

of faithful ministers, do more than they think of toward the hindering of their work, and the shortening of their days, and perhaps will have a great deal to answer for shortly.

[3.] Bless God that the breaking of the earthen vessel is not the loss of the heavenly treasure. Ministers die, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever; and a seed of ministers shall be raised up to preach it, and a seed of Christians to profess it, both which shall be accounted unto the Lord for a generation.<sup>i</sup> Ministers hold forth this light, but it shall not die in their hands; they hold this treasure, but it shall not be buried in their graves; for though we see the end of the conversation of those who have spoken to us the word of God, have seen their exit, and shall see them no more, yet we are sure that *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*<sup>k</sup>

And therefore, since Christ has provided that there should be a succession of these earthen vessels, why should not you look out accordingly? Apply yourselves to him who has the residue of the Spirit, and who holds the stars in his right hand, and attend his conduct.

[4.] Let the glory of all the benefits you have, or may have, by the ministry of the gospel, be given to God, to him only, to him entirely; for from him the *excellency of the power is*. No praise is due to us, we have a great deal in ourselves to be ashamed of, and nothing to boast of, nothing to trust to; the more

we do for God, the more we are indebted to him for employing us in his service, and enabling us for it: and therefore let every crown be cast at the feet of free grace, and every song sung to the humble strain, (Ps. cxv. 1.) *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.*

[5.] Let the consideration of the frailty and mortality of your ministers quicken you to make a diligent improvement of their labours, while they are continued with you. You have the treasure in earthen vessels, therefore delay not to make it yours, lest the vessels that are most likely to convey it to you, should break, and others such should not be raised up, and so you come short of it. *Behold, now is the accepted time*, therefore put not off the great work you were sent into the world about to a further time, but *to-day, while it is called to-day*, hear the voice of Christ, and heed it. *Yet a little while is the light with you*, therefore walk and work while you have the light. He who will not send to you by a messenger from heaven, will not send to you by a messenger from the grave: if you believe not Moses and the prophets, your ministers, when once laid in the dust, shall be no more reprovers to you; nor Samuel be raised from the dead to advise Saul, who would not be advised by him while he was with him. By these, therefore, be admonished now, at length in this your day, to know and understand the things that belong to your peace, lest you despair at the last when they are hid from your eyes.<sup>m</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Ps. xxii. 30.

<sup>k</sup> Heb. xlii. 7, 8.

<sup>l</sup> John xii. 36.

<sup>m</sup> Luke xix. 42.

## A CONCISE ACCOUNT

OF THE

## LIFE OF THE REV. DANIEL BURGESS.

He was born about the year 1645, at Staines in Middlesex, where his father, Mr. Daniel Burgess, was at that time minister, but afterwards removed to Sutton, in Wiltshire, and then to Collinburn Ducis, in the same county, a very considerable living, I am told, of about 400*l.* per annum; and thence he was turned out by the *Act of Uniformity*, choosing rather to quit it on the fatal *Bartholomew Day*, 1662, than to wrong his conscience; and with what little he had of his own, by the blessing of God, made a shift to maintain and educate a numerous family.

This son of his being looked upon to be a child of extraordinary ability, he sent him, at nine years old, to Winchester school; and, after some time, he was chosen on the foundation, where, as is supposed, he

continued till he removed to the university. He was entered Commoner of Magdalen-Hall in Oxford, in *Mick.* term, 1660, when we take him to be but about fifteen years of age; so great was his proficiency. That house then flourished much under Dr. Henry Wilkinson, who was then principal of it, but was turned out by the Act of Uniformity. His tutor was one Mr. Northmore, a Devonshire man, of great note for piety and learning, and an acute disputant.

One who was his contemporary in Magdalen-Hall, gives us this account of him, that he was observed to be a very close hard student, and his demeanour in the house was, in all respects, very good.

He continued there till he was Bachelor's standing; but then he and some others his contemporaries

in the same house, (Mr. Brice and Mr. Cudmore,) scrupling something that was required of them for their degree, as I am informed, chose rather to wave taking it, than to submit to the impositions they were then dissatisfied in.

Soon after that he left the university, and went to his father's in the country, and in a little while went to be chaplain to Mr. Foyl, of Chute, in Wiltshire; from thence he moved into the family of Mr. Smith of Tedworth, in the same county, as tutor to his and some other gentlemen's sons. After some years he was courted by the Earl of Orrery, Lord President of Munster, (who was Mr. Baxter's great friend,) to go over with him to Ireland; which he did about the year 1667.

The Earl set up a school at Charlevill for the strengthening of the interest of the protestant religion in that kingdom, and nominated Mr. Burgess the head-master of it. There he had the education of the sons of many of the nobility and gentry of that part of Ireland. After he left that school, he was for some time chaplain to the Lady Mervin, near Dublin.

He was ordained in Dublin, by Dr. Harrison, Dr. Rolls, and some other ministers there. There he married Mrs. Briscoe, by whom he had a son and two daughters.

He continued in that kingdom about seven years; but his father growing infirm, sent for him over to settle near him, which he did in 1674.

He took up his residence at Marlborough in Wiltshire, where he applied himself closely to the work of the ministry, as the difficulty of the times would permit: for he had the courage to put to sea in a storm, and when very few nonconformists did.

He laboured abundantly, and with great success, at Marlborough, and in the parts adjacent, and afterwards preached stately at Baden, and occasionally at Hungerford, Ramsbury, Alborn, and other places thereabout.

And as he was much followed by those who loved and valued his ministry, so he was greatly persecuted by those who hated it, and much hardship he underwent. Being once taken up for preaching, he was committed to the common gaol, at Marlborough, where he had nothing either to sit down, or lie down, upon, but was forced to walk all night, till next day his friends got a bed in to him at a window. He was likewise denied a copy of his commitment; but after some time he came out upon bail. His prosecutions at assizes and sessions were very expensive to him; and as he laboured, so he suffered, abundantly.

The violence of his prosecutors in the country at length forced him to London, about the year 1685. And there he was when the dissenters had some breathing time allowed them, in 1687, and then he first began to be taken notice of in the city; and some little singularities he had in his preaching,

made him to be the sooner and the more taken notice of: and in a little time his hearers were very numerous; and among them divers persons of distinction formed themselves into a society, and took a meeting-place for him in Bridges-street, near Covent Garden: divers of them were the remains of Dr. Manton's congregation thereabouts. There he continued many years.

After that turn of the tide in favour of the dissenters, he was advised by a great man to take his advantage against those in the country, who had prosecuted him beyond the law; but he said, no, he had freely forgiven them, and would never meditate revenge.

He often said he chose rather to be profitable than fashionable in his preaching, and that he thought it cost him more pains to study plainness, than it did others to study fineness; and he would be willing to go out of the common way to meet with sinners, to persuade them to return to their God. "That is the best key (said he) that fits the lock, and opens the door, though it be not a silver or golden one." And many have acknowledged that they came to hear him at first only to scoff at him, and make a jest of what he said, but went away under such convictions about the concerns of their souls, and another world, as, it was hoped, ended in a happy change of their spirits.

In his preaching he insisted mostly upon the first and great principles of religion, which all good Christians are agreed in; and one who was a very competent judge told me, he thought he had as good a faculty in demonstrating them, and making them plain and evident, as most men he ever heard. He much lamented, and vigorously opposed, the growth of deism and infidelity among us, saying, he dreaded a "Christless Christianity." He meddled not with party matters, or matters of doubtful disputation, but plainly made it his aim to bring people to believe in Jesus Christ, and to live in all godliness and honesty. He was particularly careful to explain the two covenants of works and grace, and to guard against the two rocks of presumption and despair.

He was observed to be very serious in prayer, and not to allow himself there such liberties of expression as he sometimes took in preaching.

He had a great dexterity in resolving cases of conscience, abundance of which were brought him from other congregations as well as his own.

He now and then used some plain similitudes, or surprising turns of expression, or little stories, such perhaps as we find Bishop Latimer's sermons full of, (that celebrated preacher and martyr,) which, by some, were turned to his reproach; but it is certain many particular stories were maliciously fathered on him, that were abominably false, and were raised by a lying spirit only to obstruct his usefulness; and in the general he was industriously misrepresented

by many, who it is to be feared therein discovered no kindness for serious godliness. A gentleman having once the curiosity to go to hear him, when he had done, could scarce be made to believe that that was Mr. Burgess; for, said he, "*I never heard a better sermon in my life!*"

His moderation was known unto all men, and he often said he cared not for being distinguished by any denomination, but that of a *Christian of Antioch*.

He was a most agreeable man in conversation, (which is all I can say concerning him of my own knowledge,) very ingenious and pleasant, and his discourse good, and to the use of edifying. He had wit and learning, and could use them aright.

He was much respected by many considerable men; and, like St. Paul, passed by honour and good report, as well as by dishonour and evil report. The excellent Dr. Bates, I am told, had a particular kindness for him.

His delight was much in his study, and there he spent most of the day, and was uneasy when he was interrupted, or called from it, unless it were to do some good office. He went from strength to strength in his work, and chose rather to *wear away* than to *rust away*.

It is well known, he had many very sore trials in the latter end of his time, and some of them went very near him; the unkindnesses, at least apprehended, of some of his friends, much nearer than the insults of his enemies; which yet, said he, "I have never inclined to express my feeling of to any friend save *Eloah, Emanuel* only. But it must and shall be said, to the praise of new-covenant grace, (so he goes on in the paper I have by me,) of never-failing grace; all my nights are not sleepless, all days are not restless, every friend is not found faithless, nor are all enemies found useless; all disturbed studies are not tasteless, all the disadvantageous sermons have not proved fruitless, all the various troubles have not been comfortless, nor the comforts mixed with them successful. Some grapes have been gathered from both sorts of thorns, and the dung, wherewith the tree is so much soiled, it is hoped will make it the more fruitful. Remember what I add, when you see me not, and when I shall be seen no more. I am near home; and, whatever falls on me betwixt this and home, I shall strive myself, and exhort such as you, to maintain a holy gospel alacrity and cheerfulness: because it is most sure, 1. Our God approves it, and requires it in all states. 2. Our Lord Jesus is anointed to give it to us. 3. Our holy infirmity-helper is sent to work it in us. 4. Our dangerous enemy is advantaged by our want of it. 5. It is our spiritual bread, to strengthen us. 6. It is our bright armour, to adorn and defend us. Hereof think you, therefore, in your supplications for yourselves, and for a poor servant of that Lord, whose oblation and intercession we count our best and only

riches: content, I hope, (as Luther spake,) to let our names be vilified, so that his name may be hallowed and glorified. I am sure new-covenant grace is cordial, and very supporting; and I hope no day shall pass without my experience thereof."

During his last sickness, which continued some months, and was purely a decay of nature, he had a great composure of mind, and was very much in a heavenly frame. He expressed an entire submission to the divine will, often repeating the words of David: *If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again to see the ark and his habitation; but if not, here I am, let the Lord do with me as seemeth good in his eyes.* He said, if he must work no more, he would rather be "idle under ground, than idle above ground."

His great weakness disabled him from speaking much; but most that he did say was heavenly and profitable. He once said, a little before his death, "I thank God, I have been dying every day in the week. With God is terrible majesty; and that the guilty world will find ere long. Who can dispute an all-knowing God, or evade his charges? But there is a Mediator, an Emanuel. O for a Christ, or else I die! O for that covenanting act to make him ours!"

The evening before his death, a friend who came to see him, speaking of public affairs, said, it was feared there would be a storm; he answered with cheerfulness, "But God will house some of his children first." And when he was so weak, that he could scarce speak so as to be understood, he said, "*Well, here is all trouble at the gate; but when got through it, no more, no more.*" And when he seemed to be fainting away, and one of his near relations thereupon cried out, in a fright, when he recovered himself, he asked what was the meaning of that shriek: "*We thought you had been dying,*" said they: "*And what if I had.*" said he, "*what needed that confusion?*" Thus willingly, thus cheerfully, did he enter into the joy of his Lord.

He was buried at St. Clement Danes church, Strand, London, January 31, 1712-13.

The books he published were these: *Soliloquies*, which he printed in Ireland. *Mr. Noah Webb's funeral sermon*, in 1675, when he was in Wiltshire. And after he settled in London: *A call to sinners*; written at the request of Judge Rotheram, for the use of condemned criminals. *Three questions plainly resolved. A discourse of the Lord's Supper. Counsel to the rich*, with an address to King William. *Of reconciliation to God. Characters of a godly man, more or less grown in grace. The Christian decalogue. Hastiness to anger reprov'd. Directions for reading the word of God profitably. The golden snuffers*, the first sermon preached to the societies for reformation of manners. *Holy contention for the faith. Duties of parents and children. Proof of the Scriptures' divine original. Sure way to wealth. Funeral sermons on Mrs. Hook, Mr. Fleming, Dr. Rolls, and the Countess*

*of Ranelagh. A sermon in the morning exercise, 1689, concerning the conversion of young people. The most difficult duty made easy: or, directions to bring our hearts to forgive injuries. Foolish talking and jesting described and condemned, in a sermon on Eph. v. 4. Rules for hearing the word with certain and saving benefit. Forty aphorisms concerning riches. Poisons and antidotes; the sins whereby poverty tempts; and helpful considerations against them. Mrs. Sarah Bull's funeral sermon. The death and rest, resurrection and blessed portion, of the saints, with the work of the Redeemer and redeemed. Man's whole duty, and God's wonderful entreaty of him thereunto. Advice to parents and children. And, a Latin defence of nonconformity, entitled, Appellatio ad Fratres Exteros—A call to the expelled brethren.*