

Sermon 1

Sermon 2

Sermon 3

Sermon 4

Sermon 5

Sermon 6

Sermon 7

3. You who have love to God, keep it flaming upon the altar of your heart. Love, as fire, will be ready to go out, Rev. ii. 4. 'Thou hast left thy first love.' Through neglect of duty, or too much love of the world, our love to God will cool. O preserve your love to God: as you would be careful to preserve the natural heat in your body, so be careful to preserve the heat of love to God. Love is like oil to the wheels, it quickens us in God's service. When you find your love abate and cool, use all means for quickening: when the fire is going out, you throw on fuel: when the flame of love is going out, make use of the ordinances as sacred fuel to keep the fire of your love burning.

## OF THE PREFACE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

EXOD. xx. 1, 2. *And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, &c.*

Qu. XLII. *WHAT is the preface to the Ten Commandments?*

*Ans.* The preface to the Ten Commandments is, 'I am the Lord thy God.'

Where observe, 1. The preface to the preface, 'God spake all these words, saying,' 2. The preface itself to the commandments, 'I am the Lord thy God.'

I begin with the first, the preface to the preface, 'God spake all these words, saying,' &c. This is like the sounding of a trumpet before a solemn proclamation, [*God spake*] other parts of the Bible are said to be uttered by the mouth of the holy prophets, Luke i. 70. but here God spake in his own person.

Q. *How may we understand this [God spake] he hath no bodily parts or organs of speech?*

*Ans.* God made some intelligible sound, or formed a voice in the air, which was to the Jews as God's very speaking to them. In the text, 1. The lawgiver, God, [*God spake.*] 2. The law itself, [*all these words.*]

1. The lawgiver, [*God spake.*] There are two things requisite in a lawgiver. *First*, Wisdom. Laws are founded upon reason; and he must be wise that makes laws. God, in this respect, is most fit to be a lawgiver; 'he is wise in heart,' Job ix. 4. he hath a monopoly of wisdom, 1 Tim. i. 17. 'The only wise God.' Therefore he is the fittest to enact and constitute laws. *Secondly*, The second thing requisite in a lawgiver

is, authority. If a subject make laws, though never so wise, yet they want the stamp of authority. God hath the supreme power in his hand ; he derives a being to all ; and he who gives men their lives, hath most right to give them their laws.

2. The law itself [*all these words :*] that is, all the words of the moral law, which is usually styled the decalogue or ten commandments. It is called the moral law, because it is the rule of life and manners. St. Chrysostom compares the scripture to a garden, the moral law is a chief flower in it ; the scripture is a banquet, the moral law the chief dish in it.

(1.) The moral law is perfect. Psal. xix. 7. ‘ The law of the Lord is perfect.’ It is an exact model and platform of religion ; it is the standard of truth, the judge of controversies, the pole star to direct us to heaven, Prov. vi. 23. ‘ The commandment is a lamp.’ Though the moral law be not a Christ to justify us, yet it is a rule to instruct us.

(2.) The moral law is unalterable ; it remains still in force. Though the ceremonial and judicial law are abrogated, yet the moral law delivered by God’s own mouth is to be of perpetual use in the church. Therefore the law was written in tables of stone, to shew the perpetuity of it.

(3.) The moral law is very illustrious and full of glory. God did put glory upon it, in the manner of the promulgation of it. 1. The people, before the moral law was delivered, were to wash their clothes, Exod. xix. 10. Whereby, as by a type, God required the sanctifying of their ears and hearts to receive the law. 2. There were bounds set, that none might touch the mount, Exod. xix. 12. which was to breed in the people reverence to the law. 3. God wrote the law with his own finger, Exod. xxxi. 18. which was such an honour put upon the moral law, as we read of no other written. God did by some mighty operation make the law legible in letters, as if it had been written with his own finger. 4. God’s putting the law in the ark to be kept, was another signal mark of honour put upon it. The ark was the cabinet in which God put the ten commandments, as ten jewels. 5. At the delivery of the moral law, there was the attendance of many angels, Deut. xxxii. Here was a parliament of angels called, and God himself was the speaker.

*Use 1.* Here we may take notice of God’s goodness, who hath not left us without a law : therefore the Lord doth often set it down as a demonstration of his love, in giving his commandments, Ps. cxlvii. 20. ‘ He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments they have not known them.’ Neh. ix. 13. ‘ Thou gavest them true laws, good statutes and commandments.’ What a strange creature would man be, if he had no law to direct him ? There would be no living in the

world ; we should have none born but Ishmaels, every man's hand would be against his neighbour. Man would grow wild, if he had not affliction to tame him, and the moral law to guide him. The law of God is an hedge to keep us within the bounds of sobriety and piety.

*Use. 2.* If God spake all these words of the moral law, then it condemns, 1<sup>st</sup>, The Marcionites, and Manichees, who speak slightly, yea blasphemously of the moral law : they say, it is below a Christian, it is carnal ; which the apostle confutes, when he saith, ' The law is spiritual, but I am carnal.' Rom. vii. 14. 2<sup>dly</sup>, The Antinomians, who will not admit the moral law to be a rule to a believer. We say not he is under the curse of the law, but the commands, we say not the moral law is a Christ, but it is a star to lead one to Christ ; we say not it doth save, but it doth sanctify. They who cast God's law behind their backs, God will cast their prayers behind his back : they who will not have the law to rule them, shall have the law to judge them. 3<sup>dly</sup>, The Papists, who (as if God's law were imperfect, and when he spake all these words, he did not speak enough) add their canons and traditions to the moral law. This is to tax God's wisdom, as if he knew not how to make his own law. And surely it is an high provoking sin, Rev. xxii. 18. ' If any man shall add to these words, God shall add unto him the plagues written in this book.' As it is a great evil to add any thing to a man's sealed will, so much more to add any thing to that law God himself spake, and wrote with his own fingers.

*Use. 3.* If God spake all these words, viz. of the moral law, then this preffeth upon us several duties : 1. If God spake all these words, then we must hear all these words ; the words which God speaks are too precious to be lost. As we would have God hear all our words when we pray, so we must hear all his words when he speaks. We must not be as the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears : he that stops his ears when God cries, shall cry himself, and not be heard.

2. If God spake all these words, then we must attend to them with reverence. Every word of the moral law is an oracle from heaven ; God himself is the preacher ; this calls for reverence. If a judge gives a charge upon the bench, all attend with reverence. In the moral law God himself gives a charge, ' God spake all these words : ' Therefore, with what veneration should we attend ? Moses put off his shoes from his feet, in token of reverence, when God was about to speak to him, Exod. iii. 5, 6.

3. If God spake all these words of the moral law, then we must remember them. Sure all God speaks is worth remembering ; those words are weighty which concern salvation, Deut. xxxii. 47. ' It is not a vain thing for you because it is your

life.' Our memory should be like the chest in the ark, where the law was kept : God's oracles are ornament, and shall we forget them ? Jer. ii. 2, 32. ' Can a maid forget her ornament ?'

4. If God spake all these words, then believe them. See the name of God written upon every commandment. The heathens, that they might gain credit to their laws, reported that they were inspired by the gods at Rome. The moral law fetcheth its pedigree from heaven : *ipse dixit*, God spake all these words. Shall we not give credit to the God of heaven ? How would the angel confirm the woman in the resurrection of Christ, Mat. xxviii. 7. ' Lo, (saith he) I have told you ;' I speak in the word of an angel. Much more should the moral law be believed, when it comes to us in the word of God. ' God spake all these words.' Unbelief enervates the virtue of God's word, and makes it prove abortive, Heb. iv. 2. ' The word did not profit, not being mixed with faith.' Eve gave more credit to the devil when he spake, than she did to God.

5. If God spake all these words, then love the commandments, Pf. cxix. 97. ' O how love I thy law ? it is my meditation all the day.' ' Consider how I love thy precepts,' Pf. cxix. 159. The moral law is the copy of God's will, our spiritual directory, it shews us what sins to avoid, what duties to pursue : the ten commandments are a chain of pearls to adorn us, they are our treasury to enrich us ; they are more precious than lands of spices, or rocks of diamonds, Pf. cxix. 72. ' The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver.' The law of God hath truth and goodness in it, Neh. ix. 13. Truth, for God spake it ; and goodness, for there is nothing the commandment enjoins, but is for our good : O then let this command our love.

6. If God spake all these words, then teach your children the law of God, Deut. vi. 7. ' These words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children.' He who is godly, is both a diamond and a loadstone ; a diamond for the sparkling of his grace ; and a loadstone, for his attractive virtue in drawing others to the love of God's precepts, *vir bonus magis aliis prodest quam sibi*. You that are parents, discharge your duty : though you cannot impart grace to your children, yet you may impart knowledge. Let your children know the commandments of God, Deut. ix. 19. ' Ye shall teach them to your children.' You are careful to leave your children a portion ; leave the oracles of heaven with them ; instruct them in the law of God : if God spake all these words, you may well speak them over again to your children.

7. If God spake all these words, then the moral law must be obeyed : if a king speaks, his word commands allegiance ; much

more, when God speaks, all his words must be subscribed to. Some will obey partially, obey some commandments, not others; like a plough, which when it comes to a stiff piece of earth, makes a baulk: but God that spake all the words of the moral law, will have all obeyed: God will not dispense with the breach of one law. Indeed princes, for special reasons, dispense sometimes with penal statutes, and will not take the severity of the law: but God, who spake all these words, binds men with a *subpana* to yield obedience to every law. This condemns the church of Rome, who instead of obeying the whole moral law, blot out one commandment, and dispense with others.

1. They leave out the second commandment out of their catechises, because it makes against images; and to fill up the number of ten, they divide the tenth commandment into two. Thus they run themselves into that dreadful premunire, Rev. xxii. 19. 'If any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.'

2. As they blot out one commandment, and cut that knot which they cannot untie: so they dispense with other commandments; they dispense with the sixth commandment, making murder meritorious, in case of propagating the catholic cause: they dispense with the seventh commandment, wherein God forbids adultery; the Pope dispenseth with the sin of uncleanness, yea, incest, only paying such fines and sums of money into his coffer. No wonder the Pope takes men off from their loyalty to kings and princes, when he teacheth them disloyalty to God. Some of the papists say expressly in their writings, that the Pope hath power to dispense with the laws of God, and can give men a licence to break the commandments of the Old and New Testament. That such a religion ever get foot in England, the Lord in mercy prevent. If God spake all the commandments, then we must obey all; he who breaks this hedge of the commandments, a serpent shall bite him.

Obj. *But what man alive can obey all God's commandments?*

Ans. To obey the law in a legal sense. *viz.* to do all the law requires, no man alive can; sin hath cut the lock of original righteousness, where our strength lay: but, in a true gospel-sense, we may so obey the moral law, as to find acceptance. Which gospel obedience consists in a real endeavour to observe the whole moral law, Ps. cxix. 166. 'I have done thy commandments:' Not, I have done all I should do, but I have done all I am able to do; and wherein our obedience comes short, we look up to the perfect righteousness and obedience of Christ, and hope for pardon through his blood: this is evangelically to obey the moral law; which, though it be not to satisfaction, yet it is to acceptance. Thus I have done with the first, the preface to the preface, 'God spake all these words:' I should

now come to the second, the preface itself to the commandments, 'I am the Lord thy God,' &c.

---

EXOD. XX. 2. *I am the Lord thy God, &c.*

II. THE preface itself, which consists of three parts : 1. 'I am the Lord thy God : 2. Which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt ; 3. Out of the house of bondage.'

First, *I am the Lord thy God*. Where we have a description of God ; 1. By his essential greatness, 'I am the Lord ;' 2. By his relative goodness, 'thy God.' 1st, By his essential greatness, 'I am the Lord,' or, as it is in the Hebrew, JEHOVAH. This great name God sets forth his majesty. *Sanctus habitum fuit*, saith Buxtorf. The name of Jehovah was had in more reverence among the Jews than any other name of God ; it signifies God's self-sufficiency, eternity, independency, immutability, Mal. iii. 6.

Use 1. If God be Jehovah, the fountain of being, who can do what he will ; let us fear this great Lord, Deut. xxviii. 58. 'That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, *Jehovah*.'

Use 2. If God be Jehovah, the supreme Lord ; then it condemns the blasphemous papists, who speak after this manner, *Our Lord God the Pope*. It is a wonder the pope lifts his triple crown above the head of kings and emperors, when he usurps God's title, 'shewing himself that he is God ?' 2 Thess. ii. 4. The pope goes to make himself Lord of heaven, for he will canonize saints there ; Lord of earth, for with his keys he doth bind and loose whom he pleaseth : Lord of hell, for he can free men out of purgatory : but God will pull down these plumes of pride ; he will consume 'this man of sin with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming,' 2 Thess. ii. 8.

2dly, God is described by his relative goodness, 'thy God :' had God only called himself Jehovah, it might have terrified us, and made us flee from him ; but when he saith, 'thy God,' this may allure and draw us to him : this, tho' a preface to the law, is pure gospel. This word *Elæka*, 'thy God,' is so sweet, that we can never suck out all the honey in it. 'I am thy God,' not only by creation, but by election. This word, 'thy God,' though it was spoken to Israel, yet it is a charter belongs to all the saints. For the further explication, here are three questions.

Q. 1. *How God comes to be our God ?*

Ans. Through Jesus Christ. Christ is a middle person in the Trinity : he is *Emmanuel*, 'God with us :' he brings two different parties together ; he makes our nature lovely to God, and God's nature lovely to us : he, by his death, causeth friend-

ship, yea, union : he brings us within the verge of the covenant, and so God becomes our God.

Q. 2. *What doth this imply God being our God ?*

Ans. It is comprehensive of all good things : God is our strong tower ; our fountain of living water ; our salvation. More particularly, God being our God implies the sweetest relation.

1. The relation of a father, 2 Cor. vi. 18. ‘ I will be a father unto you ; ’ a father is full of tender care for his child ; whom doth he settle the inheritance upon, but his child ? God being our God, will be a father to us ; a ‘ Father of mercy,’ 1 Cor. i. 3. ‘ The everlasting Father,’ Isa. ix. 7. If God be our God, we have a Father in heaven that never dies.

2. It imports the relation of a husband, Isa. liv. 5. ‘ Thy Maker is thy husband.’ If God be our husband, he esteems us precious to him, as the apple of his eye, Zech. ii. 8. He imparts his secrets to us, Psal. xxv. 18. He bestows a kingdom upon us for our dowry, Luke xii. 32.

Q. 3. *How may we come to know this covenant-union, that God is our God ?*

Ans. 1. By having his grace planted in us. King’s children are known by their costly jewels ; It is not having common gifts, which shews we belong to God ; many have the gifts of God without God ; but it is grace gives us a true genuine title to God. In particular, faith is *vinculum unionis* the grace of union ; by this we may spell out our interest in God. Faith doth not, as the mariner, cast its anchor downwards, but upwards ; it trusts in the mercy and blood of God, and trusting in God, engageth him to be our God ; other graces make us like God, faith makes us one with him.

2. We may know God is our God, by having the earnest of his Spirit in our hearts, 2 Cor. i. 22. God often gives the purse to the wicked, but the Spirit only to such as he intends to make his heirs. (1.) Have we had the consecration of the Spirit ? If we have not had the sealing work of the Spirit, have we had the healing work ? 1 John ii. 20. ‘ Ye have an unction from the holy One.’ The Spirit, where it is, stamps the impress of its own holiness upon the heart : it embroiders and bespangles the soul, and makes it all glorious within. (2.) Have we had the attraction of the Spirit ? Cant. i. 4. ‘ Draw me, we will run after thee.’ Hath the Spirit, by its magnetic virtue, drawn our hearts to God ? Can we say, as Cant. i. 7. ‘ O thou whom my soul loveth ! ’ Is God our paradise of delight ? Our *Segullah*, or chief treasure ! Are our hearts so chained to God, that no other object can enchant us, or draw us away from him ? (3.) Have we had the elevation of the Spirit ? Hath it raised our hearts above the world ? Ezek. iii. 14. ‘ The Spirit lifted me up.’

Hath the Spirit made us *suprema an helare*, seek the things above where Christ is? Though our flesh is on earth, is our heart in heaven? though we live here, trade we above? Hath the Spirit thus lifted us up? By this we may come to know, that God is our God: where God gives his Spirit for an earnest, there he gives himself for a portion.

3. We may know God is our God, if he hath given us the hearts of children. Have we obediential hearts? Psal. xxvii.

8. Do we subscribe to God's commands, when his commands cross our will? A true saint is like the flower of the sun, it opens and shuts with the sun: he opens to God, and shuts to sin. If we have the hearts of children then God is our father.

4. We may know God is ours, and we have an interest in him, by our standing up for his interest. We will appear in his cause, and vindicate his truth, wherein his glory is so much concerned. Athanasius was the bulwark of truth; he stood up for it, when most of the world were Arians. In former times the nobles of Polonia, when the gospel was read, did lay their hands upon their swords, signifying that they were ready to defend the faith, and hazard their lives for the gospel: no better sign of our having an interest in God, than by our standing up for his interest.

5. We may know God is ours, and we have an interest in him, by his having an interest in us, Cant. ii. 16. 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.' When God saith to the soul, 'Thou art mine;' the soul answers, 'Lord, I am thine:' all I have is at thy service; my head shall be thine, to study for thee; my tongue shall be thine to praise thee. If God be our God by way of donation, we are his by way of dedication: we live to him, and are more his than we are our own. And thus we may come to know that God is our God.

*Use* 1. Above all things let us get this great charter confirmed, That God is our God: Deity is not comfortable without propriety. *Tolle meum, et tulle Deum*, Aug. O let us labour to get sound evidences, that God is our God: we cannot call health, liberty, estate ours; O let us be able to call God ours, and say as the church, Psal. lxxvii. 6. 'God, even our own God shall bless us.' Let every soul here labour to pronounce this *Shibboleth*, 'My God.' And that we may endeavour after this to have God for our God; consider, (1.) The misery of such as have not God for their God: in how sad a condition are they, when an hour of distress comes? this was Saul's case, 1 Sam. xxviii. 13. 'I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and the Lord is departed from me.' A wicked man, in time of trouble, is like a vessel tossed on the sea without an anchor, it falls on rocks or sands: a sinner, not having God to be his God, tho' he makes a shift while health and

estate last, yet, when these crutches, which he leaned upon are broken, his heart sinks. It is with a wicked man, as it is with the old world, when the flood came; the waters at first came to the valleys, but then the people would get to the hills and mountains, but when the waters came to the mountains, then there might be some trees on the high hills, and they would climb up to them: ay, but then the waters did rise up to the tops of the trees: now all hopes of being saved were gone, their hearts failed them. So it is with a man that hath not God to be his God: if one comfort be taken away, he hath another: if he lose a child, he hath an estate: ay, but when the waters rise higher, death comes and takes away all; now he hath nothing to help himself with, no God to go to, he must needs die despairing. (2.) How great a privilege it is to have God for our God? Psal. cxliv. 15. 'Happy are the people whose God is the Lord.' *Beatitudo hominis est Deus*, Aug. That you may see the privilege of this charter;

1. If God be our God, then, though we may feel the stroke of evil, yet not the sting. He must needs be happy, who is in such a condition, that nothing can hurt him: if he lose his name, it is written in the book of life; if he lose his liberty, his conscience is free; if he lose his estate, he is possessed of the pearl of price; if he meets with storms, he knows where to put in for harbour; God is his God, and heaven is his haven.

2. If God be our God, then our soul is safe. The soul is the jewel, it is a blossom of eternity, Dan. vii. 15. 'I was grieved in the midst of my body;' in the Chaldee it is in the midst of my sheath. The body is but the sheath; the soul is the princely part of man, which sways the sceptre of reason; it is a celestial spark, as Damascene calls it. If God be our God, the soul is safe, as in a garrison; death can do no more hurt to a virtuous heaven-born soul, than David did to Saul, when he cut off the lap of his garment: the soul is safe, being hid in the promises; hid in the wounds of Christ; hid in God's decree. The soul is the pearl, and heaven is the cabinet where God will lock it up safe.

3. If God be our God, then all that is in God is ours: the Lord saith to a saint in covenant, as the king of Israel to the king of Syria, 1 Kings xx. 4. 'I am thine, and all that I have.' So saith God, 'I am thine:' how happy is he who not only inherits the gift of God, but inherits God himself? All that I have shall be thine; my wisdom shall be thine, to teach thee; my power shall be thine, to support thee; my mercy shall be thine, to save thee. God is an infinite ocean of blessedness, and there is enough in him to fill us: if a thousand vessels be thrown into the sea, there is enough in the sea to fill them.

4. If God be our God, he will entirely love us: propriety is

the ground of love. God may give men kingdoms, and not love them; but he cannot be our God, and not love us: he calls his covenanted saints, *Jediduth Naphshi*, 'The dearly beloved of his soul,' Jer. xii. 7. 'He rejoiceth over them with joy, and rests in his love,' Zeph. iii. 17. They are his refined silver, Zech. xiii. 9. His jewels, Mal. iii. 17. His royal diadem, Isa. lxii. 3. He gives them the cream and flower of his love: he not only opens his hand and fills them, Psal. cxlv. 17. but opens his heart and fills them.

5. If God be our God, he will do more for us than all the world besides can. What is that? (1.) He will give us peace in trouble: when a storm without, he will make music within. The world can create trouble in peace, but God can create peace in trouble: he will send the Comforter, who, as a dove, brings an olive-branch of peace in his mouth, John xiv. 16. (2.) God will give us a crown of immortality: the world can give a crown of gold, but that crown hath thorns in it, and death in it: but God will give 'a crown of glory that fadeth not away,' 1 Pet. v. 4. The garland made of the flowers of paradise never withers.

6. If God be our God, he will bear with many infirmities: God may respite sinners a while, but long forbearance is no acquittance; he will throw them to hell for their sins; but if God be our God, he will not for every failing destroy us; he bears with his spouse as with the weaker vessel: God may chastise, Psal. lxxxix. 32. He may use the rod and the pruning-knife, but not the bloody axe, Numb. xxiii. 21. 'He hath not seen iniquity in Jacob:' he will not see sin in his people, so as to destroy them; he sees their sins so as to pity them: he sees them as a physician sees a disease in his patient, to heal him, Isa. lvii. 18. 'I have seen his iniquities, and I will heal him.' Every failing doth not break the marriage-bond asunder. The disciples had great failings, they all forsook Christ, and fled; but this did not break off their interest in God; therefore, saith Christ, at his ascension, 'Tell my disciples, I go to my God and to their God.'

7. If God be once our God, he is so for ever, Psal. xlviii. 14. 'This God is our God for ever and ever.' Whatever worldly comforts we have, are but for a season, Heb. xi. 25. we must part with all. As Paul's friends did accompany him to the ship, and there left him, Acts xx. 28. so all our earthly comforts will but go with us to the grave, and there leave us. You cannot say you have health, and shall have it for ever; you have a child, and shall have it for ever; but if God be your God, you shall have him for ever; 'This God is our God for ever and ever.' If God be our God, he will be a God to us as long as he is a God: 'You have taken away my gods,' saith Micah,

Judges xviii. 24. But it cannot be said so to a believer, that his God is taken away; he may lose all things else, but cannot lose his God. God is ours from everlasting in election, and to everlasting in glory.

8. If God be our God, we shall enjoy all our godly relations with him in heaven. The great felicity on earth, is to enjoy relations; a father sees his own picture in a child; a wife sees a piece of herself in her husband, we plant the flower of love among our relations, and the loss of them is like the pulling of a limb from the body. But if God be ours, with enjoying God we shall enjoy all our pious relations in glory. The gracious child shall see his godly father, the virtuous wife shall see her religious husband in Christ's arms; and then there will be a dearer love to relations than ever was before, though in a far different manner; then relations shall meet and never part: 'And so shall we be ever with the Lord.'



EXOD. xx. 2. *I am the Lord thy God, &c.*

To all such as can make out this covenant-union, it exhorts to several things.

I. If God be our God, let us improve our interest in him, cast all our burdens upon him; the burden of our fears, wants, sins, Psal. lv. 22. 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord.' Wicked men, who are a burden to God, have no right to cast their burden upon him; but such as have God for their God, are called upon to cast their burden on him. Where should the child ease all its cares, but in the bosom of its parent? Judges xix. 26. 'Let all thy wants lie upon me.' So God seems to say to his children, Let all your wants lie upon me. Christian, what doth trouble thee? thou hast a God to pardon thy sins, to supply thy wants: therefore roll your burden on the Lord, 1 Pet. v. 7. 'Casting all your care on him.' Whence are Christians so disquieted in their minds? they are taking care, when they should be casting care.

II. If God be our God, let us learn to be contented, though we have the less other things. Contentment is a rare jewel, it is the cure of care. If we have God to be our God, well may we be contented: 'I know whom I have believed,' 2 Tim. i. 12. There was Paul's interest in God, 2 Cor. vi. 10. 'As having nothing, yet possessing all:' there was his content. That such who have covenant-union with God may be filled with contentation of spirit, consider what a rich blessing God is to the soul.

1. God *bonum sufficiens*, a sufficient good. He who hath

God, hath enough. If a man be thirsty bring him to the ocean, and he is satisfied; in God there is enough to fill the heaven-born soul: 'He gives grace and glory,' Psal. lxxxiv. 11. There is in God not only a sufficiency, but a redundancy; he is not only full as a vessel, but as a spring. Other things can no more fill the soul, than a mariner's breath can fill the sails of a ship: but in God is a *cornucopia*, an infinite fulness; he hath enough to fill the angels, therefore enough to fill us. The heart is a triangle, which only the Trinity can fill.

2. God is *bonum sanctificans*, a sanctifying good. 1. He sanctifies all our comforts, and turns them into blessings. Health is blessed, estate is blessed; he gives with the venison a blessing, Psal. cxxxii. 15. 'I will abundantly bless her provision.' He gives us that life we have *tanquam arrabo*, as an earnest of more. He gives us the little meal in the barrel, as an earnest of the royal feast in paradise. 2. He sanctifies all our crosses: they shall not be destructive punishments, but medicines; they shall corrode and eat out the venom of sin, they shall polish and refine our grace. The more the diamond is cut, it sparkles the more. God's stretching the strings of his viol, is to make the music better.

3. God is *bonum selectum*, a choice good. All things *sub sole*, are but *bona scabelli*, as Austin, the blessings of the footstool; but to have God himself to be ours, is the blessing of the throne. Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines, but he settled the inheritance upon Isaac, Gen. xxv. 4. 'Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac.' God may send away the men of the world with gifts, a little gold and silver; but, in giving us himself, he gives us the very quintessence, his grace, his love, his kingdom: here is the crowning blessing.

4. God is *bonum summum*, the chief good. In the chief good there must be, *First*, delectability, it must have something that is delicious and sweet: and where can we suck those pure quintessential comforts, which ravish us with delight, but in God? *In Deo quadam dulcedine delectatur anima, imo rapitur*; 'At God's right hand are pleasures,' Psal. xvi. 11. *Secondly*, In the chief good there must be transcendency, it must have a surprising excellency. Thus God is infinitely better than all other things; it is below the Deity to compare other things with it. Who would go to weigh a feather with a mountain of gold? God is *fons et origo*, the spring of all entities, and the cause is more noble than the effect. It is God that bespangles the creation, that puts light into the sun, that fills the veins of the earth with silver; creatures do but maintain life, God gives life. God infinitely outshines all sublunary glory; he is better than the soul, than angels, than heaven. *Thirdly*, In the chief good, there must be not only fulness, but variety; where va-

riety is wanting, we are apt to nauseate; to feed only on honey, would breed loathing; but in God is all variety of fulness, Col. i. 19. He is an universal good, commensurate to all our wants; he is *bonum in quo omnia bona*, a son, a portion, an horn of salvation: he is called the 'God of all comfort,' 2 Cor. i. 3. There is a complication of all beauties and delights in him: health hath not the comfort of beauty, nor beauty of riches, nor riches of wisdom; but God is the God of all comfort. *Fourthly*, In the chief good there must be eternity. God is a treasure that can neither be drawn low, nor drawn dry. Though the angels are still spending on him, he can never be spent; he abides for ever. Eternity is a flower of his crown. Now, if God be our God, here is enough to let in full contentment into our souls. What tho' we want torch-light, if we have the sun? what if God deny us the flower, if he hath given us the jewel? how should this rock a Christian's heart quiet? if we say God is our God, and we are not content, we have cause to question our interest in him.

III. If we can clear up this covenant-union, that God is our God, let this cheer and revive us in all conditions. To be content with God, is not enough, but to be cheerful. What greater cordial can you have, than union with Deity; when Jesus Christ was ready to ascend, he could not leave a richer consolation with his disciples than this, 'Tell them, I go to my God and their God,' John xx. 17. Who should rejoice, if not they, who have an infinite, all-sufficient, eternal God to be their portion, who are as rich as heaven can make them? what though I want health? I have God, who is the health of my countenance, and my God, Psal. xlii. 11. What though I am low in the world? if I have not the earth, I have him that made it. The philosopher comforted himself with this, though he had no music or vine trees, yet here are the household-gods with me: so, though we have not the vine or fig-tree, yet we have God with us. I cannot be poor, saith St. Bernard, as long as God is rich: for his riches are mine. O let the saints rejoice in this covenant-union! To say God is ours, is more than to say heaven is ours; heaven would not be heaven without God. All the stars cannot make day without the sun; all the angels, those morning-stars, cannot make heaven without Christ the Sun of righteousness. And as to have God for our God is matter of rejoicing in life; so especially it will be at our death. Let a Christian think thus, I am going to my God. A child is glad when he is going home to his father. This was Christ's comfort, when he was leaving the world, John xx. 17. 'I go to my God.' And this is a believer's death-bed cordial, I am going to my God; I shall change my place, but not my kindred; I go to my God and my Father.

IV. If God be our God, then let us break forth into doxology and praise, Psal cxviii. 28. 'Thou art my God, and I will praise thee.' O infinite, astonishing mercy, that God should take dust and ashes into so near a bond of love as to be our God! As Micah said, Judges xviii. 24. 'What have I more?' so, what hath God more? what richer jewel hath he to bestow upon us than himself? what hath he more? That God should put off most of the world with riches and honour, that he should pass over himself to us by a deed of gift, to be our God, and by virtue of this settle a kingdom upon us; O let us praise him with the best instrument, our heart; and let this instrument be screwed up to the highest peg; let us praise him with our whole heart. See how David riseth by degrees, Ps. xxxii. 11. 'Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, and shout for joy.' [*Be glad,*] there is thankfulness; [*Rejoice,*] there is chearfulness; [*Shout*] there is triumph. Praise is called incense, because it is so sweet a sacrifice. Let the saints be choristers in God's praises. The deepest springs yield the sweetest water; the more deeply sensible we are of God's covenant-love to us, the sweeter praises we should yield. We should begin here to eternize God's name, and do that work on earth which we shall be always doing in heaven, Ps. cxlvi. 2. 'While I live, will I praise the Lord.'

V. Let us carry ourselves as those who have God to be our God; that is, when we walk so, that others may see there is something of God in us. Live holily; what have we to do with sin? is it not this, that if it doth not break, yet it will weaken the interest? Hos. xiv. 8. 'What have I to do any more with idols?' So should a Christian say, God is my God; what have I to do any more with sin, with lust, pride, malice! bid me commit sin! as well bid me drink poison; shall I forfeit my interest in God? Let me rather die, than willingly offend him, who is the crown of my joy, the God of my salvation.



### Exod. xx. 2. *The Land of Egypt, &c.*

THE second part of the preface, 'Who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.' Egypt and the house of bondage are the same; only they are presented to us under a different expression, or notion. I begin with the first expression, 'Who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt.'

Q. *Why doth the Lord mention this deliverance of Israel out of Egypt.*

Ans. 1. Because of the strangeness of the deliverance. God delivered his people Israel by strange signs and wonders, by

fending plague after plague upon Pharaoh, blasting the fruits of the earth, killing all the first-born in Egypt, Exod. xii. 29. And when Israel marched out of Egypt, God made the waters of the sea to part, and become a wall to his people, while they went on dry ground; and as he made the sea a causeway to Israel, so a grave to Pharaoh and his chariots. Well might the Lord mention his bringing them out of the land of Egypt, because of the strangeness of the deliverance; God wrought miracle upon miracle, for their deliverance.

2. God mentions Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, because of the greatness of the deliverance. God delivered Israel from the pollutions of Egypt; Egypt was a bad air to live in, it was infected with idolatry; the Egyptians were gross idolaters, they were guilty of that which the apostle speaks of, Rom. i. 23. 'They changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.' The Egyptians worshiped, instead of the true God, *First*, corruptible man, they deified their king Apis, forbidding all, under pain of death, to say that he was a man. *2dly*, They were worshippers of birds, they worshipped the hawk. *3dly*, They were worshippers of beasts, they worshipped the ox: thus they made the image of a beast to be their god. *4thly*, They were worshippers of creeping things, they worshipped the crocodile, and the Indian mouse. Therefore God mentions this as a memorable and signal favour to Israel, that he brought them out of such an idolatrous country; 'I brought thee out of the land of Egypt.'

The thing I would note is this, That it is no small blessing to be delivered from places of idolatry. God speaks of it no less than ten times in the Old Testament, 'I brought you out of the land of Egypt;' an idolatrous place. Had there been no iron furnace in Egypt, yet there being so many altars there and false gods, it was a great privilege to Israel to be delivered out of Egypt. Joshua reckons it among the chief and most memorable mercies of God to Abraham, that he brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham's ancestors served strange gods, Josh. xxiv. 2, 3. 'It is well for the plant that is set in a bad soil, to be transplanted to a better, where it may grow and flourish; so, when any are planted among idolaters, it is a mercy when they are removed and transplanted into Zion, where are the silver-drops of God's word to make them grow in holiness.

*Qu. Wherein doth it appear that it is such a great blessing to be delivered from places of idolatry?*

*Ans.* It is a great mercy, because our nature is so prone to idolatry. Israel began to be defiled with the idols of Egypt, Ezek. xxiii. 3. Dry wood is not more prone to take fire, than

our nature is to idolatry. The Jews made cakes to the queen of heaven, that is the moon. Jer. vii. 18.

Qu. *Whence is it that we are so prone to idolatry?*

Ans. 1. Because we are led much by visible objects, and love to have our senses pleased. Men naturally fancy a god that they may see; though it be such a god that cannot see them, yet they would see it. The true God is invisible; this makes the idolater worship something that he may see.

2. It is a mercy to be delivered from idolatrous places, because of the greatness of the sin of idolatry. It is giving that glory to an image, which is due to God. All divine worship God doth appropriate to himself; it is a flower of his crown: the fat of the sacrifice God laid claim to, Lev. iii. 3. Divine worship is the fat of the sacrifice, which God reserves for himself. The idolater devotes this worship to his idol, which the Lord will by no means endure, Isa. xlii. 8. 'My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.' Idolatry is spiritual adultery, Ezek. xxiii. 37. 'With their idols have they committed adultery.' To worship any other than God, is to break wedlock: this makes the Lord disclaim his interest in a people, Hos. ii. 2. 'Plead with your mother, plead, she is not my wife.' And Exod. xxxii. 7. 'Thy people have corrupted themselves;' no more my people, but thy people. God calls idolatry blasphemy, Ezek. xx. 27, 31. 'Thus your fathers have blasphemed me.' Idolatry is devil-worship, Deut. xxxii. 17. 'They sacrificed to devils, not unto God; to new gods:' These new gods were old devils, Lev. xvii. 7. 'And they shall no more offer their sacrifice unto devils;' the Hebrew word *Lafhegnirim*, is the hairy ones, because the devils were hairy, and appeared in the forms of satyrs and goats. How dreadful a sin is idolatry; and what a signal mercy is it to be snatched out of an idolatrous place, as Lot was snatched by the angels out of Sodom?

3. It is a mercy to be delivered out of idolatrous places, because idolatry is such a silly, irrational religion, I may say, as Jer. viii. 9. 'What wisdom is in them?' Is it not folly to refuse the best, and choose the worst? The trees in the field of Jotham's parable, despised the vine-tree which cheers both God and man, and the olive which is full of fatness, and the fig-tree which is full of sweetness, and chose the bramble to reign over them; this was a foolish choice, Judg. ix. so, for us to refuse the living God, who hath power to save us, and to make choice of an idol, that hath eyes and sees not, feet, but walks not, Ps. cxv. 6. What a prodigy of madness is this? Therefore, to be delivered from committing such folly, is a mercy.

4. It is a mercy to be delivered from idolatrous places, because of the sad judgments inflicted upon idolaters. This is a

fin which enrageth God, and makes the fury come up in his face, Ezek. xxxviii. 18. Search through the whole book of God, and you shall find no fin God hath followed with more plagues than idolatry, Pf. xvi. 4. 'Their sorrows shall be multiplied, that hasten after another god.' Pf. lxxviii. 58, 59. 'They moved him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard this he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel;' ver. 60. 'So that he forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh.' Shiloh was a city belonging to the tribe of Ephraim; there God set his name, Jer. vii. 12. But, for their idolatry God forsook that place, gave his people up to the sword, caused his priests to be slain, his ark to be carried away captive, and it never returned to Shiloh any more. How severe was God against Israel for worshipping the golden calf? Exod. xxxii. 27. The Jews say, that in every misery that befalls them, there is *uncio aurei vituli*, an ounce of the golden calf in it, Rev. xviii. 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' Idolatry lived in, cuts men off from heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 9. So then it is no small mercy to be delivered out of idolatrous places.

*Use 1.* See the goodness of God to our nation, who hath brought us out of mystical Egypt, delivering us from popery, which is Romish idolatry, and hath caused the light of his truth to break forth gloriously among us. In former times, and more lately in the Marian days, England was overspread with idolatry; we worshipped God after a false manner; that is idolatry, not only to worship a false god, but the true God in a false manner. This was our case formerly, we had purgatory, indulgencies, the idolatrous mass, the Scriptures locked up in an unknown tongue, invocation of saints and angels, image-worship. Images are teachers of lies, Hab. ii. 18. Wherein do they teach lies? because they represent God in a bodily shape, whereas he cannot be seen, Deut. iv. 12. 'Ye saw no similitude, only ye heard a voice.' *Quod invisibile est, pingi, non potest*, Ambr. God cannot be pictured out by any finger? you cannot picture the soul, being a spirit; much less God, Isa. xl. 18. 'To whom then will ye liken God?' The papists say, they worship God by the image; which hath a great absurdity in it, for if it be absurd to bow down to the picture of a king, when the king himself is present, then much more to bow down to the image of God, when God himself is present, Jer. xxiii. 24. What is the popish religion, but a bundle of ridiculous ceremonies? their wax, flowers, *pixes agnes Dei*, cream and oil, beads, crucifixes: what are these but Satan's policy, to dress up a carnal worship, fitted to carnal minds? Oh what cause have we to bless God, for delivering us from popery! It was a mercy to be delivered from the Spanish invasion and the powder-treason; but a far

greater to be delivered from the popish religion, which would have made God give us a bill of divorce.

2. If it be a great blessing to be delivered from Egypt, popish idolatry; then it shews their sin and folly, who, being brought out of Egypt, are willing to return into Egypt again; having put off the yoke of Rome, would fain put it on again. The apostle saith, 'Flee from idolatry:' 1 Cor. x. 14. But these rather flee to idolatry: herein we are like the people of Israel, who, notwithstanding all the idolatry and tyranny of Egypt, yet longed to go back to Egypt, Numb. xiv. 4. 'Let us make a captain and return into Egypt.' But how shall they go back into Egypt? how shall they have food in the wilderness? will God rain down manna any more upon such rebels? how will they get over the red sea? will God divide the water again by miracle, for such as leave his service, and go into idolatrous Egypt? yet, say they, Let us make a captain. And are there not such spirits amongst us, who say, 'Let us make a captain and go back to Romish Egypt again? and if we do, what shall we get by it? I am afraid the leeks and onions of Egypt will make us sick.' Do we ever think, if we drink in the cup of fornication, we shall drink in the cup of salvation? O that any should so forfeit their reason, as to enslave themselves to the see of Rome! that they should be willing to hold a candle to a mass priest, and bow down to a strange god! let us not say, we will make a captain; but rather say as Ephraim, Hos. xiv. 8. 'What have I to do any more with idols?'

3. If it be a mercy to be brought out of Egypt, then it is not desirable or safe to plant one's self in an idolatrous place, where it may be a capital crime to be seen with a Bible in one's hand. Some for secular gain thrust themselves among idolaters, and think there is no danger to live where Satan's seat is: but do you pray God would not lead you into temptation, and do you lead yourselves? you are in great danger of being polluted: it is hard to be as the fish, which keeps fresh in salt waters. A man cannot dwell among the Blackmoors, but he will be discoloured; you will sooner be corrupted by idolaters, than they will be converted by you: Joseph got no good by living in an idolatrous court; he did not teach Pharaoh to pray, but Pharaoh taught him to swear, Ps. cvi. 35. They 'were mingled among the heathen, and served their idols.' I fear this hath been the undoing of many; they have seated themselves amongst idolaters, for advancing their trade, and at last have not only traded with them in their commodities, but in their religion.

*Uſe 2.* It is a mercy to be brought out of the land of Egypt, places which are defiled, and where sin reigns? then it reproaches such parents as shew little love to the souls of their children, whether it be in putting them out to service or match-

ing them. 1. In putting them out to service: their care is chiefly for their bodies, that they may be provided for, but care not what becomes of their souls; their souls are in Egypt, in houses where there is drinking, swearing, sabbath-breaking, and where God's name is every day dishonoured. 2. In matching their children, they look only at money, 2 Cor. vi. 24. 'Benot ye unequally yoked:' if their children be equally yoked for estate, they care not whether they be unequally yoked for religion: now, to such parents, 1. Think how precious the soul of your child is; it is immortal, it is capable of communion with God, and angels: and will you let this soul be lost, by placing it in a bad family? If you had an horse you loved, you would not put him into a stable with other horses that were sick and diseased; and do you not love your child better than your horse? 2. God hath intrusted you with the souls of your children, you have a charge of souls. God saith, as 1 Kings xx. 36. 'Keep this man; if he be missing, thy life shall go for his life.' So saith God, if the soul of thy child miscarry by thy negligence, his blood will I require at thy hand. Think of this, all ye parents; take heed of placing your children in Egypt, in a wicked family; do not put them in the devil's mouth: find out a sober, religious family, such a family as Joshua's, chap. xxiv. 15. 'I and my house will serve the Lord.' Such a family as Cranmer's which was *palæstra pietatis*, a nursery of piety: such a family as is a Bethel, of which it may be said, as Col. iv. 15. 'The church which is in his house.'

*Use 3.* Let us pray that God would keep our English nation from the defilements of Egypt, that it may not be again overspread with superstition and idolatry: O sad religion: not only to have our estates, our bodies enslaved, but our conscience: pray that the true protestant religion may still flourish among us, that the son of the gospel may still shine in our horizon. The gospel lifts a people up to heaven, it is *columna et corana regni*, the crown and glory of the kingdom: if this be removed, then *Ichabod*, the glory is departed. The top of the beech-tree being cut off, the whole body of the tree withers apace: the gospel is the top of all our blessings; if this top be cut, the whole body politic will soon wither. O pray that the Lord will continue the visible tokens of his presence among us, his ordinances, that England may be called, *Jehovah Shamamah*, 'The Lord is there,' Ezek. xlvi. 35. Pray that righteousness and peace may kiss each other, that so glory may dwell in our land.

EXOD. XX. 2. *Out of the House of Bondage.*

EGYPT and the house of bondage are the same, only they are expressed under a different notion. By Egypt is meant a place of idolatry and superstition; by the house of bondage is meant a place of affliction. Israel, while they were in Egypt, were under great tyranny; they had cruel task-masters set over them, who put them to hard labour, and set them to make brick, yet allowed them no straw; therefore Egypt is called the iron furnace, Deut. iv. 20. and here the house of bondage. From this expression, 'I brought thee out of the house of bondage,' two things are to be noted; 1. God's children may sometimes be under sore afflictions, 'In the house of bondage.' That God will, in his due time, bring them out of their afflicted state, 'I brought thee out of the house of bondage.'

1. God's children may sometimes be under sore afflictions, *In domo servitutis*, in the house of bondage: God's people have no writ of ease granted them, no charter of exemption from trouble in this life: while the wicked are kept in sugar, the godly are oft kept in brine. And indeed how could God's power be seen in bringing them out of trouble, if he did not sometimes bring them into it? or how should God wipe away the tears from their eyes in heaven, if on earth they shed none? doubtless God sees there is need that his children should be sometimes in the house of bondage, 1 Pet. i. 6. 'If need be, ye are in heaviness:' the body sometimes doth more need a bitter potion than a julap.

Qu. 1. *Why God lets his people be in the house of bondage, in an afflicted state?*

Ans. He doth it, 1. For probation or trial, Dent. viii. 16. 'Who led thee through that terrible wilderness, that he might humble thee and prove thee.' Affliction is the touch-stone of sincerity, Psal. xli. 10, 11. 'Thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us as silver: thou laidst affliction upon our loins.' Hypocrites may embrace the true religion in prosperity, and court this queen while she hath a jewel hung at her ear: but he is a good Christian who will keep close to God in a time of suffering, Psal. xli. 17. 'All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee;' to love God in heaven, is no wonder: but to love God when he chastiseth us, this discovers sincerity.

2. For purgation: to purge our corruption. *Ardet palea, purgatur aurum*, Isa. xxvii. 9. 'And this is all the fruit, to take away his sin.' The eye, though it be a tender part, yet when it is sore, we put sharp powders and waters into it, to eat out the pearl: though the people of God are dear to him, yet,

when corruption begins to grow in them, he will apply the sharp powder of affliction, to eat out the pearl in the eye. Affliction is God's flail to thresh off our husks; it is a means God useth to purge out sloth, luxury, pride and love of the world. 'God's furnace is in Zion,' Isa. xxxi. 5. This is not to consume, but to refine: what if we have more affliction, if by this means we have less sin.

3. For augmentation: to increase the graces of the Spirit: grace thrives most in the iron furnace; sharp frosts nourish the corn, so do sharp afflictions grace: grace in the saints is often as fire hid in the embers, affliction is the bellows to blow it up into a flame. The Lord makes the house of bondage a friend to our grace: now faith and patience act their part; the darkness of the night cannot hinder the brightness of a star: so, the more the diamond is cut, the more it sparkles; and the more God afflicts us, the more our graces cast a sparkling lustre.

4. For preparation: to fit and prepare the saints for glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. These stones which are cut out for a building, are first hewn and squared: the godly are called 'living stones,' 1 Pet. ii. 5. And God doth first hew and polish them by affliction, that they may be fit for the heavenly building: the house of bondage prepares for the house not made with hands, 2 Cor. v. 1. The vessels of mercy are seasoned with affliction, and then the wine of glory is poured in.

Qu. 2. *How do the afflictions of the godly differ from the afflictions of the wicked?*

Ans. 1. These are but castigations, those on the wicked are punishments: these come from a father, those from a judge.

2. Afflictions on the godly are fruits of covenant-mercy, 2 Sam. vii. 14. But afflictions on the wicked are effects of God's wrath, Eccl. v. 17. 'He hath much wrath with his sickness.' Afflictions on the wicked are the pledge and earnest of hell: they are like the pinioning of a malefactor, which doth preface his execution.

3. Afflictions on the godly make them better, but afflictions on the wicked make them worse: the godly pray more, Psal. cxxx. 1. The wicked blaspheme more, Rev. xvi. 9. 'Men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God.' Afflictions on the wicked make them more impenitent: every plague upon Egypt increased the plague of hardness in Pharaoh's heart. To what a prodigy of wickedness do some persons come after great sickness? affliction on the godly is like bruising of spices, which are more sweet and fragrant: affliction on the wicked is like stamping of weeds with a pebble, which makes them more unfavoury.

Use 1. It shews us, that we are not to wonder to see Israel in the house of bondage, 1 Pet. iv. 12. The holiness of the saints

will not excuse them from sufferings: Christ was the holy one of God, yet he was in the iron furnace: Christ's spouse is a lily among thorns, Cant. ii. 2. His sheep, though they have the ear-mark of election upon them, yet may have their wool fleeced off; the godly have some good in them, therefore the devil afflicts them; and some evil in them, therefore God afflicts them. While there are two seeds in the world, expect to be under the black rod. The gospel tells us of reigning, but first of suffering, 2 Tim. ii. 12.

2. It informs us, that affliction is not always the sign of God's anger: Israel, the apple of God's eye, a peculiar treasure to him above all people, Exod. xix. 5. yet these were in the house of bondage. We are apt to judge and censure them who are in an afflicted state. When the Barbarians saw the viper on Paul's hand, they said, 'No doubt this man is a murderer,' Acts xxviii. 4. so, when we see the viper of affliction fasten upon the godly, we are apt to censure them, and say, these are greater sinners than others, and God hates them: this rash censuring is for want of wisdom. Were not Israel in the house of bondage? Jeremiah in the dungeon? Paul a night and a day in the deep? God's afflicting is so far from evidencing hatred, that his not afflicting is, Hof. iv. 14. 'I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom.' *Deus maxime irascitur cum non irascitur*, Bern. God punisheth most when he doth not punish; his hand is heaviest when it seems to be lightest; the judge will not burn him in the hand whom he intends to execute.

3. If God's own Israel may be in the house of bondage, then afflictions do not of themselves demonstrate a man miserable. Indeed sin unrepented of, makes one miserable; but the cross doth not. If God had a design in afflicting his children, to make them happy, then they are not miserable; but God's afflicting them is to make them happy, therefore they are not miserable, Job. v. 17. 'Happy is the man whom God correcteth.' The world counts them happy, who can keep out of affliction; but the scripture calls them happy who are afflicted.

Qu. *How are they happy?*

Ans'. (1.) Because they are more holy, Heb. xii. 10. (2.) Because they are more in God's favour, Prov. iii. 12. The goldsmith loves his gold when in the furnace. (3.) Because they have more of God's sweet presence, Pl. xci. 15. And they cannot be unhappy that have God's powerful presence in supporting, his gracious presence in sanctifying their affliction. (4.) Because, the more affliction they have, the more degrees of glory they shall have: the lower they have been in the iron furnace, they shall sit upon the higher throne of glory: the heavier their crosses, the heavier shall be their crown. So then, if

afflictions makes a Christian happy, they cannot denominate him miserable.

4. See the merciful providence of God to his children : though they may be in the house of bondage, and smart by affliction, yet they shall not be hurt by affliction. What hurt doth the fan to the corn ? only separates the chaff from it : or the lance to the body ? only lets out the imposthume. The house of bondage doth that which sometimes ordinances will not do ; it doth humble and reform, Job xxxvi. 8, 11. ‘ If they be held in cords of affliction, he openeth their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.’ O what a merciful providence is this, though God bruise his people ; yet, while he is bruising them, he is doing them good ? as if one should throw a bag of money at another, and a little bruise him, yet it doth enrich him. Affliction enricheth the soul, and yields the sweet fruits of righteousness, Heb. xii. 11.

5. If Israel be in the house of bondage ; if the Lord deals so with his own children, then, how severely will he deal with the wicked ? if God be so severe with them he loves, how severe will he be with them he hates ? if it be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry ? if they that pray and mourn for sin be so severely dealt with, what will become of them that swear, and break the sabbath, and are unclean ? If Israel be in the iron furnace, the wicked shall lie in the fiery furnace of hell. It should be the saddest news to wicked men, to hear that the people of God are afflicted, let them think how dreadful will the case of sinners be, 1 Pet. iv. 17. ‘ Judgment must begin at the house of God ; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel ?’ If God thresh his wheat, he will burn the chaff, If the godly suffer castigation, the wicked shall suffer condemnation. If he mingle his people’s cup with wormwood he will mingle the wicked’s cup with fire and brimstone.

2. *Use 1.* If Israel be in the house of bondage, then do not entertain too hard thoughts of affliction. Christians are apt to look upon the cross and the iron furnace as frightful things, and do what they can to shun them. Nay, sometimes to avoid affliction, they run themselves into sin. But do not think too hardly of affliction ; do not look upon it as through the multiplying-glass of fear ; the house of bondage is not hell. Consider, *First*, whence doth affliction come ? even from a wise God, who prescribes whatever befalls us. Persecutions are but like apothecaries. They give us that physic which God prescribes. *Secondly*, affliction hath its light side as well as its dark. God can sweeten our afflictions, candy our wormwood, 2 Cor. i. 5. ‘ As our sufferings abound, so doth all our consolation.’ Argerius dated his letters from the pleasant garden of the Leonine

prison. God doth sometimes so revive his children in trouble, that they had rather bear their afflictions than want their comforts. Why then should Christians entertain such hard thoughts of affliction? do not look at its grim face, but at the message it brings, which is to enrich us both with grace and comfort.

*2dly*, If Israel be sometimes in the house of bondage, in an afflicted state, then think before-hand of affliction; say not as Job xxix. 18. 'I shall die in my nest.' In the house of mirth, think of the house of bondage; you that are now Naomi, may be Marah, Ruth i. 20. how quickly may the scene turn, and the hyperbole of joy end in a catastrophe; all outward things are upon the Tropics, given to change. The forethoughts of affliction would make us sober and moderate in the use of lawful delight; it would cure a surfeit. Christ at a feast mentions his burial; a good antidote against a surfeit. The forethoughts of affliction would make us prepare for it; it would take us off the world, it would put us upon a search of our evidences.

We should see what oil we have in our lamp, what grace we can find, that we may be able to stand in the evil day. That soldier was imprudent who had his sword to whet, when he was just going to fight. He who forecasts sufferings, will have the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit ready, that he may not be surprized.

*3dly*, If afflictions do come, let us labour to deport ourselves wisely as Christians, that we may adorn our sufferings: that is, let us endure with patience; James v. 10. 'Take, my brethren, the prophets for an example of enduring affliction and patience.' Satan labours to take advantage of us in affliction, by making us either faint or murmur; he blows the coals of passion and discontent, and then warms himself at the fire. Patience adorns sufferings. A Christian should say as Jesus Christ, 'Lord, not my will, but thy will be done.' And indeed, it is when the affliction is sanctified, when the heart is brought to a sweet submissive frame, and then God will remove the affliction: he will take us out of the iron furnace. And that brings me to the second thing, God's deliverance of his people Israel, 'I brought you out of the house of bondage.'

---

EXOD. xx. 2. *Who brought thee out of the house of bondage.*

WE may consider these words, 'Who brought thee out of the house of bondage;' either, 1. Literally; or, 2. Spiritually, and mystically. (1.) In the letter, 'I brought thee out of the house of bondage;' that is, I delivered you out of the misery and servitude you sustained in Egypt, when you were in

the iron furnace. (2.) Spiritually and myſtically, ‘I brought thee out of the houſe of bondage.’ So it is a type of our deliverance by Chriſt from ſin and hell.

*Fiſt*, Literally, in the letter, ‘I brought thee out of the houſe of bondage.’ viz. out of great miſery and ſlavery in the iron furnace. The thing I note hence is, though God bring his people ſometimes into trouble, yet he will bring them out again, Iſrael was in the houſe of bondage, but at laſt I brought you out of bondage. 1. That God doth deliver out of trouble. 2. In what manner. 3. When are the ſeaſons. 4. Why God delivers. 5. How the deliverances of the godly and wicked out of trouble differ?

*1ſt*, That God doth deliver his children out of troubles, Pſal. xxii. 4. ‘Our fathers truſted in thee, they truſted, and thou didſt deliver them,’ 2 Tim. iv. 17. ‘And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion,’ viz. from Nero. Pſal. lxvi. 11, 12. ‘Thou laiſt affliction upon our loins, but thou broughteſt us out into a wealthy place.’ Pſal. xxx. 5. ‘Heavineſs may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.’ God brought Daniel out of the lion’s den, Zion out of Babylon. God, in his due time, gives an iſſue out of trouble, Pſal. lxxviii. 20. The tree which in the winter ſeems dead, in the ſpring revives: *Poſt nubila Phœbus*. Affliction may leap on us as the viper did on Paul, but at laſt this viper ſhall be ſhaken off. It is called a cup of affliction, Iſa. li. 17. ‘The wicked drink a ſea of wrath, the godly drink only a cup of affliction, and God will ſay ſhortly, *Let this cup paſs away*. God will give his people a goal-delivery.

*2dly*, Qu. *In what manner doth God deliver his people out of trouble?*

*Ans.* He doth it like a God, in wiſdom. 1. He doth it ſometimes ſuddenly. As the angel was cauſed to fly ſwiftly, Dan. ix. 21. ſo God ſometimes makes a deliverance fly ſwiftly upon the wing, and on a ſudden he turns the ſhadow of death into the light of the morning. As God gives us mercies above what we can think, Eph. iii. 20. ſo ſometimes before we can think of them, Pſal. cxxvi. 1. ‘When the Lord turned the captivity of Sion, we were like them that dreamed;’ we were in a dream, we never thought of it. Joſeph could not have thought of ſuch a ſudden alteration, to be the ſame day freed out of priſon, and made the chief ruler in the kingdom. Mercy ſometimes does not ſtick long in the birth, but it is brought forth on a ſudden. 2. God ſometimes delivers his people ſtrangely. That the whale which ſwallowed up Jonah ſhould be a means to bring him ſafe to land, God ſometimes delivers his people in that very way they think he will deſtroy: in bringing Iſrael out of Egypt, God ſtirred up the heart of the Egyptians

to hate them, Pſal. cv. 22. and that was the means of their deliverance. He brought Paul to ſhore by a contrary wind, and upon the broken pieces of the ſhip, Acts xxvii. 41.

3dly, Qu. *When are the times and ſeaſons that God uſually delivers his people out of the bondage of affliction?*

Anſ. 1. When they were in the greateſt extremity. When Jonah was in the belly of hell, then, chap. ii. 5. ‘Thou haſt brought up my life from corruption.’ When there is but an hair’s-breadth between the godly and death, then God uſhers in deliverance. When the ſhip in the goſpel was almoſt covered with waves, then Chriſt awoke and rebuked the wind. When Iſaac was upon the altar, and the knife going to be put to his throat, then comes the angel, ‘Lay not thy hand upon the child.’ When Peter began to ſink, then Chriſt took him by the hand. *Cum duplicantur lateres, venit, Moſes*; when the tale of brick was doubled, then comes Moſes the temporal favour. When the people of God are in the greateſt danger, then appears the morning-ſtar of deliverance. When the patient is ready to faint, then the cordial is given.

2. The ſecond ſeaſon is, when affliction hath done its work upon them: when it hath effected that which which God hath ſent it for. As, (1.) When it hath humbled them, Lam. iii. 19. ‘Remembering my affliction, the wormwood and gall, my ſoul is humbled in me.’ When God’s corroſive hath eaten out the proud fleſh. (2.) When it hath tamed their impatience. Before, they were proud and impatient, like froward children that would ſtruggle with their parents: but when their curiſt hearts are tamed, and they ſay as Micah vii. 9. ‘I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him;’ and as Eli, ‘It is the Lord; let him do what ſeems good:’ Let him hedge me with thorns, if he will plant me with grace.

3. When they are more partakers of God’s holineſs, Heb. xii. 10. they are more full of heavenly-mindedneſs. When the ſharp froſt of affliction hath brought forth the ſpring-flowers of grace, now the croſs is ſanctified, and God will bring them out of the houſe of bondage. *Luctus in lætitiā vertetar, cineres in corollas*. When the metal is refined, then it is taken out of the furnace; when affliction hath healed us, then God takes off the ſmarting plaſter.

4thly, Qu. *Why doth God bring his people out of the houſe of bondage?*

Anſ. Hereby he makes way for his own glory. God’s glory is dearer to him than any thing beſides; it is a crown-jewel. God by raiſing his people, raiſeth the trophies of his own honour: he glorifies his attributes; his power, goodneſs, truth, &c. all ride in triumph.

1. His power. If God did not ſometimes bring his people

into trouble, how would this power be seen in bringing them out? he brought Israel out of the house of bondage, with miracle upon miracle; he saved them with an out-stretched arm, Psal. cxiv. 5. 'What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?' &c. It is spoken of Israel's march out of Egypt; 'When the sea fled, and the waters were parted from each other.' Here was the power of God set forth, Jer. xxxii. 27. 'Is any thing too hard for me?' God loves to help, when things seem past hope; he creates deliverance, Psal. cxxiv. 8. He brought Isaac out of a dead womb, and the Messiah out of a virgin's womb. O how doth his power shine forth, when he overcomes seeming impossibilities, and works a cure when things look desperate!

2. His truth. God hath made promises to his people when they are under great pressures to deliver them; and his truth is engaged in his promise, Psal. l. 15. 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee.' Job v. 19. 'He shall deliver thee in six troubles, and in seven.' How is the scripture bespangled with these promises, as the firmament is with stars? either God will deliver them from death, or by death; he will make a way to escape, 1 Cor. x. 13. When promises are verified, God's truth is magnified.

3. His goodness. God is full of compassion to such as are in misery. The Hebrew word, *Racham*, for mercy, signifies bowels. God hath 'founding of bowels,' Isa. lxiii. 15. And this sympathy stirs up God to deliver, Isa. lxiii. 9. 'In his love and pity he redeemed them.' This makes way for the triumph of God's goodness. For he is tender-hearted, he will not over-afflict; he cuts asunder the bars of iron, he breaks the yoke of the oppressor. Thus all his attributes ride in triumph, in saving his people out of trouble.

5thly, Qu. *How the deliverance of the godly and wicked out of trouble, differ?*

Ans. 1. The deliverances of the godly are preservations; of the wicked are reservations, 2 Pet. ii. 9. 'The Lord knows how to deliver the godly, and to reserve the unjust to be punished.' A sinner may be delivered from dangerous sickness, and out of prison; but all this is but a reservation to some greater evil.

2. God delivers the wicked (or rather spares them) in anger. Deliverances to the wicked are not given as pledges of God's love, but symptoms of displeasure; as quails were given to Israel in anger. But deliverances of the godly are in love, 2 Sam. xxii. 20. 'He delivered me because he delighted in me.' Isa. xxxviii. 17. 'Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered me from the pit of corruption;' or as in the Hebrew, *Chashtia'eta Naphshi*, Thou hast loved me from the pit of corruption. A wicked man may say, 'Lord, thou hast delivered me out of the pit of corrup-

tion; but a godly man may say, Lord, thou hast loved me out of the pit of corruption. It is one thing to have God's power deliver us, and another thing to have his love deliver us. O, saith Hezekiah, 'Thou hast, in love to my soul, delivered me from the pit of corruption.'

Qu. *How may it be known that a deliverance comes in love?*

Ans. 1. When a deliverance makes our heart boil over in love to God, Psal. cxvi. 1. 'I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice.' It is one thing to love our mercies, another thing to love the Lord: then a deliverance is in love, when it causeth love.

2. Then a deliverance is in love, when we have hearts to improve it for God's glory. The wicked instead of improving their deliverance for God's glory, improve their corruption: they grow worse after, as the metal when it is taken out of the fire grows harder; but then our deliverance is in love, when we improve it for God's glory. God raiseth us out of a low condition, and we lift him up in our praises, and honour him with our substance, Prov. iii. 9. He recovers us from sickness, and we spend ourselves in his service. Mercy is not as the sun to the fire, to dull it, and put it out; but as oil to the wheel, to make it move faster.

3. Then a deliverance comes in love, when it makes us more exemplary in holiness: our lives are walking Bibles. A thousand praises and doxologies do not honour God so much as the mortifying of one lust, Obadiah 17. 'On mount Zion there shall be deliverance and holiness.' When these two go together, deliverance and holiness; when, being made monuments of mercy, we are patterns of piety; now a deliverance comes in love, and we may say as Hezekiah, 'Thou hast loved me out of the pit of corruption.'

Use 1. If God brings his people out of bondage, then let none despond in trouble, say not, I shall sink under this burden; as David, 'I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul.' God can make this text good *personally* and *nationally*, to bring his people out of the house of bondage: when he sees a fit season, he will put forth his arm and save them; and he can do it with ease, 2 Chron. xiv. 11. 'It is nothing for thee, Lord, to help.' He that turns the tides, can turn the times: he that raised Lazarus when he was dead, can raise thee when thou art sick, Isa. lxiii. 5. 'I looked, and there was none to help: therefore my own arm brought salvation.' Do not despond; believe in God's power: faith sets God on work to deliver us.

Use 2. Labour (if you are in trouble) to be fitted for deliverance: many would have deliverance, but are not fitted for it.

Qu. *When are we fitted for deliverance?*

*Ans.* When we are, by our afflictions, conformed to Christ: namely, when we have learned obedience, Heb. v. 8. 'He learned obedience by the things which he suffered;' that is, he learned sweet submission to his Father's will. Luke xxii. 42. 'Not my will but thy will be done.' When we have thus learned obedience by our sufferings, we are willing to do what God would have us do, and be what God would have us be. Now we are conformed to Christ, and are fitted for deliverance.

3. If God had brought you at any time out of the house of bondage, out of great and imminent troubles, be much in doxology and praise. Deliverance calls for praise, Psal. xxx. 11, 12. 'Thou hast put off my sackcloth; and girded me with gladness: to the end that my glory may sing praise to thee.' My glory, that is, my tongue, which is the instrument of glorifying thee. The saints are temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. iii. 16. Where should God's praises be sounded but in his temple? *Beneficium postulat effcium*: the deepest springs yield the sweetest water; and hearts deeply sensible of God's deliverances yield the sweetest praises. Moses tells Pharaoh, when he was going out of Egypt, 'We will go with our sheep and cattle,' Exod. x. 9. Why so, because he might have sacrifices of thanksgiving ready to offer to God for their deliverance. To have a thankful heart for deliverance is a greater blessing than the deliverance itself, Luke xvii. 15. One of the lepers, 'when he saw he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.' The leper's thankful heart was a greater blessing than to be healed of his leprosy: have any of you here been brought out of the house of bondage: out of prison, sickness, or any death-threatening danger? do not forget to be thankful: be not graves, but temples. And, that you may be more thankful, observe every emphasis and circumstance in your deliverance; as to be brought out of trouble when you were *in articulo mortis*, there was but an hair's-breadth between you and death; or to be brought out of affliction, without sin, you did not purchase your deliverance by the ensnaring of your consciences; or, to be brought out of trouble upon the wings of prayer; or, that those who were the occasions of bringing you into trouble, should be the instruments of bringing you out: these circumstances, being well weighed, do heighten a deliverance, and should heighten our thankfulness. The cutting of a stone may be of more value than the stone itself; and the circumstancing of a deliverance may be greater than the deliverance itself.

Qu. 2. *But how shall we praise God in a right manner for deliverance?*

*Ans.* 1. Be holy persons. In the sacrifice of thanksgiving, whosoever did eat thereof, with their uncleanness upon them,

were to be cut off, Lev. vii. 20. to typify how unpleasing their praises and thank-offerings are who live in sin.

2. Praise God with humble hearts, acknowledge how unworthy you were of deliverance; God's mercies are not debts, but legacies; and that you should have a legacy given you, be humble, Rev. xi. 16. 'The elders fell upon their faces (an expression of humility) and worshipped and praised God.'

3. Praise God for deliverances cordially, Psal. cxi. 1. 'I will praise the Lord with my whole heart.' In religion there is no music but in concert, when heart and tongue join.

4. Praise God for deliverances constantly, Psal. cxlvi. 2. 'While I live will I bless the Lord:' some will be thankful while the memory of a deliverance is fresh, and then they leave off. Like the Carthaginians, who used at first to send the tenth of their yearly revenue to Hercules: but by degrees they grew weary, and left off sending. But we must be constant in our eucharistical sacrifice or thank-offering: the motion of our praise must be like the motion of our pulse, which beats as long as life lasts, Psal. cxlvi. 1. 'I will sing praises to my God while I have a being.'



### EXOD. xx. 2. *Out of the House of Bondage.*

*Secondly*, THESE words are to be understood mystically and spiritually. By Israel's deliverance from the house of bondage, is typified their spiritual deliverance from sin, Satan and hell.

I. *from sin.*] The house of bondage was a type of Israel's deliverance from sin. Sin is the true bondage, it enslaves the soul, *Nihil durius servitute*, Cicero. "Of all conditions, servitude is the worst." "I was held before conversion (saith Austin) not with an iron chain, but with the obstinacy of mine own will." Sin is the inflaver: sin is called a law, Rom. vii. 23. because it hath such a binding power over a man; and it is said to reign, Rom. vi. 12. because it exerciseth a tyrannical power: and men are said to be the servants of sin, Rom. vi. 17. because they are so enslaved by it. Thus sin is the house of bondage. Israel was not so enslaved in the iron furnace, as the sinner is by sin: those are worse slaves and vassals who are under the power of sin, than those who are under the power of earthly tyrants.

1. Other slaves have the tyrants only ruling over their bodies; but the sinner hath his soul tyrannized over; the soul, that princely thing, which sways the sceptre of reason, and was once crowned with perfect knowledge and holiness, now this

prince goes on foot ; it is enslaved, and made a lackey to every base lust.

2. Other slaves have some pity shewn them ; the tyrant gives them meat, and lets them have hours for their rest ; but sin is a merciless tyrant, it will let men have no rest. Judas had no rest until he had betrayed Christ ; and after that, he had less rest in his conscience. How doth a man hackney himself out in the service of sin, waste his body, break his sleep, distract his mind ? a wicked man is every day doing sin's drudgery-work.

3. Other slaves, tho' they are set about servile work, yet about lawful : it is lawful to work in the galley, tug at the oar ; but all the laws and commands of sin are unlawful. Sin saith to one man, defraud ; to another, be unchaste ; to another, take revenge ; to another, take a false oath. Thus all sin's commands are unlawful ; we cannot obey sin's law, but by breaking God's law.

4. Other slaves are forced against their will ; Israel groaned under slavery, Exod. ii. 23. but sinners are content to be under the command of sin ; they are willing to be slaves, they love their chains, they will not take their freedom ; they ' glory in their shame,' Phil. iii. 19. They wear their sins, not as their fetters, but their ornaments : they rejoice in iniquity, Jer. xi. 15.

5. Other slaves are brought to correction, but sin's slaves are, without repentance, brought to condemnation : other slaves lie in the iron furnace, sin's slaves lie in the fiery furnace. What freedom of will hath a sinner to his own confusion, when he can do nothing but what sin will have him ? he is enslaved. Thus sinners are in the house of bondage ; but God takes his elect out of this house of bondage : he beats off the chains and fetters of sin ; he rescues them from their slavery ; he makes them free, by bringing them into the glorious liberty of the children of God, Rom. viii. The law of love now commands, not the law of sin. Though the life of sin be prolonged, yet not the dominion : as those beasts in Daniel had their lives prolonged for a season, but their dominion was taken away, Dan. vii. 12. The faints are made spiritual kings, to rule and conquer their corruptions, to ' bind these kings in chains.' This is the matter of the highest praise and thanksgiving, to be thus taken out of the house of bondage, to be freed from enslaving lusts, and made kings to reign in glory for ever.

II. The bringing Israel out of the house of bondage, was a type of their deliverance from Satan. Thus men naturally are in the house of bondage, they are enslaved to Satan : Satan is called the prince of this world, John xiv. 30. and the god of this world, 2 Cor. iv. 4. because he hath such power to com-

mand and enslave them. Though Satan shall one day be a cloſt-prifoner in chains, yet now he doth insult and tyrannize over the ſouls of men; finners are under the rule of Satan, he exerciſeth over them ſuch a jurifdiction as Cæſar did over the ſenate. The devil fills men's heads with error, and their hearts with malice, Acts v. 3. 'Why hath Satan filled thine heart?' A ſinner's heart is the devil's manſion-houſe, Matth. xii. 44. 'I will return into mine houſe.' And ſure that muſt needs be an houſe of bondage, which is the devil's manſion-houſe. Satan is a perfect tyrant: 1. He rules men's minds, he blinds them with ignorance, 2 Cor. iv. 4. 'The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not.' 2. He rules their memories; they ſhall remember that which is evil, and forget that which is good: their memories are like a ſerger or ſtrainer, that lets go all the pure liquor, and returns only the dregs. He rules their wills: tho' the devil cannot force the will yet he draws it, John viii. 44. 'The luſts of your father you will do.' He hath got your hearts, and him you will obey: his ſtrong temptations do more draw men to evil, than all the promiſes of God can draw them to good. This is the ſtate of every man by nature, he is in the houſe of bondage, the devil hath him in his power: a ſinner grinds in the devil's mill; he is at the command of Satan, as the aſs is at the command of the driver. No wonder to ſee men oppreſs and perſecute; theſe ſlaves muſt do what the god of this world will have them: how could thoſe ſwine but run, when the devil entered into them? Matth. viii. 32. When the devil tempted Ananias to tell a lie, he could not but ſpeak what Satan had put in his heart, Acts v. 3. When the devil entered into Judas, and bid him betray Chriſt, Judas would do it, though he hanged himſelf. This caſe is ſad and diſmal, to be thus in the houſe of bondage, under the power and tyranny of Satan. When David would curſe the enemies of God, how did he pray againſt them? That Satan might be at their right-hand, Pl. cix. 6. He knew he could lead them into any ſnare: if Satan be at the ſinner's right-hand, let the ſinner take heed he be not ſet on God's left-hand. Is not this a caſe to be bewailed, to ſee men taken captive by Satan at his will? 2 Tim. ii. 26. he leads ſinners as ſlaves before him in triumph; he poſſeſſeth them. If people ſhould ſee but their beaſts bewitched and poſſeſſed of the devil, they would be much troubled; yet their ſouls are poſſeſſed by Satan, but they are not ſenſible. [What can be worſe than to be in the houſe of bondage, to have the devil hurry men on in their luſt to perdition?] Sinners are willingly enſlaved to Satan; they love their goaler; are content to ſit diſquietly under Satan's jurifdiction; they chuſe this bramble to rule them, tho', within a while, fire will come out of this bramble to devour them, Judges ix. Now, what an infinite mercy of God is

it, when he brings poor souls out of this house of bondage, when he gives them a goal-delivery from the prince of darkness ! JESUS CHRIST redeems captives, he ransoms sinners by price, and rescues them by force : as David took a lamb out of the lion's mouth, 1 Sam. xvii. 34. So Christ rescues souls out of the mouth of this roaring lion. O what a mercy is it to be brought out of the house of bondage, to be taken from being made captives to the prince of the power of the air, and to be made subjects of the Prince of peace ! And this is done by the preaching of the word, Acts xxvi. 18. ' To turn them from the power of Satan unto God.'

III. The bringing of Israel out of the house of bondage, was a type of their being delivered from hell. Hell is *domus servitutis*, an house of bondage ; an house built on purpose for sinners to lie in.

1. That there is such an house of bondage where the damned lie, Ps. ix. 17. ' The wicked shall be turned into hell.' Mat. xxiii. 33. ' How can ye escape the damnation of hell ?' If any one shall ask where this house of bondage is, where is the place of hell ? I wish you may never know feelingly. ' Let us not so much (saith Chrysostom) labour to know where hell is, as how to escape it.' Yet, to satisfy curiosity, hell is *locus subterraneus*, some place beneath, Prov. v. 24. ' Hell beneath.' Hesiod saith, ' Hell is as far under the earth, as heaven is above it,' Luke viii. 31. ' The devils besought Christ that he would not command them to go into the deep.' Hell is in the deep.

2. Qu. *Why there must be this house of bondage ? why a hell ?*

Ans. Because there must be a place for the execution of divine justice ; earthly monarchs have their prison for malefactors, and shall not God have his ; sinners are criminal persons, they have offended God ; and it would not consist with God's holiness and justice, to have his laws infringed, and not appoint penalties for the transgressors.

3. The dreadfulneſs of this place. Could you but for one hour hear the groans and shrieks of the damned, it would confirm you in this truth, that hell is an house of bondage : hell is the emphasis of misery. Besides the *pœna damni*, the punishment of loss, which is the exclusion of the soul from the glorified sight of God, which divines think the worst part of hell ; I say, besides this, there will be *pœna sensus*, the punishment of sense. If, when God's wrath is kindled but a little, and a spark of it flies into a man's conscience in this life, it is so terrible (as in the case of Spira) then what will hell itself be ? That I may describe this house of bondage,

1. In hell there will be a plurality of torments, 1. Bonds and chains, 2 Pet. ii. 4. 2. The worm, Mark ix. 44. this is the

worm of conscience : and the lake of fire, Rev. xx. 15. other fire is but painted to this.

2. This house of hell is haunted with devils, Matth. xxv. 41. Anselm hath a saying, "I had rather endure all torments, than see the devil with bodily eyes." Such as go to hell must not only be forced to behold the devil, but must be shut up in the den with this lion ; they must keep the devil company : the devil is full of spite against mankind ; this red dragon will spit fire in men's faces.

3. The torments of hell abide for ever, Rev. xiv. 11. 'The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever,' Mark ix. 44. Time cannot finish it, tears cannot quench it : the wicked are salamanders ; who live always in the fire of hell, and are not consumed : after sinners have lain millions of years in hell, their punishment is as far from ending, as it was at the beginning. If all the earth and sea were sand, and every thousandth year a bird should come, and take away one grain of this sand, it would be a long time ere that vast heap of sand were emptied ; yet, if after all that time the damned might come out of hell, there were some home hope ; but this word EVER breaks the heart.

Qu. *But how doth this seem to stand with God's justice, for a sin committed in a moment, to punish it with eternal torment ?*

Ans. 1. Because there is an eternity of sin in man's nature. 2. Because sin is *crimen læsæ majestatis*, it is committed against an infinite majesty ; therefore the sin is infinite, and proportionably the punishment must be infinite. Now, because a finite creature cannot bear infinite wrath, therefore he must be eternally satisfying what he cannot satisfy at once. Now then, if hell be such an house of bondage, what infinite cause have they to bless God, who are delivered from it ? 1 Thess. i. 20. 'Jesus delivered us from the wrath to come.' Jesus Christ suffered the torments of hell in his soul, that believers should not suffer them. If we are thankful, when we are ransomed out of prison, or delivered from fire, O how should we bless God to be preserved from the wrath to come ! And that which may cause the more thankfulness, is because the most part go into this house of bondage, the most part go to hell : therefore to be of the number of these few that are delivered from it, it is matter of infinite thankfulness. I say, most go to this house of bondage when they die ; most go to hell, Matth. vii. 13. 'Broad is the way which leadeth unto destruction, and many there be that go in thereat.' The greatest part of the world lies in wickedness, 1 John v. 19. Divide the world, saith Brerewood, into thirty-one parts, nineteen parts of it are possessed by Jews and Turks, seven parts by Heathens ; so that there are but five parts of Christians, and among these Christians so many seduced Papists

on the one hand, and so many formal Protestants on the other, that we may conclude the major part of the world goes to hell. 1. The scripture compares the wicked to briers, Isa. x. 17. There are but few lilies in your fields, but in every hedge thorns and briers. 2. To 'the mire in the streets,' Isa. x. 6. Few jewels or precious stones in the street, but you cannot go a step but you meet with mire. The wicked are as common as the dirt in the street: look into the generality of people, how many drunkards for one that is sober? how many adulterers for one that is chaste? how many hypocrites for one that is sincere? The devil hath the harvest, and God only a few gleanings. Oh then, such as are delivered from the house of bondage, hell, have infinite cause to admire and bless God. How should the vessels of mercy run over with thankfulness? when most are carried prisoners to hell, they are delivered from wrath to come.

*Qu. How shall I know I am delivered from hell?*

*Ans.* 1. Those whom Christ saves from hell, he saves from sin, Matth. i. 21. 'He shall save his people from their sins.' Hath God delivered you from the power of corruption, from pride, malice, lust? if he hath delivered you from the hell of sin, then he hath delivered you from the hell of torment.

2. If you have got an interest in Christ, prizing, confiding, loving him, then you are delivered from hell and damnation. Rom. viii. 1. 'No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.' If you are in Christ, then he hath put the garment of his righteousness over you, and hell-fire can never singe this garment. Pliny observes, nothing will so soon quench fire as salt and blood: the salt tears of repentance and the blood of Christ will quench the fire of hell, that it shall never kindle upon you.

## OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

EXOD. xx. 3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me, &c.*

BEFORE I come to the commandment, I shall premise some things about the moral law: viz. answer questions, and lay down rules.

*Qu. 1. What is the difference between the moral law and the gospel?*

*Ans.* 1. The law requires that we worship God as our Creator: the gospel requires that we worship God in and through Christ. God in Christ is propitious: out of Christ we may see God's power, justice, holiness; in Christ we see his mercy displayed.

2. The moral law requires obedience, but gives no strength