Sec. 177.

Sec. 197. *Of the resolution of, and observations from, Heb. xiii. 25.*

Ver. 25. *Grace be with you all. Amen.*

The sum of this verse is, an apostolical benediction. Hereof are two parts:

1. The kind of benediction.
  2. The ratification thereof, in this word, *Amen*.
- In the kind of benediction there is set down,
1. The kind desired, *grace*.
  2. The parties for whom. These are,

1. Implied, under this phrase, *with you*.
2. Amplified, in this general particle, *all*.

*Doctrines.*

I. *Discourses are to be ended with benedictions.* This is gathered out of this conclusion of the apostle's epistle.

II. *God's favour is especially to be prayed for.* This is intended under this word, *grace*.

III. *Grace is to be prayed for on others' behalf.* The apostle prayeth for it in the behalf of those to whom he wrote.

IV. *Blessing is to be desired for all sorts of saints.* These are they that are comprised under this word, *all*.

V. *What is prayed for must be believed.* This is that which is intended under this title of ratification, *Amen*.

Sec. 198. *Of the postscript.*

*Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy.*

This postscript cannot be imagined to be added by the apostle that penned this epistle, for it is contrary to sundry passages therein, such as these:

1. It is promised in this epistle that Timothy should come to them, namely, after the epistle was sent, ver. 23. How then could it be sent by Timothy?

2. Timothy was not with the apostle when he sent this epistle, for he looked that he should come shortly to him. This epistle then was not sent by him.

3. The apostle promised to come himself with Timothy: how can we then think that he would send him before him with this epistle?

4. It is not probable that the apostle would date his epistle from a large region as Italy was, but rather from some church, or town, or city therein.

We may from these premises infer that this postscript is no part of canonical Scripture.

The like have sundry expositors on other epistles observed concerning postscripts added to them.

# AN ALPHABETICAL INDEX

OF THE MOST MATERIAL POINTS CONTAINED IN THIS COMMENT.

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