

**A DIVINE POEM OF THE
SHUNAMITE**

**THE SERVANT OF THE
LORD DESCRIBED AND
VINDICATED.**

William Huntington

**VOLUME VII
Of The 20 Volume Set
1811**

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A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE.

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND.

A Clownish Poem on the Shunamite,
 A sinner call'd to be the Lord's delight;
 By the despised William Huntington,
 Both known and trusted now in Paddington.

PREFATORY ADDRESS.

DIRECTION.

To Mistress SANGSTER, now at Number Eight,
 'Tis by the New St. Luke's that's built of late,
 At Old-street-end you'll find the Dame's abode,
 In Winkworth's-buildings, on the City-road.

APOLOGY.

I HOPE, dear Madam, you will not be vex'd,
 Because you find your name to this affix'd;
 'Tis sent by ay of grateful recompense,
 But not design'd to give the least offence.
 I trust your name is in the book of life;
 Nor have I us'd it here to gender strife
 Take not this freedom in the least unkind,
 The poem's sent to entertain your mind.
 The subject matter is a work of grace,
 Which on a saint in days of old took place;
 The sex - a woman, and her statute great;
 And to her sex these lines I dedicate.

PREMISED INQUIRY, AND CAUTION.

But if you ask what I might have in view,
 And why I send this poem first to you;
 Or how I came to frame these whims of mine,
 And puzzle you, from first to last, with rhyme.
 Some people's heads are like a hive of bees,
 Whose brood sent forth, the women ring to please.
 When Jesus shines, the heart with love gets warm,
 'Tis then the head with thoughts begins to swarm.
 Methinks, you prize an old prolific hive,
 And wish their young may both increase and thrive;
 You'd have the stocks be neither weak nor few,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

But would not wish a swarm rung down to you.

A lion slain was once a hive for bees,
 Against his ribs they built their cells with ease;
 The mighty Saint, that slew the brute in ire,
 Soon after found an entertainment there.
 That beast proclaims my former state of mind,
 In which I roar'd against an Arm Divine;
 God slew the brute, and sent the honey too,
 Or else this swarm had never fled to you.
 'Tis by your means this work is brought about,
 You shook the stand, and then the swarm went out;
 At this my fault you must in love connive,
 And mind in future how you move the hive.

INFORMATION.

'T WAS On a certain day I went from home,
 As hawking pedlars are so apt to roam;
 When I return'd the time was rather late,
 My wife inform'd me what I now repeat.
 She said - Here's been a vehicle to day,
 And close by us the driver made a stay:
 A little cart, drove by a little lass,
 Who at our house pull'd in, and stopp'd the ass.
 She straightly ask'd - If HUNTINGTON liv'd here,
 But would not tell from whence she came, nor where;
 She fetch'd this weighty burden to my door,
 And then return'd the way she came before"
 We held a council, but could not devise
 Who was the benefactor in disguise;
 At last 'twas settl'd, if conjecture's true,
 The lot we cast - the sentence fell to you.
 The little equipage of cart and ass
 Was something like what Shunem brought to pass
 If wrong conjectur'd, take it not amiss;
 To tell the truth - my poem sprung from this.
 My frothy head has often fell to rhyme,
 The work I stifl'd for the want of time -
 Till Friday last appeared a leisure day,
 In which I thought to send this swarm away.
 I meant, at first, to send my thoughts to you,

And not expose the same to public view;
 I only meant to send an homely fare,
 And, with yourself, your other-self a share.
 But so it fell, when I began to write,
 That heart and head brought many things to light,
 Much more than I at first purpos'd to send,
 For I at night had thirty verses penn'd.
 I found my mind entangl'd in a strait,
 How I should send this burden'd vessel's freight.
 And when constrain'd some other way to seek.
 'Twas fix'd to write, and send it once a week.
 Again, I thought a month might turn about
 Before I got this springing matter out,
 While you, from day to day, might long to see
 The next epistle that might come from me.
 At last, I thought I'd send it from the press,
 But send my pious friend the first address;
 And after that, expose the whole to view,
 That others might be fed as well as you.
 Thus I contriv'd, and fix'd the scheme at last,
 And now present you with this strange repast
 Accept my present, let it not displease;
 Be thou enlarg'd, and hive this swarm of bees.
 Methinks you aim'd to have your gift conceal'd
 And not in public print to be reveal'd;
 But women's pleas to men's replies give place -
 A priest may speak where they must hold their peace,
 Give my respects to your superior lord,
 As you and him in things divine accord;
 If entertain'd with what I send to thee,
 I hope, in turn, you'll send a line to me.
 Forget me not when both engag'd in pray'r,
 A prodigal return'd should have a share
 (God well approves of charity divine),
 And you, in turn, shall have a share in mine.

A DIVINE POEM ON THE SHUNAMITE.

The chosen race, while in their native state,
 And still preserv'd, in Christ, to life, by fate;
 Jehovah's eye their various steps surveys,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

And lends his sacred aid through all their ways.

The distant spot, the time, the means decreed,
When they shall hear, and choose the promis'd seed;
Their future husband's will shall be reveal'd,
And they to love shall sweet subjection yield.

A pious matrons o the days of old,
A sheep appointed for the Shepherd's fold,
A woman great, the chosen Shunamite,
Decreed, by fate, to be the Lord's delight.

A prophet grave, upon a certain day,
By God's appointment was to pass that way;
Her feet were guided with this saint to meet,
And she constrain'd the man of God to eat.
The rev'rend sire with her request complies:
When God inclines, what servant e'er denies?
She ey'd her guest - his conversation heard,
And, as she thought, some rays divine appear'd.
She heard the blessing crav'd upon his food:
Observ'd his grave deport and heavenly mood;

With jealous eye his blissful state admir'd;
To know his God her teeming thoughts aspir'd.
The time's arriv'd - the prophet must depart;
Her guest she loses, and she's lost her heart;
His bened'mtion fastens on her mind,

The man is gone, the master stays behind
His word she ponders, and his word construes,
And for a second visit often sues;

The great Jehovah hers her mental pray'r,
And moves his saint to pay His visits there.
Her teeming mind no longer holds its own,
She to her husband makes the matter known;
What she observ'd and heard she'll now declare,
That he, her other-self, might have a share.
Behold, says she, the things that I perceive,
And with compliance my advice receive;

Our transient guest, who Shunem's path has trod,
Is, I perceive, an holy man of God.

I find his stated circuit lies this road,
And I'm inclin'd to build him some abode;
Let us, I pray, a little chamber make,

Receive this servant for his Masters sake.
 I've plann'd the building, furniture, and all,
 And think to fix it on that vacant wall;
 I'll set a table, candlestick, and bed,
 That he may have whereon to lay his head.
 And it shall be, whenever he comes this way,
 That I'll invite him oftentimes to stay;
 In times of darkness, or inclement weather,
 I'll importune, and make him turn in thither.
 We'll entertain him, and we'll lodge him too,
 For who can tell what God For us may do?
 Observe his converse, and his words attend,
 And we shall both be gainers in the end.
 My mind's impress'd to make this preparation,
 And I predict he'll use the habitation
 Grant my request - I'll own the impulse vain,
 If his kind Master sends him not again.
 The scheme's approv'd; the chamber's quickly rear'd,
 And when 'twas furnish'd then the sire appear'd;
 Or, so it fell, that on a certain day,
 The Lord directed him once more that was.
 The pious dame beholds the prophet come,
 And with entreaties kindly ask'd him home;
 She treats the man - he entertains her mind,
 She sows her carnal things, and reaps divine.
 They spend their eve, and then conclude with pray'r,
 The prophet sues to leave a blessing there;
 The time arrives that nature calls for rest,
 And to the room prepar'd she leads her guest.
 The saint he follow'd where the matron led,
 Survey'd the chamber, furniture, and bed,
 Admir'd her quick dispatch and tender care,
 And wonders much why she should want him there.
 The prophet ponders on the mystic scene,
 And wants to know what she by this can mean,
 And why her lib'ral heart should freely teem
 So many favours, unimplor'd by him.
 My Master's hand is in this woman's scheme,
 For pious acts like these must flow from him;
 Shall then Jehovah's saint find food and bed,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

While such a lib'ral host goes unrepay'd?
 Shall servants travel at their Master's charge?
 And will not God reward where he enlarge?
 I'm entertain'd for my great Master's sake,
 And 'tis more bless'd to give than 'tis to take.
 I'll have her brought, to see what views she hath,
 For I suspect this chamber's built in faith;
 I'll find the bottom ere I sleep to night -
 Gehazi, go, and call this Shunamite;
 And when she's come do thou accost her thus
 What shall reward thy tender care for us?
 I do approve thy kindness done to me,
 And now demand what shall be done for thee.
 I wish to know from whence thy motives spring,
 Wilt thou that I commend thee to the king?
 Or halt thou friends that would desire a post,
 To act beneath the captain of the host?
 I wish no friend of mine with blood to sport,
 Nor do I crave the pleasures of a court;
 In earthly pomp let those that choose excel,
 With my own people I'm content to dwell.
 She gave her answer, and she then withdrew,
 And left the prophet, that he might construe
 Her pious meaning, and her good intent,
 That no sinister ends were ever meant.
 The prophet wonders at her strange reply,
 But can't as yet unfold the mystery;
 He eyes the room, he turns his thoughts about,
 And is resolv'd to find this riddle out.
 He says - Gehazi, see this woman's care,
 And tell me now what I shall do for her;
 I do suspect a work of grace begun,
 What's done to me, is to my Master done.
 Gehazi answer'd - she's a barren styl'd,
 For I have heard she never bore a child;
 Her other-self to nature's charms is cold,
 She can't expect a seed, her husband's old.
 A barren womb! - her soul is barren too,
 No fruit divine, unless Jehovah woo:
 Sarah and Hannah - both their wombs were dead

And yet by faith they both conceiv'd and bred.

I much suspect a work of faith begun,
To strengthen which, I will predict a son;
The word may serve her feeble faith to lead
To Isra'l's hope the promis'd woman's seed.
The pregnant promise, God to Sarah gave,
Stands good to all who in the Lord believe;
Upon this word a thousand hopes have stood,
Which I'll repeat, and God shall make it good.

'The Word and Spirit God reveals to men,
Is that by which the saints are born again;
God now shall speak his own immortal word,
And she by mystic birth shall know the Lord.

The prophet now construes the matter plain,
And bids his servant call her up again;
Her reputation she shall now redeem,
And nourish faith her barren womb shall teem.

The servant calls her to the prophet's door,
Or somewhat closer than she stood before,
And said - next season, by the rules of life.
Thou shalt appear the mother and the wife.

She answer'd - Nay, my lord, thou man of God,
If barrens bear, the world will think it odd;
Soothe not thins handmaid in a false disguise,
Nor dare deceive, thou man of God, with lies.

Thus unbelief appears with brazen brow,
And contradicts the rev'rend prophet's vow;
The sire's amaz'd, no promise he'll renew,
But goes to bed - the Shunamite withdrew.

Shall unbelief thus triumph over faith,
And give the lie to what Jehovah saith?
Shall bold corruption spew her harden'd face
And counterveil the promises of grace?

Shall carnal reason mount the judgment seat,
Her husband's age with various pleas repeat?

Nay, give assent, believe the rev'rend sire,
Let God be true, but every man a liar.

The prophet left her in her unbelief,
Nor was the matron plunder'd by the thief;
The word took hold, the barren shall conceive,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

God will be faithful, though we don't believe.
 The prophet knew the promise would prevail,
 What God himself declares can never fail;
 But views her bold reply with such disdain,
 She must invite him ere he comes again.
 Her womb prolific, proves her undeceiv'd;
 Her time's appointed, and she then conceiv'd;
 Her faith shall triumph in her pregnant womb,
 And in her heart she finds a Saviour come.
 She sets her seal, and owns Jehovah true,
 His mystic work to wondrous ends construe;
 God's banner now to faith appears unfurl'd,
 And faith itself to overcome the world.
 She ponder'd o'er how all was brought about,
 And bless'd the day she found the prophet out.
 Her former thoughts appear with marks divine,
 And like a prophecy fulfill'd in fine.
 With joys divine she wants the hour to come,
 For sure her mind's as pregnant as her womb;
 The time's arriv'd, her nine months' race is run,
 The contradicting handmaid bears a son.
 Her soul is now inflam'd with love divine,
 Bold unbelief is banish'd from her mind;
 She eyes the distant Saviour long decreed,
 And in the type beholds the woman's seed.
 The son from day to day in stature grows,
 So her affections to her Saviour flows;
 In days like these we too securely stand,
 And seldom dream of troubles hard at hand.
 No pleasing frames like these unmix'd abide,
 Her thriving faith must now again be try'd;
 Or it shall fall, that on a certain day,
 The Lord that gave will surely take away.
 For so it fell, that when the child was grown,
 He'll see them reap the crop his sire had sown;
 God smites the child, the child is seiz'd with dread,
 And to his father cries, My head, my head.
 The father bids a lad, his servant, come,
 And orders him to take the darling home
 Convey him safe, of falt'ring steps beware,

Commit the infant to his mother's care.
The tender mother plac'd him on her knees,
With tears bewails his violent disease;
Requests the infant's life, but that's deny'd;
She holds him up till noon, and there he dy'd.
Is this the blessing unimplor'd bestow'd?
Is this the great reward the saint avow'd?
Shall all my kindness be rewarded so?
And am I doom'd to weep a mother's woe?
Did I this infant of the prophet crave?
Nay - I deny'd when he so freely gave;
I bid the prophet not deceive with guile,
I did not ask, nor yet expect a child.
And has the man of God his room forsook.
And on my grief does he disdain to look?
Since he the chamber has forsook and fled.
I'll lay the corpse where he himself has laid.
Had I implor'd this son, I'd been content;
On anxious cares the rod is ofen sent;
But I refus'd the offer when'twas made,
Yet I'm entangl'd, and the prophet's fled.
But who can tell what God may farther do?
His hand's divine, his promises are true;
Why should a resurrection strangely seem?
The word that bid me bear may quicken him.
It was a promise quicken'd first my womb,
And by a promise shall my Saviour come;
And I conceive, as far as faith can pry,
That in this child I've seen my Saviour die.
Die Jesus must! or else my hope is vain,
Nor can he save unless he rise again;
Cheer up, my soul! expect this strange surprise,
For in my son I'll see my Saviour rise.
My faith in this is far from void of doubt,
The prophet knows, and I will find him out;
I'll make him come where he has lodg'd before
She puts the corpse to bed, and shuts the door.
Thus big with hopes of what shall come to pass,
She bids her husband send the man and ass;
I'll ride to Carmel, it shall not be vain,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

I'll see the man of God, and come again.
 The steady husband disapproves her haste
 (Time spent in harvest must be spent in waste);
 He bids his dame her nasty tour delay
 Till the new moon, or else thee Sabbath-day.
 In faith she's mounted, and in faith she'll ride,
 When dame's in haste she scorns to be deny'd;
 Her present thoughts she now delays to tell,
 Send me the man and ass, it shall be well.
 The yielding husband urges no reply,
 Obeys her voice without a reason why;
 'Tis vain to parley if her mind is bent,
 She gave command - the retinue is sent.
 She brings the saddle, and equips the ass.
 And bids her servant ride the swiftest pace;
 Go forward, drive, nor dare to slack thy hand,
 Nor slack thy pace, except I give command.
 The trusty man obeys the matron's will.
 And ends his stage on Carmel's sacred hill;
 God sent the prophet, to behold afar
 The weeping mother in the hasty car.
 The man of God appears in some affright,
 And says - Gehazi, see that Shunamite;
 Go now, I pray, and search her welfare out,
 Her hasty visit fills my mind with doubt.
 Say now unto her - Is it well with thee?
 Thy husband also, tell me, how is he?
 And if she answers, as I hope she will,
 Then kindly ask her if the child is well.
 Her errand to the man she'll not declare,
 As ahe could never see God's image there;
 She answers well, and to the prophet ran,
 She wants the master's aid, but not the man.
 The pious prophet and the mother meet,
 While she arrests, and holds him by the feet;
 The servant comes to thrust the dame away,
 The prophet awes his violence to stay.
 The surly servant lets the dame alone,
 And she's too full of grief to make it known;
 He says - she's vex'd, this I plainly see,

But God has hid her grievous case from me.
The troubled mother breathes her honest plea -
 Did I, my lord, intreat a son of thee?
 Yea, I deny'd when thou the promise gave,
 I bid thee then beware and not deceive.
The prophet's mind is now reliev'd from doubt,
 By this he finds the matron's trouble out:
 No wonder sorrow bows her drooping head,
When God has struck the promis'd infant dead.
 The man of God admires her faith divine,
 Nor dares to raise a doubt upon leer mind;
 As she believ'd the child should rise again,
 He takes the work in hand - and not in vain.
Thrice happy soul! that's bless'd with such a grace,
 A pow'r that death itself can ne'er outface;
Saint Paul observes, this woman conquer'd death,
 'Tis left recorded in the acts of faith.
 Elisha bids Gehazi come in haste,
 Gird up thy loins, and run the swiftest pace;
 Prepare to go, and take my staff in hand,
 Nor dare salute the complimenting man.
 When servants go with messages divine,
 They claim the whole attention of the mind;
 If any force their salutations vain,
 Obey my voice, salute them not again.
Make haste to Shunem, enter there my room,
 Behold the dead, the fallen mortal's doom
 Behold the corpse is lying in my place,
 Lay thou my staff upon the infant's face.
In heart she vow'd he should not serve her so,
 'Twas thou at first occasion'd all my woe,
 Thou shalt not thus deceive the Shunamite,
 Nor send me off with such an hypocrite.
 Deceive me not, for I am fully bent,
 Thyself shall go, the sender, not the sent;
By God that lives I'll make thee walk with me,
 And as thy spirit lives I'll not leave thee.
 The woman urges, and the prophet yields,
 No ifs nor buts, in positives she deals;
 The prophet rose, the woman leads the van,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

And both pursue the path the servant ran.
 Gehazi steps with hasty strides before,
 To gain applause, he aims at nothing more;
 His vain attempts may make the woman laugh,
 She knew his faith was in his master's staff.
 He lays the stick upon the baby's face,
 And hopes to fix it on the proper place;
 His slight of hand proclaims his sad mistake,
 He comes, and cries, the child is not awake.
 This cry confirm'd the troubled Shunamite,
 She saw her judgment of the man was right;
 And wonders much how he could try the scheme,
 And why the prophet should be plagu'd with him,
 Thus hypocrites appear in false disguise,
 And think they veil the wisdom of the wise;
 He fawns and feigns, but still engenders doubt;
 The babe in grace will feel the serpent out.
 They learn the actions of the righteous saint,
 And wear the garb as harlots wear their paint;
 But if they preach, or if they join in pray'r,
 Do what they will, the serpent will appear.
 So he attempts to raise the infant dead,
 But looks no higher than the staff he laid;
 The mother hates the mimic's vain appearing,
 And he cries out, there's neither voice nor hearing.
 The rev'rend sire attains his journey's end,
 Where to the room she built she leads her friend;
 The prophet sees his long deserted bed,
 And in his place he finds the infant dead.
 He's mov'd to feel the weeping mother's grief,
 His soul's engag'd to bring her some relief;
 He seems confirm'd the child shall rise again,
 The door he closes on the praying twain.
 The fervent prophet calls upon the Lord,
 And begs the soul he took might be restor'd;
 Then he returns, and travels to and fro,
 To watch if God would send it back or no.
 He goes again, and lays upon the child,
 His mind is agitated all the while;
 He grasps his hands, he meets his mouth and eyes,

While faith commands, and bids the dead arise.

What faith demands Jehovah will perform,
The prophet feels the corpse is getting warm;
He then return'd, and to the house he went,
The pensive mother waits the strange event.

Again the prophet to the chamber goes,
And on the corpse himself again he throws;
He still expects to bring the dead to life,
But finds a cope with death a stubborn strife.

At last the infant seven times it sneez'd,
The prophet heard it, and his mind was eas'd;
He looks again, and sees the dead arise,
The sleeping corpse had open'd both his eyes.

The man of God beholds it with delight,
And bids his servant call the Shunamite;
With pregnant hope she to the chamber run,
The prophet points, and bids her take her son.
She sees the babe, and on the ground she fell
(The triumphs gain'd by grace are hard to tell)

Her unbelief must now again retreat;
Her soul's surrender'd at the prophet's feet.

She rises up, and to the infant goes,
Whose sad departure caused all her woes;
With joy and grief her tender bowels yearn,
While love to God begins afresh to burn.

Like one bewilder'd, or in pensive thought,
She takes the infant back the prophet brought;
With warm affections, and with thoughts devout,
She hugs the darling, and conveys him out.

Such souls as these the great Jehovah law'd,
By such he spreads his wondrous fame abroad;
While future saints, who in such paths have trod,
Admire the mystic ways that lead to God.

In this we see how each event agreed,
To lead the matron to the promis'd seed;
Both centric and eccentric wheels conspire,
And each in motion rais'd her faith the higher.
First God directs the prophet's wand'ring feet,
And she with him promiscuously shall meet;
Her mind's impell'd to entertain the man,

A DIVINE POEM OF THE SHUNAMITE

And this shall bring to tight the mystic plan.
 She must attend the prophet's words divine,
 While God impress'd them on the woman's mind;
 The prophet goes at his appointed hour,
 But not the word, nor the impulsive pow'r.
 She meditates to find his meaning out,
 And wish'd a second visit brought about;
 The ear of God attends to her complaint,
 To strengthen faith, again he sends the saint.
 By this encouragement she's led to pray,
 And now believes he'll often come that way;
 She builds a room to entertain the sire,
 And arms to catch the prophet's glowing fire.
 Like pious Jacob, with his peeled rod,
 Stuck in the gutters where the flocks had trod,
 While in a dream he sees the horned sire
 Beget the spotted and the spangled hire;
 So she contrives to fix this little trap,
 And caught the lot of wisdom in her lap;
 The prophet comes, approves her tender care,
 Predicts and promises a blessing there.
 He speaks the word - 'tis God's immortal seed,
 To help her faith, her barren womb shall breed;
 The time arrives - she brings the infant forth,
 By which she sees her Saviour's future birth.
 In time she's led to see redemption's plan,
 The way in which the Lord would ransom man;
 God smites the child, her growing faith to try,
 While in the type faith sees her Saviour die.
 In deep distress to Carmel she'll repair;
 The wand'ring prophet is directed there;
 His sympathetic soul must feel her grief,
 While faith shall prompt to seek divine relief.
 Upon his knees he heav'n itself assails,
 That she might see how faith with God prevails;
 He then parades, and eyes Jehovah's hand,
 To watch and pray is a divine command.
 God never bade his servants seek in vain,
 He craves a soul departed back again;
 God hears his cry, the soul returns to prison,

The joyful mother sees a Saviour risen.
She now believes what Sadducees deny'd,
The glorious truth which Deists now deride;
She's well confirm'd that God can raise the dead,
He's rais'd her son, and rais'd her drooping head.
Her hope prolific teems with joys to come,
She sends her thoughts to meet the genial doom;
In hope divine my flesh to dust shall go,
God rais'd my son - he'll raise the mother too.

A LETTER TO MR. SANGSTER,

No. 8, Winkworth's-buildings, Old-street, City-road.

Dear Sir,

If my heart was as steady in its motions as the husband of the Shunamite, who could trust every event till the new moon or Sabbath day, I had deferred sending this present till the beginning of months, or New-year's-day, at which season presents and compliments are much in fashion; then it might have served for a New-year's gift; but our blessed Apostle lays no stone on a springing well, nor fetters the tongue that is seasoned with grace, though it be as full of motion as the hand of a ready writer. He tells us to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, and to be instant in season and out of season; and I believe entertaining the minds of God's people, and keeping their thoughts employed about heavenly things, is a work of the Lord.

If the Paschal lamb was too big for an Israelitish family, the master was to invite his neighbour, as there were to be no fragments left for the next day; the morrow was to take thought for the things of itself. Job seems to observe the former rule; he ate not his morsel alone. If I find a cluster with a blessing in it, or get among the pleasant fruits that our beloved has laid up at our gates. I cannot sleep till I have imprisoned them on a bit of paper, nor rest satisfied till they are packed up and sent off to somebody, though I know I shall shortly be obliged to beg for more. Whatever be found under the priest's hand, of sacred things, it is lawful to give it to those of the household, even to the shew-bread; for if the shew-bread prefigured the Saviour, we are to hold him forth in the word of life. If it prefigured the believer, we are to hold him up to God in prayer. A Christian can never be too busy. He that is sluggish in his profession, is sent to the ant to learn her ways, and be wise; whose wisdom lies in providing her food in the summer. I will not say that by instinct she is instructed to know there is a winter, but it is clear that the

beams of the sun draw her forth to labour; and her industry is equal to that of the husbandman, who makes hay while the sun shines. Nor is she a whit behind him, seeing she provideth her “meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest,” Prov. vi. 6.

God has furnished his children with a multitude of teachers, if we could but observe them. A gospel is our summer and harvest, in which the Sun of Righteousness shines in our horizon; “life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel;” which, if cordially received, is meat indeed. This wonderful lesson is taught us by the instinct of the ant.

The saving knowledge of God, and the invaluable worth of the gospel, is taught us by the instinct of the ox and the ass; “the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel loth not know (either his God or his word), my people doth not consider,” Isa. i. 3.

The visitations of God in a preached gospel, and the certainty of that gospel being removed from us, or were moved from that to judgment by death, is taught us by the instinct of the stork, the turtle, the crane, and the swallow; “yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord,” Jer. viii. 7.

The danger that a soul is exposed to while out of Christ, the only rock of help - the necessity of flying from the wrath to come - and the safety of those that fly for shelter to “the cleft of that rock,” Song ii. 14, is taught us by the instinct of the coney, “the conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks,” Prov. xxx. 26.

The nauseous pharisaical hypocrite, that creeps into the church of God, and yet dares to hatch the cockatrice egg of free-will, and weave the spider’s web of self righteousness, while he sits under the gospel, Isa. lix. 5; Job, viii, 14; is pointed out by the bold and subtle instinct of the spider - “the spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings’ palaces,” Prov. xxx. 28.

To be short. The Christian is taught to be bold by the Lion, Prov. xxx. 30. To be swift by the greyhound, Prov. xxx. 31. To be comely in his walk by the he-goat, Prov. xxx. 31. To be wise by the serpent. To be industrious by the ant. To cleave to the Rock of Salvation by the coney. To be heavenly-minded and quick sighted by the eagle. To be harmless by the dove. To know his Lord by the ox. To cleave to the Lord’s word by the ass. To follow the light and heat of the gospel by the swallow. And to shun every rock of error by the skilful mariner, lest he make shipwreck of faith.

I am, dear Sir, your, &c.

William Huntington.

POSTSCRIPTS

Bless'd are the loving twain that walk the road
That leads at last to Zion's bles'd abode;
The hallow'd path is like the shining light,
By which they shun the glooms of endless night.
The heedful traveller observes his path,
And seeks direction of his Lord by faith;
His mind compos'd upon his master's staid,
He feels him out, and finds his heav'nly aid.
This mystic path he walks in filial fear,
And finds no brute, no rav'nous monster there;
None but the saint can walk this milky way,
The child of darkness shuns the heavenly ray.
At each by - path he'll stop, he'll pray, and wait,
Till Christ appears, and makes the crooked straight,
Lest the wayfaring soul should trip or stray,
He bids us take the stumbling blocks away.
If God deserts him, he bemoans his loss,
Till he erects the standard of the cross;
Again he travels, void of doubt or fear,
While he discerns Jehovah's banner there.
Upon this path no fool shall ever err,
Because Jehovah is his guide and cure;
All roughs and mounts that Satan dares to throw,
God smooths the one, and brings the other low.
The word's a map, by which he learns the way,
And while he walks by that, he cannot stray;
He follows those whose souls are now with God,
And marks the steps that ancient saints have trod.
Jehovah says that such shall dwell aloft,
And see the promis'd land, though distant off;
The King immortal he by faith shall spy,
And see his beauty with a longing eye.
The host of heaven guard him on the way,
Nor leave their charge till he's in endless day;
His bless'd Redeemer travels by his side,
Nor is his wanted presence long deny'd.
At length he finds he's ne'er to end his race,
And eyes the great reward that comes by grace;

His shatter'd frame is bow'd upon the bed,
 While arms divine support the drooping head.
 His busy faith maintains her mighty hold,
 While hope expects the vision to unfold;
 The snares of death invade the heav'nly mind,
 But through the gloom faith sees a beam divine.
 The flesh unpanoply'd will fear the stroke,
 The soul to lend it help will God invoke;
 The blessed Saviour own'd, when low and meek,
 The spirit's willing, but the, flesh is weak.
 If heart and flesh through fear of death should fail;
 The Spirit breathes a strong and heav'nly gale
 To answer pray'r the Lord appears at length,
 He feeds the mind, and props the heart with strength.
 If sunk with grief, or rack'd with mortal pain,
 To make his bed the Lord will not disdain:
 His tender aid shall bear his spirit up,
 His end is peace, his flesh shall rest in hope.
 At last he breathes the ripen'd spirit forth,
 God takes the soul who gave it first its birth
 To heav'n it flies, the angels bear it in,
 And thus he ends his journey and his sin.

THE MUSIC AND ODOURS OF SAINTS

**A SERMON, PREACHED AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL,
 SEPTEMBER 2, 1787.**

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." Rev. v. 8.

THIS chapter begins thus, "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals." The glorious person here represented on the throne is, in my humble opinion, God the Father. The throne is not the throne of judgment; for although he has "prepared his throne for judgment," Psalm ix. 7, yet he is not seated upon that as yet, for the judgment day is not arrived; besides, the throne of judgment is given up to our blessed Immanuel; "for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son," John, v. 22. Nor is a throne of grace here intended; for Christ himself is the throne of grace: "grace is poured into his lips, and God hath blessed him for ever,"

Psalm xlv. 2. "It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell," Col. i. 19, that we might "receive out of his fullness grace for grace," John, i. 16. God has treasured up all grace in him, and nowhere else, for there is "salvation in no other name."

In the ark of Christ's body is every spiritual blessing deposited, as the hidden manna was laid up in the ark of the covenant; he is our sanctuary, our glorious throne, and our propitiation. As the law, and the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, were laid up in the ark under the mercies seat, so in Christ is the magnified law laid up - "thy law is within my heart." Aaron's blooming, rod, which prefigured the church in gospel times, which is called a "royal priesthood," I Peter, ii. 9; and the "rod of an almond tree," Jer. i. 11; together with the golden pot of manna, which prefigured the comfortable grace of life, are all in their spiritual signification to be found and enjoyed in Christ Jesus. The ark of the testament is now opened in heaven; and to "him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone," Rev. ii. 17, which is the witness of God's spirit.

Thus the ark, with all its mysterious treasures, is now to be found in heaven; and blessed be God it is opened in the church, and poor sinners are led to see that the ark with all its contents, and the mercies seat thereon, prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our throne of grace, our propitiation, and our only mercies seat. It was on him that the sentence of the law was executed; it was of him that Justice got an infinite satisfaction; "justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth shall go before thy face," Psalm lxxxix. 14.

The Saviour, as a throne of grace, was shewed in an obscure manner by the prophet Isaiah, where he is represented under the name Eliakim: "It shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house," Isa. xxii. 21-24. In the above text you have Christ represented as the everlasting father of his people, he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; secondly, as a glorious throne to the household of faith; thirdly, as a nail fastened in a sure place, that every vessel of mercy may hand, their hopes and expectations on him for time and eternity; and fourthly, you have him held forth as a sovereign, having the keys of David; which are now found, not in the hand of Eliakim, but in the hand of Christ: "Write

these things saith he [Christ] that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth,” Rev. iii. 7. Thus it appears, that not a throne of judgment, nor a throne of grace is intended here, but rather a throne of glory, upon which God the Father sat.

Of the book that he had in his right hand, which is said to be written within, and on the back side sealed with seven seals, I shall treat from the words of my text, where the Saviour is said to take the book.

In the second verse, “a strong angel with a loud voice is making proclamation - Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof.” Whosoever he be that can take this book had need of infinite wisdom to open the seals and disclose the divine mysteries; he had need be a friend to sinners, to dispense the blessings of it to them; he had need of an omnipotent power, to execute the vengeance it contains; for he that opens it must reward the just, judge the wicked, and destroy the world; and he had need of omniscience, to search the hearts and try the reins of men, to know how and where to apply them. For this wonderful book contains all things that shall come to pass in the world and church, till the “mystery of God be finished,” and “time be no more.”

“And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon,” verse 3. No man in heaven (not Christ himself if he is no more than man), neither the spirits of just men made perfect, nor any of the saints in a militant state, was able to open the book; “nor no man on earth;” either saint or sinner, wise or unwise, noble or ignoble, learned or illiterate “neither was any under the earth” ? either damned souls, or damned devils, able to open this book, loose its seals, or look into its contents.

“And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon,” verse 4. John saw the need of a mediator, a prophet, and an advocate; one to undertake as a mediator, make known the mysteries as a prophet, and plead the cause of the just as an advocate; and he saw no man in heaven, earth, or hell, that was worthy of either of these offices, or able for such an undertaking. He must be equal to God that does it, or he cannot transact with God for us; and he must be man also, or be cannot undertake for man. In short, he must be “God’s equal” and “man’s fellow;” that takes the book. Christ can do it, for he thought it no robbery to be equal with God;” Phil. ii. 6. therefore he can transact with God; and as he is “man’s fellow;” he can transact for man, and sympathize with him, especially as he is “anointed with the oil of gladness above all his fellows,” Psalm xlv. 7, who were to have “fellowship with him,” I John, i. 3, by

being “joined to him,” and made of “one spirit with him,” I Cor. vi. 17.

“And one of the elders said unto me, weep not; behold, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof;” verse 5. Here you have the terrible and powerful majesty of the Saviour set forth by a lion, called the “lion of the tribe of Judah,” because ‘tis evident that Christ sprang from that tribe, Heb. vii. 14, as touching his manhood; and yet this lion is the everlasting father of Judah with respect to his Godhead; hence Judah is called “a lion’s whelp, that went up from the prey,” Gen. xlix. 9, from being a prey to the lion of the bottomless pit, by faith in the lion of heaven, which is God: “The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?” Amos, iii. 8. Christ is here called the “root of David; because David derived his being from him as the God of nature and the creator of the world, “all things were made by Christ,” Col. i. 16. David derived his spiritual life from him as the God of grace, “Christ is the resurrection and the life;” and David expected to be glorified by him as the King of glory; “thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and receive me into glory,” Psalm lxxiii. 24. Hence the Psalmist so often calls him his Lord, his King, his Redeemer, his Saviour, and the King of Glory; “Lift up your heads ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall enter in,” Psalm xxiv. 9. Thus Jesus as God is David’s root, and as man be is David’s offspring; “I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star,” Revelations, xxii. 16.

“The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book.” This lion hath prevailed over the lion of the bottomless pit; over sin, the devil’s essence; and over death, sin’s “first born;” and over “destruction, the first-born of death,” Job, xviii. 13. He hath prevailed, and led captivity captive; spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly. This is the all-conquering lion that made the devil feel the rod of his strength when he dethroned him, and cast him out of sinners’ hearts, destroyed his works, and marred his kingdom; and will at last destroy him with a dreadful destruction, and crush him beneath the feet of all his saints; as sure as Moses’ rod, when turned into a serpent, devoured all the serpent, produced by magic or infernal art.

This lion hath prevailed, not only over the world and the devil, but he hath prevailed with God also in behalf of his people. By his obedience, he prevailed to disarm the law of its curse; by prayer, he prevailed with his father for us; by death, he prevailed with justice; by his resurrection, he prevailed over death; and as a mediator, high priest, and advocate, he must ever prevail in heaven; for all power, and all judgment, are committed to him he is ascended far above all heavens, enthroned, glorified, and set down at

the right hand of the majesty on high," Heb. i. 3.

The "diadem of David is removed," and the crown put on the Saviour; all other crowns must submit to his, for all must be abased before him, and be obedient to him. He that humbled himself—he that was meek and lowly, must now be exalted, and "wear both the crown and diadem," Ezek. xxi. 26. And he proclaimed, through heaven and earth, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." Is this the case? Then oh, my soul, submit thou to his sceptre; take the oath of allegiance, and kiss the hands of this wonderful, all-conquering, and terrible majestic sovereign, as thou art commanded to do, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry," Psalm ii. 12. and say, with a loyal and loving heart, "O king, live for ever;" and this of him will be neither falsehood nor flattery.

"And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth," verse 6. I shall not mention the lamb here, the beasts, nor the elders, as they are included in my text, but drop a few words upon the horns and eyes. By the horns you are to understand the majestic or kingly power of Christ; David was "anointed with oil out of an horn," I Sam. xvi. 1; hence he often speaks of "his horn," Ps. xcii. 10; and of "his horn being exalted with honour," Ps. cxii. 9; which horn signified the kingly power and authority that God had given him; and as the Saviour was to spring, from David, he is called a "bud" from his horn, who was to govern Zion for ever: "God hath chosen Zion, he has desired it for his habitation; there will I make the horn of David to bud. I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed; his enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish," Psalm cxxxii. 16, 17. This was fulfilled at the appearance of Christ; "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began," Luke, i. 68-70. Blessed be his name this is fulfilled; our mighty horn of salvation is exalted, and he makes all his people "kings and priests;" he "anoints us with his spirit," 2 Cor. i. 21; "crowns us with knowledge," Prov. xiv. 18; and "with loving-kindness and tender mercy" Ps. ciii. 4; "and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. v. 10; because we are upheld by his hand; "he has horns coming out of his hand, and there is the hiding of his power Hab. iii. 4.

But you will say, why is he represented as having seven horns? Every horn has its signification; ten horns are called "ten kings," Rev. xvii. 12. And Jesus Christ is a king in a seven-fold sense, represented by seven horns; he is anointed with the seven-fold gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, and on

his head are many crowns, as well as many horns: First he is "King of Glory," Psalm xxiv. 7. Secondly, King of Zion - "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," Psalm ii. 6. Thirdly, He is, as Tidal was, King of Nations - "Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations," Jer. x. 7; he has power over all flesh, "that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him," John, xvii. 2. Fourthly, He is King of kings - "by him kings reign, and princes decree justice," Prov. viii. 15. Fifthly, He is King over sin; sin is said to "reign unto death," Rom. v. 21; but Christ hath destroyed that monster - "he was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John, iii. 8, and grace by him reigns over sin. Sin shall not have dominion over the saints, for they are under grace; and "grace shall reign through righteousness to life eternal," Rom. v. 21.

Sixthly, Christ is King, over Death-which is called the "king of terrors," Job, xviii. 14. "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, over all them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Rom. v. 14; but Christ ransomed his people from the power of the grave, and redeemed them from death; he was the plague of death, and the destruction of the grave, Hosea, xiii. 14, and "must reign till he hath put down all rule, all authority, and all power; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," 1 Cor. 15, 25, 26. Seventhly, Christ is King over devils, though against their will; he demolishes the kingdom of Satan, and translates sinners out of his dark dominions into his own kingdom, and into marvellous light, having destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, Heb. ii. 14, and "led him captive," and will bruise him under our feet shortly.

Thus Christ is King of Glory, and the head of all principalities and powers; the King of Zion - King of nations - King of kings - King over sin, and sin's dominion - King over death - and King over devils; "and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Isa. ix. 7.

This wonderful lamb with seven horns is said to have seven eyes, which are the "seven spirits of God sent forth into an the earth." These seven spirits are not seven angels; for though the church be called "the apple of the Lord's eye," Zech. ii. 8, yet angels are never so called, that I remember; nor is the number of angels that attend the church of God confined to seven. Elisha had the whole "mountains round about covered with them at Dothan," 2 Kings. vi. 17; and Jacob saw such a number of them on the plains of Mabanaim, that he calls them "an host," Gen. xxxii. 2. They all minister to the children of God in turn; not a small number only - as it is written, "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i. 14; and if all are ministering spirits, and all sent forth to minister, they cannot be so small a number as seven, seeing we read

of “twenty thousand” at one place, Psalm lxxviii. 17, and “twelve legions” at another, Matt. xxvi. 53.

But rather the Holy Ghost is intended; the number seven implying the perfection of Deity, he being a person in the Godhead, and equal to the Father and the Son; from whom, in conjunction with the Father and the Son, this revelation is sent to the churches, Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the “faithful and true witness,” Rev. i. 4, 5. Or the Spirit’s seven-fold gifts may be intended by the number “seven agreeable to ancient prophecy,” “And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord,” Isa. xi. 2.

These seven eyes are quoted from ancient prophecy, which came to Joshua when the corner-stone of the second temple was laid; which was to point Joshua to Christ the chief corner-stone, that is set at nought of so many builders. “Behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one stone shall be several eyes. Behold, I will engrave the gravings thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day,” Zech. iii. 9. This text I have often heard handled, and the seven eyes have been held forth as all sorts of eyes looking to Christ, some for help, and some out of envy. However, they are the eyes of the Lamb, and the eyes of him who is the stone of Israel. “For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven: “They are the eyes of the Lord [not men nor devils’ eyes], which run to and fro through the whole earth,” Zech. iv. 10. seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, are said to be “sent forth into all the earth,” Rev. v. 6; agreeable to the Saviour’s promise, “It is expedient for you that I go away for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you,” John, xvi. 7; which, blessed be his precious name, he has. He has sent forth this “sevenfold unction” or “eye-salve,” which is to “anoint our eyes that we may see,” Rev. iii. 18. These seven eyes of the Lord are sent forth into all the earth, “that we who were once darkness might be made light in the Lord,” Eph. v. 8. Upon the church of God there hath been, and still is, a large measure of the Spirit of God; and though not in all his fullness, yet in all his seven-fold operations, and to each living member of the mystical body of Christ, “a measure to profit withal.” Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man,

to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the “word of wisdom,” which makes a man wise in the mysteries of God, and wise to salvation through faith; “to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit,” that he may take Christ for himself, whom to know is eternal life, and know how to speak a word in season to others; “to another, faith by the same Spirit,” that he may believe to the justification of his soul, and strengthen the faith of others; “to another, the gifts of hearing by the same Spirit,” for the good of the church, “that bodily and spiritual diseases may be healed by the great Physician to another, the working of miracles,” that the apostles might by them confirm their mission and commission; “to another, prophecy,” that a minister may forewarn the churches of evil to come, and strengthen them against them, and foretell them of good to come, and encourage their hope to expect it; “to another, discerning of spirits,” that a minister may try those upstarts that say they are apostles or evangelists, and “prove them liars, if they are not,” Rev. ii. 2; “to another, divers kinds of tongues,” that ministers may overthrow the false constructions that erroneous men, or carnal scholars, have put upon the word of God; “and to another, the interpretation of tongues,” that the pure, uncorrupted sense of scripture, may be handed down to us, instead of old wives’ fables and country tales, that turn from the truth, and that hard or difficult parts of scripture might be made plain to our shallow comprehensions. “But all these worketh that one and the self same spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will,” I Cor. xii. 4-11.

These are the seven eyes and the seven spirits of God, or the Holy Ghost, who is perfect God, in his seven-fold gifts and graces, who will never leave the earth, till the last elected soul that ever shall be called by grace or born again of the Spirit: for thus runs the covenant; “The word that I have put in thy mouth, and the spirit that I have put upon thee, shall never depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, from henceforth and for ever,” Isa. lix. 21. Hence we may conclude, that the Spirit of God will never leave the earth, till the mystery of iniquity be revealed by his light; Antichrist consumed by him, as the breath of Christ’s mouth; and “the mystery of God be finished, as he hath declared by his servants the prophets,” Rev. x. 7.

“And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne,” v. 7. Christ having come forth from the Father, and completed the work he gave him to do, he now was ascended to the Father, and drew nigh unto him. According to Daniel’s vision, “he came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,

and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," Dan. vii. 13, 14; which is a prophecy of the Saviour's coronation in heaven, which prophecy is fulfilled in this chapter, and confirmed in the next. "And there was a crown given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer," Rev vi. 2. And we find that the coronation-anthem is sung in this chapter upon the reception of this book, "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing," Rev. v. 12. It is "a copy of his kingdom" that he is here going, to receive, "in which he will meditate day and night," Deut. xvii. 18, 19; and order his throne, and manage his government with wisdom infinite, and rectitude divine, till his kingdom of grace shall be consummated in everlasting glory, and Zion's king be acknowledged the "king eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God, worthy of all honour and glory for ever. Amen." 1 Tim. i. 17: "all authority and all power beside being put down," I Cor. xv. 24. This will then be acknowledged, and then we shall "speak of the glory of this kingdom, and talk of the power. His mighty acts shall be made known," when we are made "perfect in knowledge, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom," Psal. cxlv. 11, 12, shall be displayed in the eternal blessedness of his subjects.

I come now to the words of my text - "And when he had taken the book [sealed with seven seals], the four beasts, and four-and twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having, every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." I will offer my thoughts under the following heads.

1st, What this "sealed book" is, which is here received by the Lamb.

2dly, What these "four beasts" are who appear in company with the elders.

3dly, Who these "four and twenty elders" are, that "fall down" with "the beasts."

4thly, The object of their adoration, "the Lamb," and why so called. it.

5thly, The music or melody of their "harps," and the cause of it.

6thly, What "their golden vials" are, and why called so.

7thly, and lastly, Describe their "odours," said to be "the prayers of all saints," and what a saint is.

First, What book is this which God the Father held forth and which none but the preveiling Lion of the tribe of Judah could receive and open. I answer, it is not the "book of the law." That the Mediator received, with all its commands, conditions, contents, and curses, before he entered upon his public ministry. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then

said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips; O Lord, thou knowest." Psal. xl. 6-9. This ancient prophecy had been fulfilled before this "sealed book" was delivered to him, which was not done till the Saviour had finished the work of redemption. "He is the Lamb slain" that receives this book; which shews that he had been crucified under the curse of the law, and entered the Holy of Holies with his own blood, before the delivery of this sealed book. In short, the Saviour had magnified the law, and made it honourable, by a life of perfect conformity thereto; he had preached it in all its spiritual meaning, as no other ever did, or ever will do; and by his making his soul an offering for sin, he had endured the curse of it, and thus delivered his own elect from the command of it [to do for life], and redeemed them from the curse of it [which condemns to hell]; and as a law magnified, and disarmed of its killing power, he keeps it in his own hand, that we may find access to God by a new and living way, "through the veil of his flesh" - without being arrested, captured, or cursed, by that fiery dispensation.

The law being thus magnified, and the righteousness of it "preached in the great congregation," the law in its spiritual meaning had been published by the Saviour, and made known in the world to thousands. Therefore this sealed book cannot be that; for this had not been revealed to the sons of men when John saw it delivered, as appears plain by the "seals being closed," which were afterwards opened in their order.

Nor is this book the "book of God's remembrance," which he keeps in behalf of them that fear the Lord, and speak often one to another, to whom God hearkens, and whose conversation the Lord bears; "and a book of remembrance is written before him, for them that fear him, and think on his name," Mal. iii. 1.6.

Nor is the black catalogue of sinners' ungodly deeds intended by this book, which is a book of remembrance also, which God swears he will never forget; "The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob" (that is, by himself), "surely I will never forget any of their works," Amos, viii. 7. Sin makes an awful impression on this book, as well as on the book of conscience. "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table of their heart," Jer. xvii. 1. The point of this diamond will cut deep, when the dreadful eye of Justice makes the sinner's heart transparent, and the awakening flames of wrath make conscience susceptible of feeling. But all these books will be opened at the great decisive day, to the astonishment and eternal triumph of the just, and to the endless shame, confusion, and contempt of the wicked, Daniel, xii. 2; vii. 10.

Nor is the “book of life” meant by this book, in which the names and number of all the elect are enrolled, who are said to have “their names written in the book of life,” Phil. iv. 3; “and written among the living, in Jerusalem, who are to be called holy,” Isa. iv. 3; and all “whose name was not found written in this book, were cast into the lake of fire,” Rev. xx. 15. But this book of life had been made known more or less by the ancient prophets, in a mysterious way; “and afterwards was spoken by the Lord, and confirmed to others by them that heard him,” Heb. ii. 3. The book of life was published before the reception of this book in my text; and many had received the blessings of it, and cried out under the quickening influence, as Peter did, “To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life,” John, vi. 68. The Saviour owned himself that he had delivered this book: “I have given them the words that thou gavest me, and they have received them,” John, xvii. 8. Yea, he had sent the Spirit to make it known, and apply the benefits of it: and he had commanded them “to preach all the words of this life; and life and immortality had been brought to light,” in the minds and hearts of thousands, through the gospel; yea, all “that believed had passed from death unto life, and had everlasting life in them,” which is the blessed contents of the book of life, and the reason why it is so called; many that “were dead in trespasses and sins had been quickened together with Christ, God having forgiven them all trespasses;” and John himself had been long a preacher of the word of life, and was at this time banished to the Isle of Patmos for it.

Seeing, this book is not the book of the law, nor the book of life, nor the book of God’s remembrance, although there may be some of all these things in it; yet the above books of law and gospel cannot be said to be sealed, as this book is; for, as was before observed, they had been made known to thousands, both Jews and Gentiles. To be short, Christ had preached the law and obeyed both precept and penalty as a priest. He had preached the gospel of eternal life as a prophet, and was now going to ascend his throne as a king; and it is the book of his kingdom that he here receives, in which lies the whole of his government both of church and world; and hence he is represented as king, and conqueror, governing his subjects, and subduing his enemies throughout this book, until his kingdom be settled in heaven, and his vanquished enemies imprisoned in hell.

This book has an allusion to what Samuel did when Saul was anointed; “And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord,” I Sam. x. 24, 25. This sealed book of the Saviour’s kingdom was laid up before the Lord;

that is, in his secret purpose; and is now given to our elder brother, who is to reign over us: "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me. Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose; one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests and Levites," Deut. xvii. 14-19. In this passage we have an account of a brother that is to reign over us; which blessed character Christ bears - "he is a brother born for adversity." He is to have a copy out of the law, and out of that which is before the priests and Levites; and it may be observed, that almost if not the whole of this sealed book is extracted from Moses and the prophets.

This book or copy of the kingdom, which is sealed with seven seals is the very book out of which my text is taken, called the Book of the Revelation, as appears from the first chapter, where it is styled, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that bear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand," Rev. i. 1-3.

It is true, a great part of this book was seen by Daniel in a vision; yet he has a command: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end," Dan. xii. 4. and although Daniel's vision was recorded, yet that part which concerns anti-christ, and the suffering church of the Gentiles under that monster of iniquity, lay hid as close as this with its seven seals, until the Lord revealed this; a great part of which is a key to that, and a certain prediction of all revolutions, vicissitudes, and events, that shall take place in the church, in antichrist, and in all kingdoms and dominions of the world; until the angel of the everlasting covenant, the God of heaven, earth, and sea, is revealed as the accomplisher of all the prophecies of this book, which he will hold in his hand when he closes the scene.

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. And he had in his hand a little book open, and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, the mystery of God should be finished," Rev. chap. 10.

2dly. This book is said to be “sealed on the back side with seven seals.” The seals denote the secret mysteries and mysterious depths of its contents; it contains the secret mysteries of God’s will; the Holy Ghost is both the seals and the sealer. What is written with the “finger of God,” Dan. v. 5, and sealed by the Holy Ghost, can never be made known by any but him who is Lord and Keeper of the privy-seal of heaven; Christ “has the seal of the living God,” Rev. vii. 2. He was “in the bosom of the Father,” and hath revealed the Father, and his mind and will also; for “all things,” saith the Saviour, “that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you,” John, xv. 15; and as he hath the seal, “he can open and none can shut, and shut, and none can open,” Rev. iii. 7: for all power is given unto him both in heaven and earth, and he hath committed all judgment unto the Son, John, v. 22; and caused all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge to be hid in him; therefore he makes known the mysteries to his servants the prophets, and feeds his people “with the bread of eternal life, for him hath God the Father sealed,” John. vi. 27.

The seals may serve to shew us that none but those who are sealed by the Spirit to the day of redemption, can ever understand this book; and indeed it is dedicated and directed to the seven churches, and to none else. The seals may represent the certain accomplishment of the prophecies of this book, as sealing, shews a thing to be ratified and confirmed; which shews that the devil and anti-christ shall continue no longer than the time appointed, nor prevail any further than the limited power permitted and made known in this book: “What is written by God’s finger, and sealed by God’s sevenfold seal, may no man reverse,” Est. viii. 8. Hence we may conclude, that this “revelation of things is certain, and the accomplishment will be sure,” Dan. ii. 45.

3dly. As seals make a deep impression, it shews that the deep things contained under these seals will sink deep, and leave a lasting impression wherever or upon whomsoever they may fall, whether in a way of mercy or of judgment; so that they will acknowledge it to come from the court of heaven; as appears from the strange effects that the opening of each seal produced in the world and church, which have, and will leave a stamp of infinite divinity behind; so that all shall acknowledge, as the magicians did, “that this is the finger of God.”

4thly. A seal is a kind of security. A thing, written and sealed is secured to the proper owner; closed and shut up from all others. Hence the saints are called “living epistles known and read of all men,” because the “law is written on the fleshly tables of their hearts by the Spirit of the living God,” 2 Cor. iii. 3; by which they are sealed also; “and grieve not the holy Spirit of God, by which you are sealed to the day of redemption,” Eph. iv. 30. This is

the saints' security and foundation of comfort, and is effectually known to none but God and themselves; "nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, God knoweth them that are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. This seal then secures the contents of this book, whether it be "the portion of that wicked man of sin "from God," Job, xx. 29; or whether it be the cup of Zion's afflictions, that her adversaries have filled or shall fill to her, which they shall receive in their turn double. "it shall be measured unto them double," Rev. xviii. 6. The number seven shews the perfection of the seals, the sealer, and of all things that are sealed; to the Spirit they are all known, for he searches the deep things of God. The Saviour, who is God, and has all the fullness of the Spirit on him, knows them all, "and reveals them to us by the Spirit," I Cor. ii. 10; hence those that have "ears to hear" are exhorted in this book "to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," Rev. ii. 7. Which leads me to my second general head.

"And when he had taken the book" - or received it in order to loose the seals, unfold the mysteries, and send the contents of it by his angel unto his servant John, who was to see these things in the visions of God, understand them by the Spirit upon him, and to write them as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, and to send them for instruction and direction, as a caution and a cordial to the seven churches that were in Asia, and by and from them to be handed down to the church of God in all succeeding ages as a revelation from heaven, with this liberty granted, "he that hath an ear let him hear, what the Spirit saith unto the churches," which is a grant to all to whom these presents shall come greeting, or to all those whom it may concern, or have any concern about the salvation of their souls by faith in Christ Jesus. "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." It contains an awful warning also, and an irrevocable denunciation of vengeance on all that die in the bosom of the whore of Babylon, or are converted to Popery - "I will kill her children with death," Rev. ii. 23. But I proceed to the substance of my second head.

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts" - Whatever these four beasts are, it is clear that all through this book they are honoured with the first view of all that is disclosed by the opening of the seals, and were employed in inviting others to behold the wonders revealed and made known by the opener of the seals - "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, 'Come and see,'" Rev. vi. 1. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, "Come and see," Rev. i. 3. "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see," Rev. vi. 5. " And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the

fourth beast say, "Come and see," Rev.vi.7. The indulgence granted to these beasts serves to give us an insight into what they are. First, they are allowed to look on while the Lamb opens the seals, "as Manoah and his wife did, when the angel did wondrously before them," Judges, xiii. 19. 2dly, They are discovered in a measure by their thundering voice; "And I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, 'Come and see,'" Rev. i. 1. And 3dly, By their inviting others to approach, and behold what themselves saw.

Now who can these four beasts be to whom these things can agree, but to gospel-ministers? First, By their standing, nearest to Christ, "as his ambassadors, or good stewards of his manifold grace and mysteries;" 2dly, Their having the first sight of the mysteries couched under the seals - "Unto you (who were apostles) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God," Matt. xiii. 11, that they might "teach others, observing all things that Christ had commanded them," Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. 3dly, By their thundering voice - "And he surnamed them Boanerges, which is the sons of thunder," Mark, iii. 17. 4thly, By their being, made use of to invite others, "And at suppertime he sent out his servants (or ministers), to invite them that were bidden;" and, 5thly, By their message, "Come and see." Come, and see for yourselves; take not our word upon trust, but see and judge for yourselves; as Andrew and Philip said to Nathaniel, "We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. And he answered, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him (in the language of the four beasts), 'Come and see,'" John, i. 45, 46. And he went and saw, "and said, Rabbi, thou art the son of God, thou art the King, of Israel," John, i. 49; and if so, he certainly was a good thing, and a holy thing, whether he came out of Galilee, out of Nazareth, or out of Heaven. And I think if our modern Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Ariatis, and Arminians, had but a divine power on their wills, and the unction of the Holy One upon their understanding, they would not be so easily led blindfold by the god of this world as they are, nor would so many heedless souls be led by them; but in obedience to the invitation of "these beasts, they would 'come and see'" for themselves.

By the above observations, they seem to be ministers of the gospel; and 'tis clear that they were sinners redeemed by the blood of Christ, by the celestial anthem that they bear a chorus in; which shews that they cannot be good angels, for they need no redemption; nor devils, for they are excluded from it; "Jesus took not on him the nature of angels," Heb. ii. 16: nor can they be reprobate sinners, for Christ "laid down his life for his sheep;" but reprobates are not of his sheep, "ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you," John, x. 26. Therefore these beasts must be chosen sinners of the human race,

whether they were preachers or private saints, according to the following, part they bear in the coronation-anthem. "The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. viii. 9, 10.

If these beasts were redeemed by Christ's blood, they must be human, not angelic saints; if redeemed out of every nation, people, and tongue, they must be redeemed from among the children of men; and if out of every nation, it is most likely they were Gentiles, rather than Jews, though the Jews will by and by be gathered in again, out of the various nations where they are now scattered.

As these beasts are privileged with standing nearest the Lord, and indulged with the first view of things, it is plain that they are ministers of Christ, who are stewards of the mysteries they saw; and as they are redeemed from among men, and say "Thou hast made us kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth," they were redeemed by Christ's blood, crowned with knowledge and loving-kindness as kings, and reigned as kings, though on the earth, under the dominion of grace, and as priests "they offered spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;" which is confirmed in my text; for 'tis said "the four beasts," as well as "the elders," had "golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints."

It may be inquired why they are called beasts. Perhaps it is intended to exhibit them as brutal sinners by nature, before they were redeemed from among the nations, tongues, and people they lay among. "Every man is brutish in his knowledge," Jer. x. 14. "Surely I am more brutish than any man," saith Acur, Prov. xxx. 2. "That God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts," Eccl. iii. 18.

We have a further description of these beasts. The first beast was "like a lion" the second beast "like a calf," the third beast had a face "as a man," and the fourth beast was "like a flying eagle," Rev. iv. 7.

The terrible majesty and undaunted courage of the lion represents them as whelps of the Lion of the tribe of Judah, as Judah is called a lion's whelp," Gen. xlix. 9; and denotes the fortitude and boldness of a gospel minister, when strengthened with spiritual might. "The wicked flee when none pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion," Prov. xxviii. 1. "The second beast being like a calf," may denote the value of a gospel minister, and his quick growth in grace and knowledge. "Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall," Mal. iv. 2. Calf is often mentioned by Isaiah as "lying down with the Lamb of

God, or with the lambs of his fold." "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together," Isa. xi. 6. Gospel ministers are compared to oxen in scripture; and a lively emblem they are, when they have got the Saviour's yoke on their neck, feed themselves on the green pastures of God's word, abide by their Master's crib, and tread out the corn for others. "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written," says Paul, I Cor. ix. 9. "The third beast had a face as a man." This shews what they really are by nature, namely, men, fallen men, but now redeemed from among men; and they were men in a militant state, or representatives of them, and not the spirits of just men made perfect; for if they were, they must look more like angels than men, nor could they be said to reign on the earth. "And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle;" which may represent their heavenly-mindedness, the eagle being a very towering flyer, to which saints are often compared. "They shall mount up as on eagle's wings; they shall run, and not weary; walk, and not faint," Isa. xl. 31. This bird may denote their spiritual knowledge and penetration, the eagle being famous for strong, and quick sight. "Her eyes are said to behold afar off" Job, xxxix. 29. She is said to be very sagacious, and can scent her prey at a distance. "Her eyes behold afar off: from thence she seeketh her prey; and where the slain are, there is she," Job, xxxix. 29, 30, which may prefigure ministers, whose souls feed on Christ's flesh and blood, in a spiritual sense, by faith, and find it the only food that can entertain the troubled mind, or satisfy a wounded conscience. "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; and unless you eat my flesh, and drink my blood, you have no life in you," John, vi. 53.

These beasts are further described, by having "six wings;" perhaps in allusion to the seraphim in Isaiah, "each having six wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly," Isa. vi. 2. The covering their faces may shew their bashfulness and modesty in the presence of God, "as virgin souls." Their covering their feet betokens their unworthiness and unprofitableness to God. "When ye have done all these things, say ye, We are unprofitable servants," Luke xvii. 10. Their flying, denotes their delight and alacrity in the work of the Lord, in spreading his gospel, as an angel is represented as "flying through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach upon earth," Rev. xiv. 6; which angel is a minister of the gospel; a man by nature, only an angel by office. Angels are not proper creatures to preach the gospel to us. They have not our infirmities about them: nor could we sit under them with any comfort. Their celestial language would be as much above the language of Canaan, as ours is above

the language of Egypt. We must “have our treasure out of earthen vessels,” 2 Cor. iv. 7; or else we should be ready to cry out, under angelic teaching, as Daniel did, “All my comeliness is turned into corruption, and I retain no strength,” Dan. x. 8.

These beasts are said to be “full of eyes within,” chap. iv. 8, which may denote the divine light that shines within them. “God, who caused the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts,” says Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 6. This makes a man appear full of eyes, and a world of corruptions are discovered, both in himself and others. It is in God’s light we see light; and whatsoever maketh manifest is light.” They had need be full of eyes within and without; for they have enemies on every side, besides taking an “oversight of the flock, and watching for their souls as them that must give an account.” There must be also a watching the hand of Providence, and the hand of God in the fulfilment of the prophecies, which are daily unfolding, more or less; and as watchmen they must give warning of approaching dangers, and observe the rising and declining of the gospel sun, which seems daily going down over many prophets; besides their watchfulness as shepherds, to observe and detect foxes and ravenous wolves, “who will not spare the flock;” nor even the chief shepherd himself, if they had but power equal to their will, and could get at him.

“When these beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever; then the four and twenty elders, fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne,” Rev. iv. 9, 10. Another proof, and I think a sufficient one, that these beasts are ministers of the gospel; because here they are represented as beginning the worship of God, and leading it on. “Under the old dispensation the ministering servant blessed the sacrifice, and then those eat that were bidden,” 1 Sam. ix. 13; under the gospel, first of all “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving, of thanks, are to be made,” 1 Tim. ii. 1. Thus preachers lead the worship, and the people follow after; as it is represented here: the four beasts begin, and the elders fell down and worshipped.

John is shewn in this vision how ministers look in God’s eyes, however they may appear in their own, called “beasts;” for such the most humble and most enlightened have often called themselves; and such the children of this world have often thought them, or Paul would never have complained, “We are as sheep accounted for the slaughter.” By their having the “face of a lion, and the face of a calf;” it shews there is something of the “Lion of the tribe of Judah,” and something of Christ the “fatted calf” about them; and by the face of the “eagle” and the “man;” it insinuates that there is something of the

“voracious nature” of the former belonging to the latter. This daring face of the man shews how self will at times make a discovery that the best of men “have like passions with the worst,” James, v. 17; or else one of the best of men would never have complained of a “body of death,” nor commanded the putting “off the old man with his deeds;” which leads me to my third head; which was to shew, who these four and twenty elders are “that fall down and worship with the beasts.”

In the days of Moses the tribe of Levi was chosen out of all the rest of the tribes of Israel, to minister before the Lord, wait at the altar, and do the service of the sanctuary. This election was of God, and made manifest by a miracle; namely, by Aaron’s rod budding, and bearing almonds, while the other, eleven rods had nothing about them but a name, Num. xvii. 8. This ministerial tribe, being, chosen of God, called to the office, and confirmed in it by a miracle, most beautifully prefigured the elected church of God in gospel times, when every believer should know his election, and see his calling clear; officiate in a better tabernacle, for the Lord is his sanctuary; offer more acceptable sacrifices in the Spirit, and wait at a better altar: “we have an altar,” whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle, Heb. xiii. 10. Hence God promised to take some from the Gentile nations, and indulge them with the glorious privileges of this tribe: “And they shall declare my glory among, the Gentiles. And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord,” Isa. lxvi. 19, 21.

Thus we see the election, calling, and miraculous confirmation of this tribe, is now to be found in its gospel signification among, common believers of the Gentiles; who are exhorted to make their calling, and election sure - to worship God in spirit and in truth - to draw near in the “ephod and teraphim” of imputed righteousness and true holiness, with the holy crown of “lovingkindness and tender mercies” - to attend on Christ the “golden altar” - and to minister about holy things - and offer the pleasing and acceptable sacrifices of hearty praises, humble petitions, and a “broken and contrite heart, which God will not despise,” Psalm li. 17.

Our glorious privileges are so great that babes in grace, as soon as Wisdom, their mother, has brought them “a little coat of needle-work wrought about with divers colours, they may gird on the linen ephod” of sanctification, “go to Shiloh,” and talk to God the Saviour for themselves. Thus the covenant of an everlasting priesthood is confirmed to the church at large; nay, I add, that as “Christ was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron, which order interweaving two offices together, namely, that of a king and a priest, it opens a way for this wonderful dignity to fall upon the church of Christ, which the Levitical tribe could never boast of, for God

never spoke such thing, of that: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God," I Peter, ii. 9, 10. Thus the royal and priestly order of Melchisedee is found in all their glorious meaning in the glorious King of Zion, and "high priest of our profession;" and the dignity and honour of both offices is reflected from the Saviour on the church: "He hath made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign on the earth," Rev. i. 6. Aaron's miraculous rod that confirmed his election and calling, is now found, with its blossoms and almonds, in the church at large. I said, I see the rod of an almond tree, Jer. i. 11, "which shall flourish," Eccl. xii. 5. "It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God," Isa. xxxv. 2, whose leaf shall never wither, but they shall blossom as the rose, and fill the world with fruit.

The family of Aaron, who were priests, were divided into twenty-four courses," 1 Chron. xxiv. 1-19; and these twenty-four courses all waited or attended on their ministry in turn. And all those four and twenty courses of ministers, with their election, call, and privileges, are now found in the church in a gospel sense, and are confirmed with many additional blessings and privileges which they never had; and which will end in the eternal salvation and glorification of every spiritual priest, which theirs did not. These four and twenty elders represent the churches of God at large, which were prefigured under the old testament by twenty-four courses of ministers or priests. This appears plain, as the scriptures call every saint a priest, a Levite; yea, kings and priests, or a royal priesthood: and in these four and twenty courses young "learners" were numbered as well as the "preachers" that "taught;" to shew that the babe in grace should be included in the gospel signification of their order as well as the strong man in Christ: "And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar," were numbered, 1 Chron. xxv. 8. Blessed for ever be that spiritual priest, into whose lap the lot of eternal life falls. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal thereof is or the lord," Prov. xvi. 33. This lot "causes contention to cease," Prov. xviii. 18. And indeed there is no stopping, the clamorous mouth of Satan, conscience, and unbelief, till we are persuaded that "we shall rest, and stand in God's lot at the end of the days," Dan. xii. 13. Thus it appears, that these "four and twenty elders" who fall down and worship, are representatives or the church of Christ at large, prefigured by the twenty-four courses of priests, which represented the church as a royal

priesthood.

The name elder is often applied to the first-born son - "Shem the brother of Japheth the elder," and represents the children of God as the elder or first-born by election; and no wonder, when they "were predestinated to the adoption of sons," before any man-child was born into the world. Abel was Adam's younger son, Isaac, was the younger of Abraham, Jacob of Isaac, and Ephraim of Joseph: but in God's decree they were not so. They were first-born sons by promise, as Isaac was, that they might inherit the home-stall, agreeable, both to the law, Deut xxi. 15, 10, and the promise, "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac," Gen. xxv. 5. Esau was before Jacob; yet the Israelites, not the Edomites, are called God's first-born. "Israel is my son (says God) even my first-born. And I say unto thee, Let my son go [Pharaoh], that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, I will slay thy son, even thy first-born" Exod. iv. 22, 23.

Elders are magistrates that used to sit on seats' at the city gates, to hear debates, try causes, settle disputes, and bear witness to contracts; hence you so frequently read of the "gates of the elders," Prov. xxx. 23, and of the elders at the gates bearing "witness to Boaz's redeeming Naomi's inheritance, and betrothing, Ruth," Ruth, iv. 11.

And if you read the description of the wonderful city called the Heavenly Jerusalem, you will see elders there. "And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God; and her light was like a stone most precious; and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written therein, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel which shews that the twelve patriarchs, fathers of the twelve tribes, whose names the tribes bore, who all sprung, from Jacob, and were called Israelites, a name which is now entailed on every believer, who "may call himself by the name of Jacob, or surname himself by the name of Israel," Isa. xlv. 5, being a son of peace, and "of the Israel of God," Gal. vi. 16. I say, these elders having their names at the twelve gates of this city, inclines me to think, that in the gospel-signification of their names, they are one half of these four and twenty elders who represent the whole Israel of God in the various gospel-characters that their names signify.

The twelve gates, "three east, three west, three north, and three south," Rev. xxi. 13, is to shew, that "many shall come from the east, west, north, and south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God," Luke, xiii. 29. If these twelve names, at the twelve gates of this city, are twelve of the elders as representatives of the church, in the gospel-signification of their names, it is to shew that none can pass these elders,

or enter into the gates of the city, by themselves, unless they are "Israelites indeed," as Nathaniel was, John, i. 47, or a part of God's Israel, "which is a name and an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" Isa. lv. 13.

The name of this city is Jerusalem, "righteousness and peace," to shew that none but justified souls, in a state of peace and reconciliation with God, can enter therein. It is the royal city of the Great King, in which he resides. "And the name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there," Ezek. xlvi. 35. If so, a dead sinner cannot enter there, nor live in the presence of God; for "in his favour is life, and in his presence fullness of joy," Psal. xxx. 5, which shews that they must be (Quickened by the Holy Ghost, and find favour with God, that enter these gates. And if these twelve patriarchs whose names the twelve tribes bore, being written on these gates, are twelve of the elders of this city, as I really believe they are, they do represent the church of God in her twelve different states and conditions, signified by the gospel sense of their names; and they appear to be elders by their names at the gates of this city. "Three gates north; one gate of Reuben, one gate of Judah, one gate of Levi; on the east side, one gate of Joseph, one gate of Benjamin, one gate of Dan; on the South side, one gate of Simeon, one gate of Issachar, one gate of Zebulon; on the west side, one gate of God, one gate of Asher, one gate of Naphtali," Ezek. xlvi. 31-34.

I now come to the signification of these names, by which these twelve patriarchs represent the whole Israel or church of God.

1st, Reuben, by his name, represents the family of God as children of light. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light" Reuben represents, by name, the fraternity of God as children of light. "And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; and she bare a son, and called his name Reuben; for she said, Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction," Gen. xxix. 31, 32.

2dly, Judah represents the church of God as God's own workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," Eph ii. 10. "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise," Isa. xliii. 21. Judah signifies Praise God. "And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I praise Jehovah; therefore she called his name Judah Gen. xxix. 35.

Levi, by name, represents the church of God in the character of "the Lamb's wife," who is made one with Christ; for they that are "joined to the Lord are of one spirit," I Cor. vi. 17. We are of the Saviour's "flesh and of his bones." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning "Christ and his church," Eph. v. 32. Levi signifies joined, united, or in union. "And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be

joined to me: therefore was his name called Levi.”

Joseph was a type of the church, as a fruitful mother, or an increasing kingdom. His name signifies addition, or increase as the kingdom of Christ must increase. “And she conceived and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name Joseph; and said, The Lord shall add to me another son,” Gen. xxx. 23, 24. Zion shall be prolific. “Shall I bring, to the birth, and not give strength to bring forth? Before she travailed, she was delivered of a manchild. Shall a nation be born at once? Before Zion travailed, she brought forth her children,” Isa. lxvi. 7, 8. Nor shall she ever be barren. God shall add to her “many sons,” and daughters too. She shall have “five wise virgins marriageable,” that shall be taken into the “marriage chamber, when the Bridegroom cometh to judgment.”

Benjamin, by his name, represents the safety of the church in the hand of God the Father, and God the Son; out of which hands Christ says they shall never be plucked. “None shall Pluck them out of my hands. My Father is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hands. I and my Father are one.” They are right-hand sons; and at the right hand of the Judge they shall appear at the great day, when the goats “shall stand on the left.” Benjamin signifies the son of the right hand. And he is called “the beloved of the Lord, who shall dwell in safety by him; the Lord shall cover him all the day long; and he shall dwell between his shoulders,” Deut. xxxiii. 12. And Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni (the son of my sorrow), but his father called him “Benjamin” (the son of my right hand), Gen. xxxv. 16-18.

Dan, by his name, represents the church of God in a justified state, whose judgment is already passed; and they are a righteous nation, who have taken their trial, been judged at the bar of the law, brought in guilty by it, condemned and silenced, and justified by an act of grace which passed upon them, through faith in Christ Jesus; and they “are justified from all things from which they never could be justified by the law of Moses.” “Dan signifies judgment, and may represent the church of Christ upon the seat of judgment with the Judge, seeing they have been his witnesses in the world, and will be the same at the great day. “And Rachel said, God hath Judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore she called his name Dan,” Gen. xxx. 6.

Simeon, by name, represents the church of God as true Israelites, who are prevalent with God in prayer, whose prayers God hears, “for his eyes are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers.” And they are an obedient people to the Saviour’s voice, whom they hear and obey. “My

sheep hear my voice, and follow me." Simeon signifies, that hears, obeys, or is heard. "And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon," Gen. xxix. 33.

Issachar, by his name, represents the church of God as the Saviour's hire, or reward. He had the elect for redeeming them. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and I lay down my life for the sheep." They are the reward of the Saviour's labour, as the spangled sheep was the hire of Jacob, as well as his wife. "And Jacob fled into the country of Syria, and Israel served for a wife; and for a wife he kept sheep," Hos. xii. 12. And so did our blessed Saviour. He assumed our nature, was among us as him that served, paid the debts of his spouse, quickened her dead soul, and espoused her to himself, as the purchase of his blood, and the reward of his labour. Jacob's "time seemed but a day for the love he had for Rachel," who was the object of his reward; for a wife he kept sheep. And "for the joy that was set before Christ, he endured the cross, and despised the shame," Heb. xii. 2; which joy consisted "in glorifying his Father," in his being, glorified in his human nature, and in "the marriage of his wife," and eternal glorification of her. Issachar signifies hire or reward. "And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me mine hire, because I have given my maiden to mine husband: and she called his name Issachar," Gen. xxx. 17, 18.

Zebulon, by name, represents the church of God as residing in "the cleft of the rock" Christ, Song, ii. 14; of whom Zion says, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations," Psal. xc. 1; in whom they "live, move, and have their being" and in whom they are commanded to stand fast. "Stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." Zebulon signifies dwelling. "And Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry: now will my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons; and she called his name Zebulon."

Gad, by name, represents the church as the Lord's host, or "an army with banners," Song, vi. 10, called the host of the Lord, a good company of soldiers; the "camp of saints," Rev. xx. 9, engaged in the "fight of faith," I Tim. vi. 12; a troop of "good soldiers of Jesus Christ, who are to endure hardness," 2 Tim. ii. 3, to "put on the whole armour of God," Eph. vi. 11, and overcome the world," I John, v. 4. Gad signifies a troop. And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh; and she called his name Gad," Gen. xxx. 10, 11.

Asher, by his name, represents the church in her covenant state, being blessed of God, and under the blessing of Abraham. "As many as are of faith

are blessed with faithful Abraham,” Gal. iii. 9, which Zion certainly is; for it is on “the mountain of Zion that the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore,” Psal. cxxxiii. 3. And this shall be proclaimed aloud in the great day, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom.” Asher signifies blessedness, or being made happy under a blessing, which all God’s people are, more or less. “And Zilpah, Leah’s maid, bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher,” Gen. xxx. 12, 13.

Naphtali, by his name, represents the church of God as mighty prevailers, struggling hard both with heaven and earth; like Jacob, they must “wrestle hard with God for a blessing,” Gen. xxxii. 24; or they will never take the kingdom of God by force, which is said to suffer violence, Matt. xi. 12. And they are obliged to “wrestle with principalities and powers, and with spiritual wickedness in high places,” Eph. vi. 12, in order to overcome the world. Naphtali signifies a mighty or prevalent wrestler. “And Bilhah, Rachel’s maid, conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed; and she called his name Naphtali,” Gen. iii. 7,8.

These particulars highly induce me to think, that these twelve patriarchs, in the signification of their names, are twelve of these elders mentioned in my text. First, they all sprung from Jacob, whose name Christ assumed, Psa. xxiv. 6; and which name every saint of God may assume, Isa. xlv. 5. Secondly, they were the fathers of all the Israelites; and they are all Israelites that believe in Christ for salvation, called the “Israel of God.” These patriarchs all sprung, from Abraham, “who is the father of us all,” Rom. iv. 16; and from Sarah, who in the allegory is “the free woman, and the mother of us all,” Gal. iv. 26. Hence we are commanded to “look to Abraham our father, and to Sarah that bare us.” Thirdly, these patriarchs were the fathers from whence the twenty-four courses of priests sprung; and by their names being at the gates of this city, they appear to be the elders of this city; and the gates of these elders; and unless we are Israelites by grace, as these patriarchs were by nature, and interested in those things signified by their names, we never can enter the gates of this city. We must produce our register, as they could, and our genealogy both, “as written among the living in Jerusalem,” Isa. iv. 3; else we shall find no admittance into this city, much less into the sanctuary; we shall be stopped in the “outer court,” which the reed of God’s word is not “to measure, because ‘tis to be trodden under foot,” as every outercourt worshipper will be, Rev. xi. 2. God will “trample” hypocrites “in his fury,” Isa. Ixiii. 3, and expose them to as much contempt as “the children of Habaiah, the children of Coz, and the children of Barzillai, who could not prove their

descent from Israel by register or Genealogy, and therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood," Nehem, vii. 63, 64.

The other twelve elders mentioned in my text, I believe to be the twelve apostles of the Lord. They in scripture are styled elders: Peter says, "The elders I exhort, who am also an elder." John styles himself "the elder unto the elect Lady and her children." The twelve apostles are said to have their names in the foundations of this city of the living God: "And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb," Rev. xxi. 14. As the apostles are called elders, and are said to have their names in the foundations of this city, it shews that they were doctrinally or ministerially the founders of it. We all know that 'twas "God that founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it," Isa. xiv. 32; and that "he that built all things is God," Heb. iii. 4; yet he used wise master-builders to lay the foundation doctrinally: "I, as a wise master-builder (says Paul), have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; but let him take heed how, he buildeth thereupon," I Cor. iii. 10. God the Father laid Christ in his own decree and purpose; hence he is called "an elect stone, which God laid," I Pet. ii. 6; and revealed him to the prophets, who laid him in their ministry. The apostles succeeding, the prophets laid him more clearly and extensively, even in the Gentile world; and every child of God "is built on the Foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye also are builded, for an habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii. 20-22.

To the apostles were "committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven," all that they loosed on earth were loosed in heaven, and all that they bound on earth were, bound in heaven, Matt. xvi. 19. Now as the church of God is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, for an habitation of God through the Spirit, it appears that this habitation of God is this city that I am speaking of; for this city is said to have "the glory of God in it, and her light was like a stone most precious," Rev. xxi. 11. This city is likewise called "the bride, the Lamb's wife," Rev. xxi. 9, 10; if so, this city must consist of such souls as the apostles espoused to a good husband, and presented as chaste virgins to Christ," 2 Cor. xi. 2. This whole city consisteth of souls that were not defiled with the errors of "mystical Jezebel," Rev. ii. 20; or the "mystical whore of Babylon," Rev. xvii. 1, 5. This city consists of such "as were not defiled with these women for they are virgins," Rev. xiv. 4.

Thus it appears that the twelve patriarchs, in the gospel signification of their names, are twelve of these elders that represent the church of God in my text; and their having their names at the gates, seems to shew that they

are the elders of this city; and unless we are Israelites, or “inwardly jews, circumcised in heart, and worshippers of God in the Spirit,” Phil. iii. 3, we shall not be able to find our “names on the book of life,” Phil. iv. 3, or “written among the living, in this new Jerusalem.”

You may object and say, the new Jerusalem signifies the triumphant church, which is “let down from heaven;” or the “spirits of just men made perfect,” coming with Christ in the clouds of heaven to receive their dead bodies raised again and to be united to them, being those “blessed ones that have a part in the first resurrection.” Be that as it may, let us look nearer home; - matters will go well with us in that day, if we are found to be true citizens. Paul says, We are come to mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel, Heb. xii. 22-24. “Happy are such souls; they are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone,” Eph. ii. 19, 20: all this is true of you, if you are upon the rock Christ.

The apostles laid the foundation of this city, and have their names engraved thereon; and had formerly the keys of it, to let all in that were “loosed on earth” by their ministry; and we must be partakers of the same spirit, and receive the same truth in the love of it which they delivered; for ‘tis the spirit and the word of truth which are the keys, and it is the word and spirit that make us free; “where the spirit is, there is liberty,” 2. Cor. 17. Ye shall know the truth, “and the truth shall make you free,” John, viii.32. Thus you find the spirit and the word lets us into liberty; when this is the happy and blessed case with us, we are free men of this city. “Isaac was by the free woman; Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all; so then we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free,” Gal. iv. 31; if so, we are free-born sons of this mother, and have a right to the inheritance given of God by promise to every heir of promise, and shall never be shut out of this city, as the bond-woman and her children will be.

As free men we may trade in this city all the elders will encourage us in it; and, as the Lord says, “we may go in and out and find pasture.” Thus these four and twenty elders, consisting of the offspring of Abraham, the twelve literal builders of the house of Israel, and the twelve spiritual builders of the church of God, have their names on the gates and foundations of this city; and as a complete senate or parliament they represent the children of God

in all their privileges as Israelites, and as followers of the blessed Redeemer in the regeneration till the world ends. Which leads me to my next general head, which is to consider,

Fourthly, The object of their adoration, the Lamb; and why so called.

If Jesus Christ be not really, essentially, and eternally God; if he be not the self-existent and independent JEHOVAH, they are every one idolaters; "I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods before me," Exod. xx. 1-3. "For thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God." But the testimony this faithful and true witness bears to his own proper deity is sufficient; "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty," Rev. i. 8; and again, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," verse 11. If so, there is none before him, nor shall be after him, which is proof of his eternity; and though this be denied by many, yet he will let all his enemies know that he is the all-seeing and heart-searching God; "I will kill [Jezebel's children] with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give to every one of you according to your works," Rev. ii. 23. Strange language this for a creature.

The essential deity of this blessed object of faith, seems to be the main stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, that the unbeliever is to stumble at; "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days that ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you," Acts, xiii. 41. But those that are led by the Spirit to see and believe this essential article of our faith, namely, the personal divinity of the Saviour, they will see the privilege, and soon feel the blessed effects of calling upon him as the object of worship; "It shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved: But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" Rom. x. 14. 'Tis in vain to call on his name as an object of prayer, if thou dost not believe his deity; "call him not good" unless thou believe his Godhead; "there is none good but one, that is God." But if thou believe him to be "both Lord and master," thou doest well, for he is so.

Blessed be God, he does not leave his own elect to stumble at this "rock of offence;" He sends the comforter, the spirit of truth, from the Father, to "testify of him," John, xv. 26, and to convince us of our need of him as one mighty to save. To talk of an eternal salvation from sin and Satan, death and hell, by a creature, is mere nonsense - "Vain is the salvation of man," Psal. Ix. 11. "He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death," Psal. lxxviii. 20. And this God of salvation is Jesus for there is salvation in no other name," Acts, iv. 10-12. These elders know what they are about; all the hosts of heaven pay divine worship to him,

though there are so many in this world that withhold it, "being wiser in their generation than the children of light," Luke, xvi. 8. When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him," Heb. i. 6; and the command is the same to Zion, "He is thy Jehovah, and worship thou him." Psalm xlv. 11.

I will never believe that there ever was an Arian that could give any true account of a work of regeneration on his soul, or of his being, born again of the Holy Ghost; and as they are sensual men, having not the Spirit, nothing can be expected from them but lies and confusion; "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," Rom. ii. 14. The Saviour will ever be glorified by the Holy Ghost wherever that Spirit comes; and he will be glorified as God and Saviour by no other spirit, nor by any but those that have the Spirit: "When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: For he shall not speak of himself, he shall glorify me," John, xvi. 13. 14.

The first powerful command that was attended with a divine ray to my soul was this, "Go and pray to Jesus Christ." I went in obedience to the heavenly vision, and in answer to the first extempore prayer put up to the name of the Lord Jesus, I came out of as much real and imaginary horror as any mere mortal could bear up under. I would bear this testimony, and swear to it with my dying breath. He that denies the Saviour's being the self-existent and independent Jehovah, is in his natural state, in a state of unbelief, and in a fair way for a share in the damnation of hell: "If ye believe not that I am ye shall die in your sins," John, viii. 24; and if "they die in their sins, where Christ is they cannot come," verse 21. This I see, that the saints of God are every way instructed, and the word of God is every way fulfilled; "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," 2 Tim. iii. 13.

It is clear, from the chapter out of which my text is taken, that these spiritual worshippers worship the Lamb with equal adoration to that of the Father; "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said Amen," Rev. vi. 13, 14. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him," John, v. 22, 23.

Having treated briefly of the object of their worship, "the Lamb," I come now to shew why he is so called.

First, Because of his innocency; he having done no sin, “neither was guile found in his month,” 1 Pet. ii. 22; “yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief,” Isa. liii. 10.

Secondly, Because of his meekness and gentleness in the hands of his enemies, and submission to their cruelty and rage. A lamb makes little resistance in the hands of a butcher, and less in the hand of its shearer; no animal of its size so passive and meek. There is nothing about it but is useful; nor anything in its nature that is voracious, cunning, sly, or savage; to which the Saviour is compared in his meek and gentle deportment. “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken,” Isaiah, liii. 7, 8.

Thirdly, He is compared to a lamb on account of his usefulness. There is nothing about a lamb but is useful. It is excellent food, if not the very best of animal food; hence the Saviour says, “My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed,” John, vi. 55. “Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day,” verse 54. This spiritual eating and drinking shews the mysterious union there is between Christ and the believer; for as food received, digested, and concocted, nourishes every part of the body, and increases it, so the soul who receives the Saviour by faith into his heart, as crucified for him, finds the sentence of death, his soul-deadness removed, and life divine communicated; “He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him,” verse 56. All other food perishes; but this food is spiritual and divine; and is no less than an eternal “feast of fat things,” intended to entertain a troubled mind, quicken and nourish a perishing soul, and satisfy the boundless desires of it with the love of God. Such souls should live above the fear, as they shall surely live above the power, of all that is called death - “He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever,” John, vi. 58.

The wool of the lamb is excellent for clothing, as well as the skin for other uses. “The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field,” Prov. xxvii. 26. And I believe there is some sweet meaning, in this text: “I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live,” Ezek. xxxvii. 6. However, the Saviour is not only the food of our souls, but our clothing, also. “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ,” Rom. xiii. 14, “and walk in him,” Col. ii. 6. He is our covering. “Blessed is the man whose sin is covered,” Psalm xxxii. 1. “The Lord hath covered me with the robe of his righteousness,” Isa.

lxi. 10; and unless he does we shall be “found naked,” Rev. xvi. 15. In short, we must “feed” on him, or die; we must be found in his “righteousness,” or be damned, and that is the truth of it.

Fourthly, There is no other fountain opened for sin but the Lamb’s blood. All that are in heaven “washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,” Rev. vii. 14; and if he “wash us not, we have no part in him,” John, xiii. 8. No cleansing but this can purge the conscience from the sting of guilt, the curse and wrath of the law, or from dead works, “that we may serve the living God,” Heb. ix. 14. He that is a stranger to the blood of the Lamb, is pursued and haunted by the wrath of God, the sentence of death, and a guilty conscience; no fountain but the blood of the Lamb of God can “sprinkle the heart from an evil conscience,” Heb. x. 22. No peace, no reconciliation or friendship, with a sin-avenging God, but by an application of this atoning blood; this is the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel,” Heb. xii. 24. Under this atonement of the Lamb, the Israelites escaped the destroying angel’s sword in Egypt: “By faith Moses kept the passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them,” Heb. xi. 28. And you pharisaical advocates for a form of Godliness, who have so often said, “O Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace,” see that you reject not this fountain; if you do, you reject all peace and reconciliation with God; and the consequence will be, that an awful separation and an infinite distance will take place between you and the “fountain of life,” and an eternal war will commence where the loss will be all your own; “He will draw his sword, and come down on the people of his curse to judgment,” Isa. xxxiv “by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many,” Isa. lxvi. 16. “You that despise this fountain of the Lamb’s blood shall feel his wrath; and though you never asked for an interest in him, yet you shall pray to be hid from him: The kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, rocks, and mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb,” Rev. xvi. 15, 16.

To whom this Lamb is no Saviour, he will be an inexorable judge. They that never sued for his grace shall feel wrath he will curse his enemies once for all - “Depart from me ye cursed,” Matt. xxv. 41; and they will curse him - “they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God,” Isa. viii. 21, and pierce their own souls by it, and that to all eternity. Happy, and eternally blessed, is that soul that can say from his own experience, “the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin.” The saint’s best performances stand in need

of washing; and our vile and corruptible bodies, which are to be changed, and divested of all corruption, and raised in incorruption, with which we are to be clothed when mortality is swallowed up of life, must have a washing, in this fountain of the Lamb's blood: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple," Rev. vii. 14, 15.

He is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Rev. xiii. 8. Indeed he was slain in the purpose of God from all eternity; and in God's secret counsel and fore-knowledge his death was decreed, purposed, appointed, and determined from all eternity. Jesus, speaking, of his death, saith, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world," John, xviii. 37. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, though it was by the instrumentality of ungodly men that he was taken, "and by wicked hands he was crucified and slain," Acts. ii. 23

He is called "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," being, typified by the offerings that Abel brought, called the "firstlings of his flock," Gen. iv. 4; which were "lambs;" and through them, by faith, Abel looked to the "Lamb of God," the woman's seed promised, who was to come, "and by faith he offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain," Heb. xi. 4; and on this account "God had respect to Abel and to his offering," but to "Cain and to his offering he had not respect," Gen. iv. 4, 5; which Cain could discern, and therefore he was "wrath, and his countenance fell." God had respect to Abel in Christ Jesus; and Abel's faith was looking through the type to the anti-type; on which account God had respect to his offering, Had the act or faith and the object of faith been out of the question, the offering, had been no better than a vain oblation; and the declaration and question would have been, "I delight not in the blood of bullocks, lambs, or he-goats: Who hath required this at your hands?" Isa. i. 12. But "faith Abel offered, and obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh," Heb. xi. 4.

In both these senses he is "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," decretively and typically, and was slain in the evening, of the world in reality. This decretive and typical slaying of the Lamb from the foundation of the world, and his being slain in reality in the "evening" or "supper time," of it, Luke, xiv. 17; or, as Paul says, in the end of the world "hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," Heb. ix. 26; this was prefigured under the law every day; that the Israelites might look back and see how every saint had been saved; and that they might look forward, in hope and expectation of a Saviour to come, called the "hope and strength of the

children of Israel," Joel, 'ii. 16; and to them he was hope to come;" for which "hope's sake" Paul was accused, Acts, xxvi. 7. "Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two lambs of the first year, day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer in the evening: This shall be a continual burnt-offering throughout your generation, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee," Exod, xxix. 38, 39, 42. Thus was the Lamb of God set before Israel every morning and evening; until that abominable monster, that enemy to God, Antiochus, commanded sacrifice to idols, which many Israelites followed. He forbid burnt-offerings, sacrifices, and drink-offerings in the temple, and polluted the sanctuary, 1 Mac. i. 41-46. "Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifice" of the morning and evening, lamb "was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down," Dan. viii. 11.

The Saviour was typified by the "paschal lamb," that was to be slain once a year, called the "Passover," in commemoration of Israel's deliverance out of Egypt, and escaping the destroying angel's sword, under the atoning blood of the paschal lamb upon their door posts. This deliverance out of Egypt, and escape from divine wrath, was to lead their faith to their great deliverer, who would deliver them from their spiritual enemies-much worse than Pharaoh; and from the yoke and curse of the law-far worse than the yoke of servitude in Egypt. This yearly sacrifice was to teach them that Christ would die once for all: Once in the world he should offer himself; and by his one offering for ever perfect all that are chosen out of the world, or sanctified; that is, set apart in the decree of God to be redeemed, saved, and glorified by Christ Jesus; which leads me to my next general head, which is to shew,

Fifthly, The music and melody of their harps, and the cause of it.

Harps were appointed for the Levites by David. Instrumental and vocal music were to go together in the worship of God: "And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps, and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy," 1 Chron. xv. 16. Though harps were in vogue long before the days of David; Jubal, in the days of Adam, had "children that could handle the harp and organ," Gen. iv. 21. Laban talked to Jacob of sending him away with "mirth, and with songs, with tabret and with harp," Gen. xxxi. 27. And we read of a "company of prophets in the days of Saul, coming down from the high place, with psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and an harp before them," I Sam. x. 5. These harps were used in the worship of God, and were typical of the heavenly music of believing hearts in gospel times: "When the church of God should be as Eden - as the very garden of

the Lord; joy and gladness being found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody;" Isa. li. 8.

The melody or music mentioned in my text, seems to be used on three occasions: 1st. At the coronation of the King of kings and the conquests he was sure to gain over his own and his church's enemies: "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, 'Come and see.' And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer;" Rev. vi. 1, 2. Here we have the Saviour as the Lord of hosts, or God of armies, mounted. The colour and undaunted courage of the horse represents the purity, the swiftness, and the irresistible force of the gospel of salvation in its rapid progress; a mighty salvation is compared to the swiftness and undaunted courage of this warlike animal: "Was the Lord displeased with the rivers? [of Nilus or Jordan.] Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the [red] sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation?" Hab. iii. 8.

2dly. The Lord is represented as having a bow in his hand, which is his word: "Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word;" Hab. iii. 9. This bow, being the word of Christ, is to shew the convincing and convicting power that goes to sinners' hearts by the Spirit from the Publication of it. This piercing and penetrating force is often compared to arrows sent from this bow: "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me," says Job, vi. 4.

3dly. The Saviour is represented as having "a crown given unto him;" which shews his coronation in heaven, and is a fulfilment of this prophecy: And thou, profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end; thus saith the Lord God, remove the diadem, and take off the crown: This shall not be the same; exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it him," Ezek. xxi. 25, 26, 27. And who can this be, that has a right to David's crown and diadem, but Christ, who was the fruit of loins, according to the flesh, raised up to sit on his throne?" Acts, ii. 30. "As a mighty horn of salvation in the house of God's servant David," Luke, i. 69. "Who, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice for ever, the zeal of the Lord of hosts," having not only promised, but "performed this," Isa. ix. 7. Thus the cause of this music in my text is, the coronation of Christ in heaven, he is "King of kings and Lord of lords." And secondly, on account of the wonderful conquests he should achieve in behalf of his

church, as appears by the following account; which serves to shew us, that those reprobates who resist the “bow of God,” and oppose the “sword of the Spirit,” are numbered to the sword of war, and “fall under the slain;” which appears from the “troop horse” and his “war colour,” that goes forth after the “stately White one.” “And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, ‘Come, and see.’ And there went out another horse that was red; and power was given to him that he sat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword,” Rev. vi. 3, 4.

The next horse represents famine, a natural consequent of war. Before an army, a “fruitful land is represented as the garden of Eden, but behind it, a desolate wilderness,” Joel, ii. 3. An army is like the Egyptian “locust, it leaves nothing green,” Exod. x. 15; which is represented by the black colour of this horse, and by the “balances” of his rider. “And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny,” Rev. vi. 5, 6.

The next vision shews the dreadful effects of war and famine, and the certain destruction that sinners bring on their souls, as well as famine on their bodies, by their rebellion against Christ Jesus. This horse is Destruction, with Death on his back, and hell at his heels: “And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth beast say, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him,” Rev. vi. 7, 8. Thus the beasts and elders seeing the coronation of Christ, and having obtained salvation by him; and seeing the wars, famine, destruction, and damnation that attended their rebellious persecutors and opposers, sing this glorious anthem, and make this wonderful melody with their harps.

These harps are used again, at a complete victory obtained over the Pope, and the “whore of Babylon” (called Jezebel), by faith in the blood of the Lamb; both over their malice, and over their errors, on which account they are called virgins, “said to be not defiled with women,” Rev. xiv. 4; that is, “they had not been corrupted, nor defiled, by committing fornication with Jezebel, nor taken with her painted face,” 2 Kings, ix. 30; Rev. ii. 20; nor with the “whore of Babylon, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication,” Rev. xvii. 2.

These harps are used by those that “stand on the sea of glass” which is the gospel dispensation, in allusion to the “glass sea made by Moses” for the priests to wash in; which, on the account of the pureness, clearness, and

heart-warming comforts of the gospel dispensation, is compared "to a sea of glass mingled with fire," Rev. v. 2; the gospel being compared to a glass, through which the believer looks till "he is changed into the image of Christ from glory to glory," 2 Cor. iii. 18.

The saints of God are represented as standing here: Christ the sum and substance of the gospel, is our sea, layer, "or fountain open for sin and uncleanness," by whom we are cleansed and renewed; and standing on this sea of glass, represents the saints as having got the victory over the pope, or antichrist; over his image, or ecclesiastical power; over his mark in the forehead or hand, which many receive to save their lives. This double mark in the hand and forehead, represents first, the oath of allegiance to him, to defend him in his villainy; or in the forehead, is openly to espouse his cursed cause; but those that stand on this sea had overcome both the beast and the whore; they had not been conquered by the one, nor defiled by committing fornication with the others and therefore "they stand on the sea of glass, with the harps of God in their hands," Rev. xv. 2.

In short, the Saviour, as the only mediator between God and man, had took the book of the law, and preached it, fulfilled it, magnified it, and redeemed his people from the curse of it. As a prophet he had taken the book of life and published it, and both were gone forth: "The law was gone forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." It was on the coronation of Christ, his ascension to his throne, and the reception of this book of the Revelation, or the copy of his kingdom, that the beasts, elders, and angels, sing, their anthems, and sound these harps which leads me to my sixth general head, which is a description of "Their golden vials," and why so called.

1st. Let it be observed, that under the old law there was a golden table, and many more sacred things, which are mentioned in this admirable book of the Revelation: "For there was a tabernacle made, the first wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shew-bread; which is called the sanctuary," Heb. ix. 2. This court prefigured Christ in his state of humiliation, and the church in its militant state; where the candlestick represented the church, Rev. i. 20. The golden table, typified "the fleshly tables of the believers' hearts, where the law is written by the Spirit of the living God," 2 Cor. iii. 3; and in which "Christ dwells by faith," Eph. iii. 17. The shew-bread represented Christ "the bread of life, that a man may eat thereof and never die," John, vi. 50: this shew-bread is called the "bread of faces," which likewise prefigures the saints of God, "who being many are one bread," I Cor. x. 17 and, by feeding on Christ by faith, they shall appear at last in the true tabernacle, or heaven itself, and in the presence of God, or before his face; blessed are the

pure in heart for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8.

On this "golden table" on which was set the golden candlestick," representing the church of God with its six branches," or the seven churches of Asia," Rev. i. 4, were set some "golden vials, or "bottles," filled with "incense;" as are mentioned by Josephus in his histories of the Jews, and in the second chapter of Esdras; which golden vials full of incense prefigured the hearts of believers, who are blessed with "the spirit of grace and supplication." "And this was the number of them, a thousand golden cups, and a thousand of silver; censers of silver, twenty nine; vials of gold, thirty," I Esdras, ii. 13. Mention is made again of this mysterious article: "And the table of shew-bread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the veil; all which be [Antiochus] pulled off," Macc. i. 22. This was to fulfil an ancient prophecy concerning, Antiochus, who was to "magnify himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was to be taken away, and the place of God's sanctuary to be cast down," Dan. viii. 11. Thus it appears that the golden vials in my text are mentioned in allusion to the vials that were placed in the sanctuary of the Lord, which were made of gold, and filled with incense. These golden vials of sweet incense, being placed on the golden table in the sanctuary, served to typify the spiritual prayers that should go up from the fleshly tables of believing hearts in gospel times, when the divine fire of love from Christ the altar, should make prayer a rich perfume; when the church should become the true tabernacle that God himself pitched, and in which the Spirit of grace and supplication would reside, as in his own sanctum.

Sometimes in scripture a believing heart, blessed with the unction of the Holy Ghost, is called the vessel of a "lamp with oil, but the wise took oil in their vessels;" which divine unction, feeding, the believer's profession, "makes him a burning and a shining light in the world;" yea it causes his light to shine before men," and his good works to appear in the sight of them.

Sometimes a believing heart filled with the comforts of the Spirit is compared to "new wine in new bottles," Matt. ix. 17; and that on the account of the unutterable joy and delight which the believer feels and experiences in communion with the Saviour, which makes religion the delight of his soul, and the joy of his heart.

But in the words of my text, a tried, believing, inspired heart, is called a "golden vial," &c. which I will attempt to explain to you in the following manner.

1 St. Why called a vial.

2dly. Why a golden one, and

3dly. What the odours are.

First, A believing or faithful heart filled with odours, which are said to be the “prayers of saints,” is called “a golden vial” of prayers, to distinguish a believer’s prayers from the petitions of a mere formalist, whose prayers are in his book, in his pocket, or else carried after him under the arm of his footman, that every body may see that the master is come, to work, or to perform his irksome task. There is a difference between a praying heart and a “prayer book;” a “vial of odours,” and a pocket of papers are two things; for want of these “vials of odours” the Lord complains; “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart (there is the vial) is far from me. But in vain they do worship me,” Matt. xv. 8, 9.

The golden vials full of odours, called the prayers of saints, are intended to distinguish them from the hasty and violent devotions of an alarmed hypocrite, who moves by fits and starts, just as the fears of death or gripes of conscience rouse him. God ever hears from him unless he is convulsed: “Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?” Job. xxvii. 9, 10. No, “in their affliction they will seek God early,” Hosea, v. 15; and say, “arise and save us,” Jer. ii. 27. Many vows and prayers are put up, “which is compassing, their maker about with lies,” or flattering with their lips, or speaking “with a double heart,” Psalm xii. 2. But when his deliverance is obtained, they say, we are lords, we will come no more nigh thee, Jer. ii. 32. We may say of such violent devotions, as we say of some people’s love, it is too hot to hold. “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? For your goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away,” Hosea, vi. 4.

All these prayers spring from the fear of damnation; not from any hatred to sin, love to God, or desire after holiness. “The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with devouring fire, who shall dwell with everlasting burnings,” Isa. xxxii. 14.

The golden vials of odours distinguish the spiritual worship of saints from the pompous shew of devotion, which is carried on by thousands only for the sake of applause, a livelihood, or a benefice. The wolf is obliged to put on the sheep’s skin, before he can shear the sheep or get at the fleece: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing,” Matt. vii. 15. “Woe unto you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation,” Matt. xxiii. 14. But the believer has got the spirit of prayer in his heart; it lies not in his book only, as the formalist’s; nor in a storm, as the convulsed hypocrite; nor in his mouth only, as the scribe; but

all his devotions spring from the spirit, out of a tried, purified, and believing heart; prayers bottled up in his golden vial will keep as long as the believer lives, and will be acceptable to God, through Christ Jesus, as long as there is a believer in the world "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer," Psalm xix. 14.

2dly. A believing heart is called a "golden vial," because of the many fiery trials that he feels: God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, Isa. xlvi. 10; and has promised "to purify them as silver is purified, and to try them as gold is tried," Zech. xiii. 9; and to "make a man," by this means, "more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir," Isaiah, xiii. 12. It is common in scripture to call faith, faithfulness, or the trial of faith, by this name gold, which is the most weighty and most valuable of all metals, and requires the greatest heat to purify it: Hence you read of "the gold becoming dim, and of the most fine gold being changed," Lam. iv. 1; and of "the faithful city becoming an harlot" Isa. i. 21. You read of the Saviour's being "girt about the paps with a golden girdle," Rev. i. 13. "faithfulness is the girdle of his reins," Isa. xi. 5. You read of the trial of our "faith being, much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire," I Pet. i. 7. And of the Saviour's counselling, the Laodiceans "to buy of him gold tried, that they might be rich," Rev. iii. 18; it means, "tried faith," God having "chosen the poor of this world rich in faith," James, ii. 5. To be short, a man whose, "heart is searched and tried," Rev. ii. 23; a heart "purified by faith," Acts, xv. 9, and fixed in humble confidence on the Lord (for "it is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness"), is this "golden vial" in my text; 'tis an honest, sound, tried heart, purified by faith, and influenced by the Holy Ghost, and prayers springing from such an heart, are compared to "sweet incense," in "golden vials:" "Let my prayer be set before thee as incense," saith the Psalmist, Psalm cxli. 2; and such prayers are as "sweet incense," and the Lord delights in them; "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice, sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely," Song ii. 14. These spiritual prayers in the heart being, compared to "vials of odours," is to teach us - that both the vial and the odours will keep - gold will not rust - odours will not stink - they are like a mixture of various perfumes corked up in a bottle, and we may say of this "vial of perfumes," as the Saviour does in the parable of the bottle of wine. "But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved," Matt. ix. 17.

3dly. Saints' prayers may be compared to odours, in allusion to the ointment made for the consecration of Aaron and his sons; "Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh, five hundred shekels; and of sweet

cinnamon half as much, even two hundred and fifty shekels; and of sweet calamus, two hundred and fifty shekels; and of cassia, five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; and of oil-olive, an hin; and thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment," Exod. xxx. 23. 24. This olive oil, and the various spices, most sweetly prefigured the blessed unction of the Spirit of all grace. That as Aaron and his sons, and the tabernacle, were anointed therewith, so the blessed Saviour, who was anointed with the fullness of the Spirit, shed abroad a little of this perfumed unction on his church and people, which is no small pleasure to them, for it is this "ointment and perfume that rejoices the heart," Prov. xxvii. 9. And of this the Saviour takes particular notice: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?" Song iii. 6.

Saints' prayers may be called odours, from the various graces that attend real prayer. The saint of God is commanded to "come with boldness to the throne of grace." He prays to a God that he knows, and therefore "worships him (accordingly) in the beauty of holiness." He comes with reverence, with filial fear, life and fervour; he "prays in the Spirit, and with the understanding also." He asks in faith - pleads the promises - importunes and wrestles hard; he prays in hope, and in expectation of being heard and answered; concludes with submission to the will of his God, and adds watching and waiting to his petitions. He prays for himself and for others, confesses his sins, craves what he needs, and blesses God for what he has got; and "with such sacrifices God is well pleased." There is the flame of divine love in his heart, fervent desires rise high towards heaven, and the approbation of God to such prayers is as conspicuous as it was to the "wise men's offering," which consisted of "gold, frankincense, and myrrh," which was approved by a vision from heaven, telling them "not to return to Herod, but to go into their own country another way," Matt. i. 12.

These "vials of odours" are called "the prayers of saints;" which differ much from an insensible sinner "saying his prayers," or what is commonly called "reading of prayers." The golden vial is a "new heart," a "tried heart," and a "believing heart," all which are God's gifts. The spirit of grace and of supplication is a blessing promised in the covenant of grace, therefore both the vials and the odours are the gifts of God, and the saints receive them. All human compositions are intended by the subtlety of the Devil to set the sinner up in business for himself, that he may not be beholden to his God for the "preparations of his heart and the answer of his tongue," Prov. xvi. 1; and as long as he can trade with human wares there is no fear of his going to God for assistance, for he is sure to be the sinner's last shift; nor will he ever get there till his stock in trade is exhausted. The fool that begun

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the tower at his own expense without counting the cost, went on till all his stock was expended, himself ruined and others mocking at his vain attempt, before he left off. And it is much to be feared, and this I will be bold to affirm, that God has awfully deceived me in the matter of prayer, if many thousands that are now swaddled up in a form of prayer without the spirit, will not in the great day be found calling in vain for this “oil in their lamps,” or these “odours” in the “vials;” without which the lamp will go out in a snuff, and instead of a “sweet smell [of odours] behold a stink.” The “vain repetitions” of the heathens are forbidden. Seek the blessed Spirit of God to help your infirmities in prayer: God loves the simple prayers of his saints; they are melody in his ears, and an odour of a sweet smell: “Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; sweet is thy voice, and the countenance is comely,” Song, ii. 14. I come now to describe a saint.

A saint is a person chosen in Christ Jesus, and in due time Gathered unto him, and made partaker of his Spirit; hence, You read of their being “sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints,” 1 Cor. i. 2; that is, by virtue of their union with him they have sanctification in him, and are sanctified by him, and by his Spirit “called to be saints.” They are made willing, by his power, persuaded by the spirit of faith, and secretly moved by the love of God to approach and close in with Christ for life and salvation. Every real believer is a saint; for he is purified by his faith, and by faith he lives: hence you read of Saul’s persecuting the believers, which is called “doing much evil to the saints,” Acts, ix. 13. In short, a saint is a believer in Christ, who is a partaker of his Spirit, maintains a close walk and keeps up a communion and fellowship with his Lord, lives in the fear of him and in good conscience toward him; he is chosen out of the world, and separated from it; though in it, he is not of it; he is warmly attached to his Lord’s cause, is diligent in the means of his appointment, orders his steps by God’s word, and follows his Lord in the regeneration. Such souls the Lord hath sanctified, and such souls will ever sanctify him. May God make and keep you all of this happy number for the sake of him that came into this world to seek and to save that which was lost. Amen and Amen.

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD DESCRIBED AND VINDICATED.

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.”- 2 Tim 2:24, 25.

THE apostle dedicates this and the former epistle to Timothy, of whom in the bowels of Christ he seems remarkably fond. He styles him his own son

in the faith; not only because he had begotten him in the bonds of the gospel, for in this sense he had many sons, but because there seemed so much of the spiritual image and heavenly likeness of the father about him.”? “I trust to send Timotheus; for I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state,” Phil. ii. 20, and because of his dutiful deportment and diligent attendance and readiness to assist his venerable father in the word and work of the Lord”, But you know the proof of Timothy, that as a son with the father he hath served with me in the gospel,” verse 22. And because there seemed so strong an affection in Timothy to his aged sire in the faith, with whom he could seldom part dry eyed, “I thank my God (says Paul the aged), whom I serve from my fore-fathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy,” 2 Tim. i. 1, 2.

When the apostle wrote this epistle he was about taking his leave of the world, and of his dearly beloved son. It was written just before Paul: as brought before Nero the emperor the second time, where he received sentence and lost his head, but not his covenant head. Paul was aware that his departure would greatly affect Timothy; and the removal of him who had been so long set for the defence of the gospel, would open a way for the second in command to appear at the front, and in the hottest of the battle; he therefore labours hard to comfort him, counsel him, and caution him; he advertises him and advises him, instructs and encourages him.

He comforts him by telling him of the unfeigned faith that was in him, which dwelt first in his grandmother and in his mother, and Paul was persuaded that it dwelt in him also. He informs him that God had not given him the spirit of fear, but of power, to support and fortify; of love, to enlarge, attract, and embolden; and of a sound mind, to keep him heavenly, steadfast in the truth, and valiant for it. He counsels him not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, or of the gospel which the Lord himself had testified; nor to be ashamed of Paul the Lord’s prisoner, who was then imprisoned for the sake of his Lord and his word, and to keep a good conscience toward him.

He counsels him to be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, or of the cruelties that men or devils might be permitted to inflict on the adherents to it, knowing that if he suffered with Christ he should reign with him.

He cautions him to beware of Alexander the coppersmith, who had done him much evil, and greatly withstood Paul and his gospel, which I suppose was done before the tribunal of Nero. He cautions him against tickling itching ears, that will be calling for candour, who will require heaps of teachers to scratch them, none being able long to please.

He advertises him that the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; that many will be lovers of themselves, and envy ever faithful servant that the Lord owns as rivals of their own honour; covetous, aiming more at the fleece than the flock; at a stock in hand, independent of Providence, instead of the good of souls; boasters of their own merit and carnal learning; proud, wearing long robes, despising the poor and illiterate, attempting to affect the passions of depraved nature by cunning artifice and the empty sound of eloquent oratory; unthankful for the spoils their profession brings in; and unholy in heart and life; without natural affection for them that eclipse their glory; truce-breakers, who swear and vow to preach the doctrines of the Lord, and then turn arminians; false accusers, calling other antinomians when themselves are nothing else; incontinent, aiming more at old widows and their pockets than at espousing souls to Christ or making them rich in faith; fierce opposers of the illiterate ones that God sends out; despisers of those that ago made good by the Holy Ghost; traitors, who will betray half the truths of the Bible to swim in the stream of applause; pawn conscience, and expose it to damnation, for the empty titles of candid men. or men of moderate principles; heady or headstrong, not against errors, nor in defence of truth, but against others in behalf of their own honour; how can they believe that receive honour one of another, and not that honour that cometh from God only? high minded, not in heavenly things, but aiming at high and lofty phrases, to please the worldly wise, embalm the pharisee, charm the hypocrite, and deceive the simple with swelling words of vanity; making a pompous appearance, climbing in dress to the height of the session, to live in a lofty stile, associating with those of the highest rank, and disdain to condescend to men of low degree; lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; men that can set and play glees upon a harpsichord for two hours together, and Men get into a pulpit and preach against party spirit, and prove all that he says by the chords of his instrument; having a form o godliness, desiring to mimic the learned and dignified priest, using service-hooks for the want of spiritual matter to serve with; denying the power of godliness in others, calling it enthusiasm and antinomianism, in order to bring the grace of God, the servants of God, and divine inspiration, into contempt; from such Paul bids his son turn away, lest they should corrupt him. They creep into houses, to prejudice the minds of people against the servants of the Lord, as they of the circumcision used to do, who subverted whole houses; ever learning scraps of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Paul advises his son to flee youthful lusts, to follow righteousness in heart and life; faith also, the object of it, the doctrines of it, the grave of it,

the exercise of it, and the life of it. Charity, or love to God as the supreme object; and to the saints, the objects of God's love, or to all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth; and to follow peace with all that call on the a Lord out of a pure heart; but not with them that call on the Lord to bless their slander, ridicule, or villainy.

He instructs him, telling him that in a great house, as God"; church is, there are not only vessels of gold-that is, there are not only vessels of mercy, with precious and tried faith in them, and vessels of silver, purified and made white; but there are vessels of wood, barren trees, dry sticks, fruitless professors, and withered branches, fit for nothing but fuel; and vessels of earth, without any divine treasure in them, vessels of dishonour; "If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour," sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Paul encourages his son to shew himself approved unto God, that men might see that he was one whom God approved, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, describing the law and the gospel, the saint and the sinner; giving a portion to seven, and also to eight, Eccl. xi. 2, a portion to the church of God, and to the synagogue of Satan, feeding the family of heaven with milk and meat, and the hardened hypocrite with judgment, Ezek. xxxiv. 16. Thus much by way of introduction to my text. I shall now consider the words in order as they lay before me, which are introduced thus: but foolish or unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves:" which for method's sake, I will endeavour to do in the following manner.

1st. Describe the servant of the Lord in contradistinction from those who call themselves so, or are by others falsely so called.

2dly. Shew you, first in the negative, and then in the positive, what is not, and what is meant by the word strive, in the text; or describe lawful and unlawful strife.

3rdly. Shew you his gentleness, and how all sorts of men will try it more or less.

4thly. Describe his aptness, or aptitude to teach, and the unaptness of pretenders to that work, with the reasons for it.

5thly. Treat of his patience, and describe those who are said to wear it out.

6thly. Define the spiritual meekness in my text, and wherein it differs from the candour of hypocrites, and

7thly, and lastly. The persons with whom this meekness is to be used,

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namely, those that oppose themselves.

1st I am to describe the Lord's servant in contradiction from those who call themselves so, or are by others falsely so called. All are not the Lord's servants who call him master; Judas called him so, and yet was a devil, and at last the devil his master entered into him, and let all men see whose servant he was; he was not without candour to himself, not the appearance of good works; he reproved the Saviour, and poor Mary also, the first for permitting, and the latter for making waste of the funeral ointment; pretending great love to the poor, but he aimed at nothing but money, therefore the searcher of all hearts gratified him with bearing the bag, or keeping the common stock; which he did not as the Lord's servant, to relieve the poor followers, and defray the travelling expenses of the Lord's retinue, but to act the part of a thief, make a private purse for himself, starve the family of God, and sell the master of the household for thirty pieces of silver, in order to get a stock in hand, independent of Providence, and to prevent the perilous adventure of going out to preach without purse or scrip.

2dly. They are not all the Lord's servants who call him by that name. Many will say unto him in the great day, Lord, Lord! Who will never be admitted into the family. It is true no man can call Jesus Lord, or his Lord, that is, with the testimony of a good conscience, but by the Holy Ghost: yet the root of all evil, the love of money, has led the devil's servants to call him so, while scripture and conscience have given them the lie to their face. Balaam said unto Balak's servant, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God to do more or less," Numb. xxii. 18. Yet his will and inclination lead him to tempt the Almighty with a seven times sevenfold sacrifice; and it is well known, that he would have sold himself to the devil, and the heritage of heaven also, for an independence; or else, why did he so often go to seek for enchantments, if he did not approve of the devil's service, seek the devil's aid, and depend on his arm for wisdom, for support, and direction? It was with a shew of much candour for Balak and the incestuous offspring of Lot, that he was brought to acknowledge that "God was not man that he should lie" as himself could, "nor the son of man that he should repent of blessing Israel," as himself could heartily repent for labouring so long for so little profit.

It is true, he knew something of the holy law of God, and of God's hatred to sin, by the advice that he gave to Balak, in order to set a trap for Israel, to entangle them in sin, and awake the wrath of God against them, as it is written, "Behold these caused the children of Israel through the council of Balaam to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation," Numb. xxxi. 16. Nor was Balaam

without some glimpse of the Saviour; the poor ass upon which he rode had seen the angel of the covenant, and the flaming sword of justice drawn against her rider, which is more than one half of our present evangelists (falsely so called) have seen; who, like the foolish prophets, follow their own spirit and have seen nothing," Ezek. xiii. 3. Balaam had perceived his eyes to be opened; he had seen the sword of justice in the visions of God; fell into a trance at the sight of it; saw the star of Jacob; the destruction of Moab; the damnation of Amalek; the victory of Israel; the glorious death of the righteous, and desired that his last end might be like theirs. But his candour for Moab, and his love for independency swallowed up all; he counselled Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, and in his heart, he loved the wages of unrighteousness; which ended his candour and love to independency by the sword of Israel, and brought him to the company of those enchanters, whose enchantments he had so often sought, both by prayer and sacrifice.

3dly. A man may have a ministerial gift, which may be much admired, and much followed, and whatever use it may be of to the church, in order to purge the flour, and blow away the chaff from the wheat, or draw away the hypocrites from the upright, yet we know, those that run before they are sent shall not profit the people at all, Jer. xxiii. 32, they are called wells, but there is no drawing water out of them, for they are called wells without water; they are called clouds, on the account of their pompous and popular appearance, but there is no water for them that are thirsty, nor floods for the dry ground, for they are clouds without rain: they are called musical instruments, none give more sound than they do, but no quickening power attends their noise, for they are said to be instruments without life-giving sound, so that no spiritual soldier knows what is piped or harped, and as the sound is uncertain, who can prepare for the battle? they are called stars, as the seven angels of the seven churches are, but no vessel of mercy can steer his course by them; they know nothing of the day star, or of the morning star, nor of him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turns the shadow of death into the morning; but they are called wandering stars, compared to glutinous vapours, exhaled from the bogs of the earth by the rays of the sun, and cast down with their false rays, by the nightly damps of the atmosphere.

They are called lamps, which serve to light others, but always go out themselves about mid-night, or before the morning appears, which will be the midnight cry of all hypocrites, and no wonder, when there is no oil in their vessels; and if they have no oil for themselves, there is no likelihood of poor men, who fall among the thieves, namely, Satan, sin, and death; there is no oil in these vessels to pour into the wounds of a bleeding conscience, no

new wine in these old bottles for those that are of an heavy heart; their own lamps are gone out, nor is there any of the oil of joy, which is to be given in exchange for mourning, much less can the garments of praise be brought forth in exchange for the spirit of heaviness.

Whatever use these gifts may be of to alarm insensible consciences, or purge the church of God from light, vain, and trifling hypocrites, it is plain there is nothing but damnation for them in the end, whether they make use of their talent or pound, or whether they lay it up in a napkin. If the prince give a gift to one of his servants, it shall (without fail) go out, or return to the prince at the year of jubilee, Ezek. xlvi. 17. The servant abideth not in the house ever, but his son's inheritance shall be his son's for them, Ezek. xlvi. 16, the son abideth in the house ever.

And it is clear that some of these servants will accuse the master himself of the want of candour in the great day: here, says one, is thy pound which I have kept laid up in a napkin. This man seems to be one that had waited on ladies or attended a sideboard, yet he falls to accusing the master; "I knew that thou wast an austere man," one of a bad spirit destitute of candour; "reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed." You see this man contended for candour, though he owned the Lord had never sowed or strewed any thing in his heart; which serves to show, that those who make the greatest stir about universal charity, or candour, are the most destitute of grace. The Saviour answers him on the ground of his own argument; "Thou knewest that I was an austere man, reaping where I had not sowed, and gathering where I had not strewed," thou oughtest therefore to have been the more careful, as thou hadst such a severe master to deal with; "thou oughtest to have put my money into the bank;" yet sticks to the old prophecy as the Prince of Peace, who was to receive his gift again at the Year of liberty, Ezek. xlvi. 17, and therefore adds, "that I might have received mine own gift with usury," Matt. xxv. 27, Luke, xix. 23; but never says a word about receiving the servant who bad received the gift, pound, or talent. These are called servants, but neither of these are the servants intended in my text; these are legal servants, servants of sin, and servants of Mammon, though they daringly call the Lord Jesus their Master, their Lord, and their God.

There are others who attend the word of God on purpose to learn to tally about religion; and having no inward Heart-work to attend to, they make great proficiency in the head and tongue, and will learn to prate publicly in prayer; prate I say, because Wisdom calls them prating fools, that shall fall. They will attempt to call upon God in public prayer in behalf of others before a poor buffeted and tempted soul can beg for himself, or dares to adopt the

language of the publican, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." This is one of the children that we say are too witty to live; simple souls that have no eyes, and hypocrites that have no feeling, stand astonished at the clapper of his mouth, at his furious zeal, his undaunted courage, and the progress he makes with the unruly member of his head; and no wonder, for there is no strife between the devil and he; Satan knows the kingdom of God is not in word as well as we do, nor is he afraid of the speech of them that are puffed up; if he was, he would be afraid of his own work. Now the common labours of the day begin to be burthensome to him, and idleness to gain ground; his call to the ministry seems clear; his abilities are sufficient for the pulpit, with a little human scouring, and a few gestures of the body, and some of master Merryman's antic motions with the hand, which may be learnt at certain places of exhibition, at a mountebank stage, or at a play-house, and these are all the qualifications he expects; and it is too often seen that such are admitted into churches by the most wealthy and most graceless of the people. Some of the poor may complain of the want of experience and power, but their attempts are often too feeble; the main supporters approve, and that is enough; and the preacher has nothing to do to endear himself to his friends but to accommodate himself to their humour, rub off the edge of God's sword with a little candour; connive at the sins of his patrons, pay his frequent visits and partake of their innocent amusements, and by these means he picks up a tolerable livelihood; then it is like people like priest; and if any complain for the want of power, they are enthusiasts; if they run away and get their food elsewhere, they are of a party spirit, and want to make divisions; if they mourn after the old deceased pastor who formerly fed them, they are 'bigots; and if they complain of too many hypocrites being taken into the church, their narrow spirit is condemned and candour enforced: and if God takes such a preacher off and sends one that is faithful, he lives as it were in a hornet's nest, unless he can burn these venomous insects out of the hole, or thrash off this chaff.

This man is called a servant in scripture, but not the Lord's servant: he is said to serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but his own belly. Such are like the papist fisherman, who took to study, and made some progress in the languages, on the account of which he was made a monk, and after that a priest of an higher order, and after that a bishop; but through all these scenes of prosperity he would have a net spread upon his table-cloth, to remind him of his mean origin; this mark of his unparalleled humility carried him higher, he commenced cardinal, but still used the net; at last he got into the scorner's chair, and then the net disappeared; and being asked the reason, he replied, "There is no call for the net now, for the fish is caught;" he fished

for the popedom, and he knew it was vain to cast the net again. If Demas cannot get a present portion in the church, it is ten to one but he goes into this present evil world again.

There is another sort of servants, who may properly be called time-servers; their service being according to the times in which they live. If they are likely to get into a church that is tolerably sound in the faith, they will act accordingly, preach against their own sentiments, condemn the very doctrines of their own heart, and advance the truths their souls abhor. The first step such a man takes is, to wriggle into the affections of his people; and when he has gained ground there, then to bring forth a little of the old store of arminianism; but if the brat is too bare, then he covers the nakedness of it by the word grace, or some plain truth; and if this goes down, then he increases the baneful ingredients according as he perceives the mixture to operate, and by degrees the minds of the people get blinded, the keenness of their appetite abated, their judgment confused, and the great things of God are obscured and hid from their eyes; then he leads them any where; and if any smell him out, and begin to complain, his zeal will be fired, and sharpness must be used; this makes him the object of their fear; and being awed by his sacerdotal countenance, and confounded by his sophistic logic, they are obliged to throw open both heart and conscience to him, while he enshrines himself in the holy place where he ought not; and thug the free and self-will of lordly man becomes the rule of a poor oppressed people, instead of the revealed will of God; the confused judgment of such people is like a weather-cock, and is turned with every wind of doctrine. This man is fit for any company, society, or pulpit. He is a calvinist by turns; an arminian in heart; a baxtarian by fits. and a churchman if occasion requires. His gift is a precious jewel in his own eyes, and whichever way it turns, it prospers, or he prospers by it. He becomes all things to all men indeed, that he may gain the more, not for God, but for himself: This man is called a servant in scripture, but not the servant that is mentioned in my text, for he is said to be a servant of the Lord. But they that preach to please men cannot be the servants of Christ:

Which leads me to consider the second branch of this general head, which is to describe this servant of the Lord, in contradistinction from all others.

1st. He is one that is represented as standing idle in the market-place; perhaps it may mean, that law and conscience were at work within him, and therefore he could not engage in the devil's service as usual; for it is a rare thing to find a sinner idle in this sense. His standing idle, may serve to skew, that the Lord's elect do not set themselves to work or attempt to go into the

vineyard, until the master hires them; and they are in general such as no carnal man cares to hire. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" they reply, "because no man hath hired us: Go ye into the vineyard, and that which is right, that shall ye receive." Here is their command, and the promise both; "go ye, and that which is right shall ye receive." These do not run before they are sent; they take not this office upon themselves until they are called of God as was Aaron; nor are they sent of men; it is the Lord that hires and sends his own servants.

It is true, Satan sends a great many preachers into the world and church both, but it is done to oppose the truth, and the advocates for it, and that in behalf of Satan's interest, on which account they bear their master's name, and are called, "ministers of Satan, whose end is to be according to their works." There are men that make preachers and send them, whom God never sent, nor will ever own; but this is no wonder, for they used to make kings and princes in the same way: "They have made kings," saith God, "but I knew it not, and princes but not by me;" and if they can make kings, why not doctors? But the Lord's servants are called, furnished, and sent by himself. "I am," says Paul, "an apostle, not of man, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ."

The apostle, in the chapter out of which our text is taken, represents the servants of the Lord in a two-fold character; first, the labourer in the vineyard, and, secondly, a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits, 2 Tim. ii. 5. The labourer must know the divine husbandman and the principal vine, before he can know any thing of the vineyard, or the branches of it, or be able to work in it. God the father is the chief husbandman, Christ the principal vine, every believer a branch, and the whole church a vineyard. And these things must be known by every labourer, or inferior husbandman, who is called the Lord's servant in my text. "This is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." If an experimental knowledge of these things is life eternal, then these things must be known by the Lord's servant before he can labour: who can work that is dead? He that laboureth, says Paul, must first be partaker of the fruits. No preaching Christ crucified, till we know that our old man is crucified with him: a knowledge of this, crucifies us to the world, and the world to us. We must be planted together in the likeness of his death, before we shall know the value of it, and in the likeness of his resurrection also, and be begotten again to a lively hope by it, before we can preach Christ as the "first fruits of them that slept."

He must be partaker of the fruits, before he can labour. He cannot be a spiritual labourer, or a minister of the Spirit, till he is a partaker of the fruits of the Spirit. He must be a partaker of the Spirit of love, be brought to

love God, Jesus Christ, his word, and all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, before he can be a minister of the Spirit. One glorious fruit of the Spirit is faith, and the Lord's labourers are called faithful servants; but graceless men cannot be called faithful. To hear unbelievers preach faith, seems as great a contradiction as for Python, the devil, to call Paul and Silas servants of the Most High God, which was true, but when he added, that spew unto us the way of salvation, it was a lie, for there is no salvation for devils. Satan by this shew of candour, expected some lenity to be shewn by the apostle; but Paul was not ignorant of his devices, he paid no respect to his candour, but charged him to come out of the damsel, and then Satan let Paul feel the effects of his spleen and bitterness: he set off into the heart of the damsel's master, stirred up a mob, and brought the servants of the most high God before the judgment-seat, with this heavy charge, "these men being Jews do exceedingly trouble our city," Acts, xvi. 19, 20.

The husbandman that labours must be a partaker of the fruits; he cannot bring forth good fruits, till his own heart be made good; no man can gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles; he cannot bring forth the fruits of the Spirit till the Spirit be in him, nor can the ministry of a barren soul be fruitful. What knows a carnal man of God's husbandry? Spiritual labourers have the fallow ground of the heart to plough up; thorns of carnal cares and covetousness to grub; clods to break; precious seed to bear; and incorruptible seed to sow; planting and watering to do. He is to enforce fruitfulness; describe sour grapes and wild figs; observe what clusters have a blessing in them and what clusters are bitter; which branch to encourage and which branch to cut at; for which business, none can furnish or qualify us but God himself, nor can there be either success or increase, without his direction and blessing.

Nor is it enough for a man to taste these fruits at his being first sent into the vineyard, he stands in need of them daily. The keepers of the vineyard have one hundred; an hundred fold in this life. It is poor work, keeping a flock and not tasting the milk of the flock. Sad work, to tread the wine-press and suffer thirst, which our Master did; it is dreadful work to keep a vineyard and not taste the fruit of the vineyard, both in a spiritual and temporal sense. In short, the labourer needs fruits and fortitude too, especially as there are so many little foxes that spoil the vines, and are so subtle and busy about them that have tender grapes.

The Lord's servant must serve his master with nothing but what is his master's own. He must plough with his master's heifer; bear his master's yoke; sow his master's seed; go by his master's direction, and aim at his master's honour. He must give no heed to old wives' fables, nor turn aside from the

way or the vineyard, though Jezebel the prophetess should attempt to teach the servants of the Lord.

2dly. Paul calls this servant in my text, a good soldier of Jesus Christ. If he is a good soldier, he is enlisted, and, under a divine power on the will, he becomes a willing volunteer; his encouragement and fortitude arise from the view that he has of the banner of divine and everlasting love being displayed over him, and from the good cheer of the banqueting house. He will make but a poor recruiting serjeant that never received the king's bounty, and unless he is in present pay and good quarters himself, in vain he beats up for volunteers. He that feeds upon Christ and his word, drinks the new wine of the kingdom, and makes God his dwelling-place, will make a good recruiting officer, because he can speak cheerfully, comfortably, feelingly, and knowingly, about the Captain of our salvation, and the glorious privileges of being quartered in the cleft of the rock, of the penny a day promised, and of the king's bounty that is given.

The apostle tells us that this servant of the Lord is a warrior; "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." He that kneeled down to drink water at the river Jordan was sent back as not fit for the field, none but those that lapped like a dog were to engage in the Lord's battle, Judges, vii. 5. If bowing the knee to the world renders a man unfit for this military service, what shall we say of soldiers that aim at nothing else but the things of this life, savour not the things of God, but those of men, and load themselves with thick clay?

This servant or soldier is chosen by his Lord, and to please his Lord should be his chief aim. That he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier, says Paul, he is to receive all his orders from the Captain of his salvation, do all in his name, depend on his strength, go by his rules, and use his spiritual weapons. Our Captain has not made any old women commanders-in-chief of his forces, nor has he committed the word of command to them; this would look as if the God of armies had left the camp; he suffers not a woman to be heard in his household, much less in his wars. If Jezebel choose four hundred of Satan's soldiers, and keep them at her own table, and use them in her service, they will be expected to obey her orders, because she chooses, enlists, and feeds them. But this servant in my text belongs to another master, and another troop, the Lord chooses him, and he is to please him that hath chosen him to be a soldier.

This servant or soldier is commanded to endure hardness. There are at times bard labour and hard fare; soldiers are seldom much regarded, though they are, under God, the defence of a nation, and much looked to in public calamity. So a good soldier of Christ Jesus is often sought after and looked to,

when conscience is besieged, diseases make inroads on a sinner's vitals, and the devil is discovered in full possession of the fort and palace, and when the midnight cry comes, these soldiers will appear to be as Elisha was to king Joash, "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." The lamps and watchfulness of the Lord's servants have kept them in readiness, while the foolish virgins, who have contented themselves with the law as the light of their feet, and the only lamps of their path, will go out, they having paid no regard to the salvation of God, which is a lamp that burneth; no regard to the oil of gladness, nor the oil of joy, which alone can keep it burning; this light of the righteous rejoiceth, when the lamp of the wicked is put out."

A soldier of Christ has many hard speeches to bear, cruel mockings to endure, hard hearts to besiege, hardened rebels to engage, and unrelenting rebels to oppose and resist, who neither sweat nor tire. These, with their human allies, will continue to compass about the beloved city, nor will they ever raise the siege, till Zion is established in heaven, and they imprisoned in hell.

This servant of the Lord, in his military character, is commanded to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. If so, he must be one that is acquainted with the influence of grace, and is in union with Christ Jesus; no man can be strong in grace that hover felt it, nor in Christ Jesus that is not united to him. A speculative knowledge of Christ, and a barren notion of grace, will afford little support or comfort to those whose eyes never saw, whose ears never heard, and whose hands never handled the word of life. Grace must be upon him that is the Lord's servant; if sin be subdued in him, it is grace that subdues it, and grace shall reign through the righteousness of Christ to eternal life; sin will have dominion over those that are destitute of grace, and such are the servants of sin, not servants of the Lord. If they are strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, great grace must be unto them, and Christ must be formed in them, and be enjoyed by them as the hope of glory, or they cannot be strong either in grace or in him. The Lord is the strength of his people, and his strength is made perfect in their weakness; for he strengthens them with his Spirit's might in the inner man; such a one is strong in grace, and well he may, when the Lord is the strength of his heart and his portion for ever.

To be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, is to have the faith of God's elect, which is a faith produced by the operation of God, firmly fixed on Christ, and which worketh by a feeling sense of God's everlasting love, shed abroad in the heart such servants or soldiers will ascribe all their victories to this; saying, nay, "but in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that hath loved us"

The apostle advises this servant or soldier of the Lord, to “put on the whole armour of God that he may be able to stand.” He allows a servant of the Lord to put no confidence in the flesh; no trust in old wives’ fables; no confidence in human wisdom, nor in excellency of speech, or swelling words of vanity; to yield to nothing but a divine demonstration, nor to submit to any thing short of spiritual power; that our “faith may not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God:” and all this caution is, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect, and to exclude the glory of salvation from an arm of flesh; for a jealous God will never give his glory to another, nor his praise to popish images.

The apostle tells us that God’s armour must be put on, that we may be able to stand and withstand. No helmet is to be wore by the Lord’s servants, but Christ the hope of Israel, the hope of salvation, and the hope of glory. No breastplate but the righteousness of God by faith; the righteousness that God the Saviour wrought out, that God the Father accepts and imputes, and faith puts on, which is in Christ, whose name is Jehovah our Righteousness. No shield but that which Abraham and David took; “the Lord is my shield and the lifter up of my head.” No sword but that of the Spirit, which is the word of God. No prayers but those indited by the spirit of supplication. No ammunition shoes, but the preparations of the gospel of peace, which assures the heart of an alliance with God though at war with the world; to engage without these, is to make a vain attempt upon this world, or the God of it. The man that engages in God’s work while he is a stranger to the fruits of the Spirit, and to Christ the first fruit, is no minister of the New Testament, no evangelist, no minister of the Spirit. He may be an hireling, or a minister of the letter, but no man can partake of his grace, for he has none. He that is a stranger to grace, to Christ, and to his own personal election, is no soldier of Christ Jesus, nor is it likely he should ever please him, because he has not chosen him to be a soldier. Unbelievers cannot fight the good fight of faith, consequently cannot please God as soldiers, for without faith it is impossible to please him; for graceless, unrenewed, unpanoplied men to set themselves against the world, while they are of it, and against sin while in bondage to it, and against the devil while he reigns in their hearts and leads them captive at his will, is like Satan casting out Satan. Keep this servant of the Lord in your eye in this his twofold character, as a labourer in the vineyard, and a good soldier of Jesus Christ, while I dismiss this part of the subject, and pass on to my second general head, which is to shew you; first, in the negative; secondly, in the positive, what is not, and what is meant by the word “strive” in my text, or describe lawful and unlawful strife.

Graceless ministers and empty professors will never strive lawfully; all

their strife is in behalf of themselves. Their striving is, either to get a name, get a livelihood, keep a restless conscience quiet, or else, they preach to oppose others and injure them in the work of the Lord, charging them in their sermons with being influenced with antinomianism, party zeal, and a bad spirit, which is in fact charging them with the spirit of the devil; but no wonder, they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, accused him of breaking the law, and profaning the sabbath, both which are antinomianism, and a bad spirit; if the master fared thus, what can the household expect? the servant is not above his Lord. Such indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will. The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to another's bonds, Phil. i. 15, 16. These can never strive lawfully, because they are destitute of that power that maintains a lawful strife. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard will strive against the errors and desperate profanity of the wicked, notwithstanding the cruel usage, and strong opposition that may be made against him; and the Spirit of God will make them maintain this strife and stand their ground at it as long as he pleases. Noah was an husbandman, and a labourer agreeably to my text, in both senses of the word, for he was a preacher of righteousness, he strove with the antediluvians for upwards of an hundred years, till God put an end to the strife, and caused those that strove with him to perish, Isa. xli. 11, saying, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man, seeing he is flesh," Gen. vi. 3, this is lawful strife.

2dly. When graceless men get into pulpits, they set themselves against the faith of the gospel, being ignorant of it; and therefore in order to keep up their popularity they charge it with licentiousness, and to amuse and blind a simple people, they turn aside to vain jangling, being strangers to gospel consistency, they desire to be teachers of the law, knowing neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. These set the law against the promises of God, and by their unbelief try to make the faith of God without effect. These are not to be admitted into the houses of the saints, nor are we to bid them God speed, lest we partake of their evil deeds: the saints of God are all to unite as the heart of one man to oppose such as these, and rescue the faith which they want to make void out of their hands, and not to flinch from this work, nor be afraid of the opponents. "Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries," which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you, of salvation, and that of God, Phil. i. 27, 28; this is lawful strife.

3idly. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard is to enlarge his work as much as possible, and to abide the longest where he sees he La most useful; and as the Lord's labourers have different gifts, one. after this manner and another after

that, they are to visit the churches occasionally, and not to be discouraged though here and there a Diotrephes will shut them out, and prate against them with malicious words, in order to keep the pre-eminence, 3 John, 9, 10; and not only visit the churches, but break up fresh ground And endeavour to raise up new plantations, which the sluggard refuseth to do by reason of the cold. It is often seen that God keeps his servants labouring in dark and barren parts of the earth till they are stocked with large store of experience and knowledge, and then uses them at the opening of the gates and in the high places of the city: yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, Rom. xv. 20, but where he was not named; this is lawful strife.

4thly. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard will often be troubled with the little foxes that spoil the vines; which foxes are false prophets; "thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts," Ezek. xiii. 4, called foxes because of their cunning and subtlety, and the stink that they make in the nostrils of God. These bring in damnable heresies to oppose the truth, and try to undermine the walls of salvation, prate against divine inspiration, and cavil at faith and a good conscience; whilst separating the vile from the precious, is doing the work of a party spirit; declaring the whole counsel of God faithfully, is doing the work of a bad spirit; to hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, is to be an antinomian; to hold Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, and the end of the commandment, to be charity; and both these in the heart by the Spirit as the righteousness of the law fulfilled in them, is making void the law; enforcing a union with Christ, and a walk in the Spirit, is setting aside the rule of life; and preaching the grace of God, is called rocking the cradle of the devil; preaching one's own testimony is preaching self; refusing confederacy with the wicked is singularity; and he must be taken down in a public pulpit that magnifies his office: while preaching to please men is doing the work of an evangelist; preaching philosophy is doing the work of a learned divine; he that preaches the principles of flesh and blood is a man of moderation; and he that gives up the truth, gives into errors, connives at slander, and justifies the wicked, is a man of candour. I cannot think but that these things will go by other names in the great day of judgment; I think it will be called walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully. These men take away the hedge of God's vineyard, and let the with boar out of the forest into it.

The Lord look down in pity and visit this vine, and enable his servants to stand in the gaps, and make up the breaches; for there are many who are trying to remove the bounds that God has set, and the fences that discriminating grace has made, and so to lay the in closures of God level with the common

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fields, barren heaths, and parched places of the wilderness, which shall never know when good cometh. To separate the vile from the precious is God's command; and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, is the duty of every Christian, as well as the ministerial servants of the Lord; in this work they are to stand like an iron pillar or a brazen wall. Though we may have some cause to complain, as Jeremiah did, "Wo is me my mother that thou hast borne me a man of strife and contention," Jer. xv. 10; yet this is lawful strife.

5thly. It is usual for those who are called out of the common way, or raised up for any particular work, if they are useful, to meet with the strongest opposition, sometimes from God's own children, but especially from false brethren. Many opposers had Paul, who crept into houses, especially those of the circumcision, who made it their business to follow him from place to place in order to raise a storm against him. The Saviour's parable was verified when the steward, namely the priestly tribe, was put out of his stewardship; he then lessened the debts of sinners to God, in order to be received into their houses. The apostle complains of such, that they were enemies to the cross of Christ; that they subverted whole houses, teaching things that they ought not; and as they hypocritically laboured in a subterraneous way, the apostle adopted their diligence; he taught the people publicly. and from house to house, endeavouring to warn every man, and teach every man: whereunto "I also labour, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily," Col. i. 28, 29. This is lawful strife.

6thly. This servant or soldier of the Lord is to endeavour to keep the field, and not like Ephraim, harnessed and carrying bows, turn back in the day of battle. The Lord's soldier must fight a good fight; he must be valiant for truth, and keep both his arms and armour; truth is his shield and buckler, and with this good thing he is never to part, on this he is never to biro his back; "he that is ashamed of me and my word, of hilts will I be ashamed." In defence of truth, and against the enemies of it, "he is to resist unto blood striving against sin," Heb. xii. 4.

7thly. This labourer or soldier is not to regard every outcry that is made against him. When the sword of the Spirit lays open a sinner's heart, or an hypocrite's empty profession, these are times that sinners in Zion are afraid, and fearfulness surprises the hypocrites: "Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Such as these will cry out against a bad spirit; too much bitterness is complained of these will lay in wait for him that reproves in the gate, crying out, Prophecy smooth things prophecy deceits; cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us; give us a little candour; make us kerchiefs, sew a few pillows under our arm-holes, Ezek. xiii. 18. The servant

of the Lord is not to spare the devil for his crying; now is the time for the good soldier to follow his blows, to speak like the piercing of a sword, for the tongue of the wise is health; now is the time to set fire to the hole of the asp, or lay the axe to the root; and if the iron be blunt, he must whet the edge (with prayer), or put forth more strength, and look up for wisdom, which is profitable to direct him where to cut. This is a work that the Lord's servant findeth to do, and he is to do it with all his might; which requires striving, and is lawful strife, because it is opposing them that strive against the Lord, Jer. 1. 24.

8thly. Not only are the servants of the Lord who labour in the word and doctrine commanded to strive, but every awakened sinner, who is compassed about with numberless sins, corruptions, and fears, which bring him into so many straits and difficulties; he is commanded to strive to enter in at the strait gate, notwithstanding the many that will strive to enter in and shall not be able. The people of God are to strive to assist their minister that the Lord sends them, when God has made it manifest in their consciences that he is sent by him; and not stand at the helm and watch to see which way the stream of public applause runs, but to watch the waters of life that make glad the city of God. Professors that aim at nothing but to take the strongest side, act like Alexander the coppersmith, and follow a multitude to do evil, in opposing the advocates for truth contrary to their own judgment and conscience: such thrive in their profession no better than Ahithophel, whose counsel was turned to foolishness, 2 Sam. xv. 31, nor do I see how they can, for they strive against their Maker Isa. xlv. 9, they strive against the priest, Hosea, iv. 4, and they strive against the verdict of their own conscience. The saints of God are to strive to assist the public servants of the Lord in their work: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me," Rom. xv. 30. This is lawful striving.

Having shewn you negatively what is not meant in my text, or is lawful striving, I come now to the second branch of this head, which is to shew you positively what is meant, or to describe unlawful strife. "And the servant of the Lord must not strive."

1st. Though it is lawful for every man of God to covet earnestly the best gifts, and to strive to excel for the edifying of the church; yet it is not lawful to slander and heap public reproach on others in order to keep up our own popularity, or to establish it, by belying those that God is pleased to send, much less are we to monopolize the churches of God into our hands, in order to keep others out, for fear of our own honour being eclipsed, much less are we to order churches that others have planted, to give the planter a

final dismissal from his own work before they can receive any assistance, as some have done, at Woking in Surrey; this is lording it over our Lord's heritage, and aiming at the garland in an unlawful way. If a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully, 2 Tim. ii. 5, for men to combine and strive in this manner is altogether unbecoming. "Be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation;" this strife is unlawful, and in this sense, "the servant of the Lord must not strive."

2dly. We must not strive to oppose others in bearing their own testimony for God, nor be offended because they zealously defend the great truths that God has revealed to them, such as, the sovereignty of the Almighty, his personal election of his people, the proper deity of our Lord, particular redemption, and justification unto life by him; as some do who depart from the faith, turn their ears from the truth, and turn to fables, boasting of free-will while they are led captive by the devil at his will; talking of power, while they are servants of sin; and boasting of merit and self-righteousness, while the sentence of the law is in them, and they are accused and condemned by their own thoughts and conscience all the day long. This is opposing God, his witnesses, and the testimony of his word, and taking part with the world, and endeavouring to set the church of God on a level with the wicked. "Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of this earth, but woe to him that strives with his Maker," Isa. xlv. 9. This striving is unlawful; in this sense, "the servant of the Lord must not strive."

3dly. Setting the law perpetually before the children of God, which has a tendency to terrify weak believers, and to take their mind from the Saviour, as too many do in our days, who make Moses's law to be the truth of Moses's rod, and set it to swallow up all the promises of the gospel, as if the law was against the promise of God, or the promise an enemy to the law. Surely the covenant of grace was in being before the law, and as it is a better covenant, and established upon better promises, one would think (of the two) the covenant of grace ought to have an equal footing, if not the pre-eminence. But we have too many who are alive without the law, the law has not killed them, and being ignorant of the sentence of it, they are not dead to it. The law is to be used lawfully, to awaken careless sinners, and stop the mouths of proud boasters by bringing them in guilty by the law; whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped. We are to insist upon the saints ordering their steps in God's word, and on love to the law after the inner man, not to a part thereof, but to the whole will of God; "then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments;" but this love to the law after the

inner man is nonsense to them who are not acquainted with the new man. Those that can act contrary to the commanding will of the Saviour in the new testament, while they are contending for one chapter in the old, are the worst of antinomians. "He that breaketh the least of these commandments, and teacheth men so," whether by word or example, shall be "accounted least in the kingdom of heaven:" but "whosoever shall do and teach" (do first, and teach afterwards) shall be accounted great. It is vain to enforce the law to others, unless they give us an account of its operation on their own hearts, and a copy of it in their own life. Those that tell us perpetually that the ten commandments are the believer's only and all-sufficient rule of life, seem to give us no account of themselves being quickened; they are for excluding the Saviour's commands, for not one of these has ever mentioned to me one word about the spiritual rule that Christ gave by Paul, which is easily to be accounted for; for spiritual circumcision, the new creature, and faith that worketh by love, are difficult points to handle, therefore it is better to waive the subject, and go to Sinai, for Ishmael has more friends than Isaac; more are the children of the desolate than those of the married wife, and by these means, simple souls are entertained with a vain jangle, which serves to make a stir, employ the minds of the people, give a job to the devil, and raise a multitude to ridicule the faith. We know the ten commandments are not of faith, nor do they give any direction about it; they say nothing about a Saviour, nor promise one, nor do they direct to his blood and righteousness; they know nothing about repentance, they do not point to it, nor give it, nor accept it; it is perfect doing and perfect love that they require. But we are under a better teacher, namely the Spirit of promise, who teaches us to profit, and guides us into all truth; we are taught of God to love one another. The law tells me to love my neighbour as myself, but not better, as the gospel does, which says, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren; to be offered up upon the service of their faith; to spend and be spent for them. Nor does it tell me to deny myself daily, nor to take up my daily cross, nor to set my face against the world and oppose it, nor yet to follow another in the regeneration, nor yet be crying to God day and night in prayer, nor give any direction concerning the various branches of divine worship, not a word about baptism, nor of breaking bread. If the ten commandments are the only rule, I cannot find any of these things in it; and yet, many live in the practice of these things, which convinces me that believers have got other rules of life beside the ten commandments, and a spiritual rule too, besides this narrow legal one which some contend for; they must take these things from some other part of the will of God. It must be confessed that unregenerate professors may have the form of knowledge and of the truth

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in the (letter) of the law, Rom. ii. 20, as well as the Jewish pharisees had, and these may make the law their rule of life as it certainly is, for they must glade by the rule if they will live therein; and such may be alive to this form of knowledge, and alive to this rule, and be as Pail was alive without the law, Rom. vii. 9, for the sinner's form of knowledge, and the spiritual law of God widely differ. Nevertheless, according to this form of knowledge, which is their rule, they may perform a deal of service, which is called serving in the oldness of the letter," Rom. vii. 6; these are the people who sit in Moses's seat, and give rules to the believer, and whatever they bid him observe, he by the Spirit does; and if he does these things, having them in his heart, he will at last judge the others; but the main drift of Satan in this business is, to turn the eyes of weak believers from the Saviour and so bring them into bondage, as was the case with the Galatians. But the believer has more than a form of knowledge; God sends the law in its spiritual power to his heart, and by his Spirit he writes it there, which leaves so deep and lasting an impression as never to be blotted out. He is the man that "knows righteousness, a man in whose heart is God's law; he is not alive without the law, but through the law alive to God; he walks in newness of life; he serves God in the newness of the Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter. This man is sure to be right, he is in the covenant, and has the law of God in his heart, grace subdues his sin, God guides him with his eye, and he serves God in the Spirit; he is circumcised, and walks in love to God; he is a new creature and follows Christ in the regeneration; he has a faith that worketh by love, and he is not idle, but abounds in the work of the Lord; and as many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them and peace. If there is truth in the scriptures, this man shall be eternally saved; this doctrine will do to die by; the former may do to talk about or to trade with in order to gain a penny for a livelihood, but it will afford no comfort at death, nor is it attended with any power in life. God sets not his seal to that; this is visible enough, and will be more so daily. The believer is the man that will perform good works; these vain janglers about the law only strive in vain; they say and do not. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God (for it is in vain that we expect them any where else) might be careful to maintain good works: these things are good and profitable unto men. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain, Titus, iii. 8, 9. This is the unlawful strife of workmongers against the grace of God; but in this sense, the "servant of the Lord must not strive."

4thly. To lay in wait for him that reproves in the gate - to make a man an offender for a word - to ridicule a servant of God and his work, by falsehood,

as the Rev. Mr. Belly at Gravesend did me, who ridiculed the providence of God in my Bank of Faith, declaring that I would spiritualize knives and forks. "I have got my sermon," says he, "in my pocket, and am going to London tomorrow, to preach against the spirit of that book;" and he had got the materials in his pocket, nay, his behaviour was such as I am ashamed to mention, and the gentleman was so hurt at it, that he had a good mind to have wrote to me, but when he came to town he took care to let me know the plot by a friend; he knows the man, he lives at Dartford in Kent, and will prove it to his head. I think he is one of a party spirit, for he brought strife and contention with him though he preached against contention. He proved the necessity of harmony by the cords of his instrument, why then did he breed a jargon with me? I had never seen him nor spoke to him. He enforced candour, and exclaimed against blood-thirsty rage, and fell foul of the text that I had handled, cavilling at the very words of God, which he was pleased to stile immodest texts, which texts may shortly appear in print, and my sermons on them, if God permit. Can such conduct as this be of any use to the church of God? Can there be any edification in this? Will this make a bad spirit better? Is this the way to reconcile parties, or to cure a bloodthirsty disposition? Can this create any love among brethren? Can playing with words, enforcing philosophy, treating of music, and cavilling at scripture, do any good? Is not this striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14. This is unlawful strife, and the servant of the Lord must not strive; which leads me to my third general head, which was to describe the gentleness of the Lord's servant, and how all sorts of men will try it more or less.

This gentleness in my text is not that tameness, laziness, or evenness of temper, which hypocrites so much admire, which is to be found in carnal men; this may be seen sometimes in deists, dead pharisees, reformed professors, or in a hypocrite when thunder-struck. Ahab seemed like a lion when the prophet met dim; "Hast thou found me O mine enemy?" and he answered, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. I will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam, and the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls eat. These things tamed Ahab, and made him gentle and tractable; for he rent his clothes, put sackcloth on his flesh, fasted and went softly; Seest thou (saith God) how Ahab humbles himself? 1 Kings, xxi. from 22 to 29th verse. But this is not the gentleness meant in my text. Nicodemus was very gentle in the senate concerning the rigorous measures proposed to be used against Christ; does our law judge a man before it hear him? and he was the same

when he came to Christ by night; but the Saviour gave him no thanks for it. The young man in the gospel, when he was commanded to sell all and follow Christ, was very tame and gentle, and went away sorrowful; but it was the sorrow of the world, that worketh death. The Laodiceans were gentle, tame, and tractable; they had no fire of love, nor fiery zeal, no rancour, spleen, nor bitterness; they needed nothing, nor did they strive for any thing, and this carnal ease and sloth is all the gentleness and candour that some call for. But it is not enough to be lukewarm, they must be either cold or hot, they must be with Christ or against him; they must either gather with him, or scatter abroad; serve God and hate mammon, or serve mammon and hate God. This gentleness springs from stupor, insensibility, carnal ease, and spiritual death; but the gentleness in my text is quite another thing; it is not forced by the withering vengeance of God, nor does it spring from an outward reformation, nor from an external perfuming or embalming of sinners by the word, which is sometimes the case where grace never reaches the heart or changes the soul.

2dly. There is a gentleness that at times influences even the servants of the Lord, which some of them are brought into by the fear of man, want of zeal, courage, and faithfulness; which they are brought into by associating with the unregenerate. The liberality of hypocrites, the feigned humility of legal workmongers, and the pretended candour of rotten fleshly professors, abates the edge of their zeal, betrays them to be partial in their trust, yield up half the good thing that is committed unto them to the children of lies; and, for the sake of unlawful peace, preach a universal gospel, and neglect the bounds that God has fixed, blunt the edge of God's sword, and pay no regard to the lines that he had drawn. This gentleness is not the gentleness that God commands in my text, for this is reprehensible. We find the angel or minister of the church in Thyatira had much of this sort of gentleness; he was not only gentle to all men, but to women also, for he suffered Jezebel to teach, for which he was reprov'd.

The apostle had some preachers in his days that were, gentle to these prophetesses; hence he writes, that women should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, which becometh women professing godliness, with good works, and that they should learn in silence with all subjection, but not to be suffered to teach nor to usurp authority over the man; for Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived was in the transgression, 1 Tim. chap. 2. The best account that Eve could give when the question was put home, "Woman what hast thou done?" was this, the serpent beguiled me; and those that are so fond of writing against the Lord's servant, in order to bring his ministry

into contempt, and injure the word of God, can say no more in their defence than their mother did the serpent beguiled me.

Some in the apostle's days were not contented with carrying a private message by word of mouth, as Mary did to the apostles, nor with private converse, as Priscilla was, who were both converted women; one knew the pardon of her sins, and the other the way of the Lord; but Paul had some women that knew not the way of the Lord nor the pardon of sin, yet would be teachers; hence "Timothy is commanded to avoid old wives' fables, though others might adhere to them. Paul had no small trials from this quarter; hence he ordains that no widow shall be admitted to a proper relief under "threescore years of age having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath lodged strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath diligently followed every good work," 1 Tim. v. 9, 10.

Paul had some honourable women, and these he greatly honoured. We read also of real prophetesses in the apostle's days, but we have no prophecies from them against the servant of the Lord, nor any account of their prophesying to teach men in public. Mary and Elizabeth prophesied to each other; and such are ordered to teach the younger women to be sober, guide the house, love their husbands and their children; to be discreet, chaste, and keepers at home, Titus, ii. 4. Paul had female servants that waited on him and the churches, but none of them pretended to teach him from the press; they did not tell him in print that he was too little because he was let out of a window in a basket, nor that Apollos was too big by one half. Paul's servants laboured with him, not against him; they succoured him, and did not add affliction to his bonds; they carried his epistles and his messages by word of mouth - they waited on him instead of slandering him; they were swift to hear him, but slow to teach him; they were helpers with him, not plagues to him.

But Paul had other sorts of women, who knew not the way of the Lord, nor the pardon of sin, like Mary; nor the Spirit's work on the soul, like those good prophetesses; but empty, insolent, tyrannical, bold, daring, and imperious; these are they that would teach and usurp authority over the men, like some in our days, whose writings bear just as much resemblance with Hannah's song, Elizabeth's prophecy, and Mary's triumphs, as the history of Tom Thumb does with Milton's Paradise Lost; the glorious rays of the one, and the confused gloom of the other, make as great a contrast as the garden of Eden would with the regions of Lapland. With this sort of prophetesses the apostle had no little trouble; and it appears there were too many preachers that were gentle towards them, knowing their warm inclination to dictate to

the second Adam, as their poor grandmother had done to the first: hence the apostle adds, "But younger widows refuse; for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation because they have cast off their first faith," 1 Tim. v. 11, 12. He goes on and withal they learn to be idle they would sooner break through the positive commands of God, and reprobate the ministry of his servants, than work for their bread; wandering about from house to house, says Paul; that is, to mump a livelihood under a pretence of religion, rather than handle the spindle or the distaff, or look well to her own household, Prov. xxxi. 19. And not only idle, says Paul, but tattlers also; that is, they would sooner carry tales, either with their tongue or pen from the press, for twopence apiece, than buckle to the spinning wheel, or be confined to the intolerable employment of knitting or sewing: these things make women out no figure in life; Dorcas's making garments for the poor - Hannah's making little coats for Samuel - Rachael's keeping sheep - and Ruth's going to gleaning, skews the weakness of those honourable women. These sorts of prophetesses have no notion of being the daughters of Sarah, calling the master of the household, Lord. It is true, the real daughters of Sarah even in our day will not be ashamed of their mother's humble conduct but as for our prophetesses, falsely so called, they seem to be of the temper of Hagar; not contented with turning Sarah out of the chair, but they spit their venom at the Lord of the household, that he sends servants too dig into the vineyard; these women lay by their weakness, and let the world know that they can cope with men: their honour consists in taking a divine by the collar. These had rather be teachers than learners; choose to guide the officers of the household, rather than their own house; to handle the pen, rather than the spindle; to usurp authority over the man, rather than be in subjection; to break every positive command of God for a few pence, rather than work to earn it; and to be commanders in chief, rather than to be in silence. Hence the apostle calls them busy bodies: that is, they neglect all the business that God has set them at, and trouble themselves about the business of others; having discarded the distaff and the spindle, they take to the pen and tongue, and live by that, and all in absolute rebellion against God; hence it is called "speaking things which they ought not," 1 Tim. v. 12, 13. The apostle, being sick of these female teachers, concludes by ordaining them some employment, in order I suppose to keep them quiet?"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully; for some [of these women] are already turned aside after Satan," 1 Tim. v. 14, 15. Hence we learn that some preachers used gentleness with these prophetesses, but this is not the gentleness in my text.

This gentleness mentioned in my text is not to be found in ministers of the letter, nor yet in hypocritical professors; it is a grace peculiar to the regenerate, and is a gift from above, and God will give it to whom he pleases; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure - it purifies the heart and judgment, and leads the mind into a pure love of the truth; then peaceable it reveals the way of peace, it proclaims peace to the heart, and makes men earnest in preaching peace, and at keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. It is gentle toward the weaklings of the flock; gentle toward the backslider, or those that turn aside; gentle in persecution toward those that oppose themselves, or set themselves to oppose the truth; and easy to be intreated? or easy to those that intreat, not slander; full of mercy and good fruits - full of the mercy of God, which produces good fruits instead of antinomianism; without partiality, and without hypocrisy, James, iii. 17. It teaches no man to be partial in the word of God; it teaches no man to justify a false preacher, nor to slander a true one; it is without hypocrisy - it makes a man honest in heart, and sound in the truth; it teaches no man to "condemn the just, nor justify the wicked, for both these are an abomination."

My. This gentleness is a fruit of the Spirit; but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Gal. v. 22. If it be a fruit of the Spirit, it cannot be found in any but those that are born of the Holy Ghost - who love God - have peace with him - and joy in him; hypocrites may pretend to it, and contend for it, but they know nothing about it.

This grace was, and still is, wonderful' exercised by the Saviour toward his own tried children, especially towards poor humble penitents in soul travail: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are wish young, Isa. xl. 11. But the Saviour made use of none of this gentleness to Herod the fox; nor to the dogs, when he tells us not to cast that which is holy to them; nor to the swine, before whom we are not to cast our pearls; nor yet to the serpents and vipers, for he was not a gentle shepherd to them; they were not of his sheep; he threatens them with the damnation of hell.

The apostle made use of this grace of gentleness, when he acted the part of, a nurse to those that were babes in grace: For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness, nor of men sought we glory, nor of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even is a nurse cherisheth her children, 1 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Thus we may see that the Saviour in his character of a shepherd used

gentleness, but as the lion of the tribe of Judah, he will use his sword. So Paul, in the character of a nurse used gentleness, but this did not destroy his valour as a soldier; for when those of the circumcision called him an antinomian, asserting, that he made void the law through faith; and that he said, let us do evil that good may come; let us sin that grace may abound. Paul lays by his gentleness and takes his sword, and tells them that their damnation is just. I come now to treat of the aptness or aptitude of the Lord's servant to teach, and the cause of it; and of the unaptness of pretenders to it, and the reason why. I chose to handle my heads in this manner because the word of God is called a two edged sword; and if so, we ought to make it cut both ways.

This word apt, signifies that he has received gifts and grace to fit him for the work; that his abilities are suitable to it; and by the constraining power of grace, he is inclined to teach others, and has a quickness or readiness for it, which he is inwardly moved to by the Spirit of God. He knows both law and gospel experimentally; the one fires his zeal, the other draws his love to God; and this fire moves him and constrains him; he knows the terrors of the Lord, and persuades men; he has felt the pardon of his own sin, and therefore can preach forgiveness to others; he is at peace with God, and therefore preaches peace; he believes, and therefore speaks; he is justified or made righteous, and is a preacher of righteousness; he has tasted that the Lord is gracious, and preaches grace; he has made his own calling and election sure, and so calls others, and preaches election to them; God's word has quickened him, and he holds forth the word of life; the Spirit of the Lord ministers gifts and grace to him, and he is a minister of the Spirit to others, that they might partake of his grace; God has put abundance of grace in his heart, and it is out of the abundance of his heart that his mouth speaks; God has put the treasure into his earthen vessel, and he brings out of his treasure things new and old; in a word, it is an experimental knowledge of the happy enjoyment of these things that makes the servant of the Lord so apt, fit, forward, ready, and quick to teach.

The moving cause is God's love to him, and its constraining power in him; "the love of Christ constraineth us," says Paul, to suffer all things for the elects' sake, that they may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. The word of God dwelling richly in the heart, makes a man weary of holding in; it is like a fire, it will blaze out; the spirit is like new wine, it will have vent. It is a well of water springing up, and will flow over; and men of understanding will draw it out, and refresh themselves with it. I come now to shew the unaptness of graceless pretenders to this work, and the reason why they are so unapt.

1st. Because they aim at nothing but the double honour that belongs to the office; the applause of the people, the fleece of the sheep, and at a genteel life; they grasp at the ministry to nurse their pride, and indulge their laziness; hence they are called heady, highminded, dumb dogs, sleepy dogs loving to slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. These men are apt to dress, apt to fleece, apt to eat, and apt to sleep; but not apt to teach. Because though they may have a gift, yet they have not life; "they are instruments without life-giving sound;" but God says, take away the noise of thy viols - he is not charmed with violins or fiddles.

The reason of their unaptness is, there is no springing well in their hearts, no oil in the cruse, no new wine in the bottle, no divine treasure in the earthen vessel, no life in the soul, no faith in the heart. Their treasure is at least stole from others, pilfered out of other men's works, and committed to paper; their treasure lays all in their pocket, and how should such be apt to teach who have no heart-treasure for it; if the heart be exercised with covetous practices, as Peter says, it cannot be exercised with an aptness or fitness to teach.

Others have got a strong memory, and all that they can hear or borrow they commit to that; their treasure is laid up in their bead; head-knowledge without the springing well, is like a pool of standing water, soon stale, and soon dry. Yet with this stock they will at times cut a tolerable figure in a pulpit; and the godly themselves will say the doctrines are sound, the prayer is evangelical, the speech in prayer and in the sermon is sound speech that cannot be condemned; but when the preacher is out of the pulpit he is quite another thing; he is no evangelist only when he preaches; hence enquiring Souls who go to him when he has done, and make use of some part of his sermon, telling him how it agreed with their experience, can get no satisfactory answer; the sermon was one thing, the conversation is another; this is the man that wears a garment of linen and woollen together; he is a time-server, a man-pleaser, who thirsts for nothing but applause, a genteel appearance, and an idle life; such cannot preach the faith, for they have no faith; how can they believe that receive honour one of another, and not the honour that cometh from God only? These are not servants of the Lord, they serve their own belly, and as the love of God is not in them, we cannot suppose that they are apt to teach; which leads me.

3dly. To consider the patience of the Lord's servant, and of them that are said to wear it out. A labourer in the Lord's vineyard has need of patience, for he is called to bear the burden and heat of the clay; superficial professors will condemn his ploughing; erroneous men will oppose the precious seed that he bears; his zeal will be called rage; his fervour, spleen and bitterness;

his attachment to study, reservedness; his continuing wherein he is called, singularity - his endeavours to separate the vile from the precious, the effects of a party spirit; preaching free grace will be called antinomianism; handling dark passages, is enthusiasm; and refusing confederacy with them that say a confederacy is the effect of pride; and those that earnestly contend for the faith, have no candour. The servant of the Lord, as a labourer in the vineyard, had need of patience to bear all this, so as not to be discouraged or frightened from his work by it; "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the world to try them." The Lord's labourer is not to leave his work, because of the opposition that is made against him; he is to continue patiently in his labour, use the mouth and wisdom that God has given him, and oppose all that oppose the truth; "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and flow thou canst not bear them that are evil; and thou hast tried them that say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted," Rev. ii. 2, 3. Thus we see a man's patience is not to drive him from his labour, nor from trying them that say they are apostles or evangelists; this is a good work, and is coupled will, patience, and is approved by the Lord; whosoever pretends to these offices is to be proved a liar by the servants of the Lord, if he is not.

Nor are we to cease ploughing and sowing as the Lord's labourers, on account of the various winds of error; nor be discouraged at it by feigned pretenders to candour, nor by the clouds of false witnesses. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand." He that "observeth the wind shall not sow," and he that "regardeth the clouds (of false witnesses) shall not reap," Eccles. ii. 4.

Those that sin openly are to be rebuked before all, that others may fear; and in this work we are to continue, whatever we may suffer in it - "Preach the word, be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine: for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine," 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3.

The servant of the Lord has need of patience, and ought to pray for it, for the good of his own soul; for it is "faith that worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope;" and he had need of it in exercise daily, that after he has clone the will of God, he may inherit the blessing; which will be, to try them that say they are apostles, and to prove them liars if they are not; to separate the vile from the precious; to stop the mouths of gainsayers; to oppose, and not suffer a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man; to oppose errors, and the vain janglings of those that desire to be

teachers of the law; to fight against them that creep into houses, and lead captive silly women; and to have nothing to do with those that are heady and high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: a servant of the Lord is to purge himself from these, that he may be a vessel unto honour, prepared unto every good work.

The servant of the Lord in his military character, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, has need of patience; soldiers, in the literal sense, are a very unwelcome guest to many, especially to inn-keepers; every upstart landlady, every bar-maid, and draggletailed girl that attends the tap, will flout and hoot at a soldier; and so a good soldier of Jesus Christ often finds it. Jezebel kills all that she could, and drives an hundred more into a cave, and then pursued one of the best men that ever lived, namely, Elijah; and swears to kill the defence of the nation, even the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.

Not only Jezebel destroys them, but Herodias counsels her daughter to get the invaluable prize of a prophet's head, as a reward for her dancing; as if nothing but the blood of one of the greatest prophets that ever was born of a woman could pay the demands of a dancing miss; thus have the good soldiers of Jesus Christ suffered by old wives, harlots, and dancing girls.

Moses, who was faithful in all God's house, had no small trouble from this quarter: we read of Miriam's taking a timbrel in her hand, and going before the women, and leading on the music and the dancing, and ordering her female attendants to sing to the Lord, because they had triumphed gloriously, Exod. xv. 20, 21; but soon after she opposes Moses, and wants to be a mediator and a law-giver; and Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses: Miriam first, and Aaron afterwards; she had engaged the high priest in her conspiracy: "And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? and the Lord heard it," Num. xii. 1, 2. Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth, Num. xii. 3, yet his meekness or candour did not screen him from the scourge of women's tongues. Therefore God comes down to stop this rebellious female teacher. "And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation; and he called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth," Num. xii. 4, 5; and "he said, hear now my words; if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream; my servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house; with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches;" wherefore "then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses," Num. xii. 7, 8, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against

them, and be departed; and the cloud departed from off the tabernacle, and behold Miriam became leprous, white as snow. And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned; let her not be as one dead, Num. xii. 10, 11, 12. And Moses (who was not destitute of candour) cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee; and the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days; how much more for spitting in the face of her Maker, and rebelling against the prophet and mediator that God had appointed? "Let her be shut out of the camp seven days," Num. xii. 12, 13, 14.

Miriam was not like Deborah the prophetess; when she had received a message from the Lord, she tells Barak of it privately, after she had sent and called him; and when Barak declared that he would not go unless she went with him, she rebukes him, and tells him if he wants a woman's aid to defend him, a woman shall take the glory of the victory from him: "And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go: And she said, I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hands of a woman," Judges, iv. 8, 9. Here is a woman that is called a prophetess; one to whom a message from heaven came; yet she did not turn her divine message into a twopenny squib, in order to fire it off against the Lord's ministers at the door of the synagogues when the people were going to worship. She received her message from God to Barak, and to him she delivered it; and when he called for her help, she predicted the loss of his honour.

And this I will be bold to affirm, that if I have written falsehood; if I am in errors; if my doctrine makes void the law; if I be an antinomian, and influenced by a bad or by a party spirit; if I am of a blood-thirsty disposition; if influenced with rancour, spleen, and bitterness; if destitute of meekness and candour, and too big by one-half; then it may be depended upon that the conduct of the present combination has been consistent with the will of God; and that our present prophetess, who has made so free with me, my office, my doctrines, and my stature, in my pretensions to excel, has done right; and that God will shew his approbation, and bear his comfortable testimony to them, and incline his saints to justify his proceeding in and by them all. But it; on the other hand, I am a child of his, and am called by him to the ministry, and am doing his work instead of deceiving the people or dividing them by a bad spirit of spleen and bitterness, then I say, God shall shew me a token for good, and that others that hate me shall see it; and those of the combination who have slandered me, reproached me, and

injured me, together with the present prophethess that has made so free with my ministry, shall sensibly meet with the visible disapprobation of God; and it shall be made known in as plain a manner as the approbation of God to Abel was before Cain. I shall pawn my honour in the ministry upon this, and the present generation shall bear witness to it; and I will leave God to justify his own conduct with respect to sending out such bad spirited mien as me, and to vindicate me if I am his servant.

I wish every true Israelite to observe what this enthusiastic Micaiah saith, and watch the event. If I am the Lord's servant, these weapons of women shall not prosper against me; but if I am not they certainly shall. Zeresh herself, the wife Haman, though the daughter of the devil, could never predict success even to her own husband against the seed of the Jews, Est. vi. 13, and God has declared that no weapon formed against his servants shall prosper; and I believe he speaks as he means. What I have asserted I found on the testimony of his own word, and upon the testimony that I think he has given me; testifying my adoption, and my call to the ministry, which I shall submit to his will to own or disown according to his faithfulness and truth.

Thus we see that the servants of the Lord, both as labourers in the vineyard and as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, have need of patience, and that in many respects. It is in patience that we are to possess our souls; and this grace is coupled with faith, and is to be found in none but real believers; hence it is called the patience and faith of the saints. We see that all sorts of people will try this grace more or less; not only persecutors, devils, and ungodly men, but little children, as Elisha found it, and old women also.

I have received letters from all sorts of people, women and all; some have informed me that they have been intolerably prejudiced against me, and desired me to call upon them to remove it, which I did not see to be a part of my duty as a minister; for people that live in idleness can attend upon me better than I can upon them; especially women destitute of grace, who rather command than intreat. I own Wisdom is gentle to them that intreat, but not to women that command. I did not get at my ministry so easy, and therefore dare not make it too cheap: "Let them return unto thee," says God, "but return thou not unto them." Jer xv. 1:19.

I received another long epistle from a woman after the above, which I must confess was pregnant with a deal of warm zeal; and it was sent by one who it seems is a staunch advocate for a certain evangelist; I opened it just before I went into the pulpit; but as I found no candour in it, I carried it into the vestry, and delivered it into the hands of Mr. Brayne, and desired that it might be read to the deacons, which it accordingly was; and I was

glad that they read it; for at the conclusion it savoured too much of spleen and bitterness, for she plainly “d??d me for a rascal for writing against so good a man.” I do not pretend to say that this woman is not a prophetess, for I believe she is, and one of the same stamp that bear that name in the 13th chapter of Ezekiel’s prophecy; and such as the apostle Paul was troubled with in his days; yet I must do her justice; for although she was found out upon the enquiry of the deacons to be a common prostitute on the town, yet she did not print her letter and send it after me from one place of worship to another; she had modesty enough to seal it up and direct it to me as a private rebuke which was well taken, because she did not seem to wish to hurt the cause of God on my account, nor to act the part of a devil at the chapel door; that is, she did not order an outcry to be made at the door of the congregation when the people were going out, as the devil its said to do, who comes in the character of the wicked one, to steal away the seed that is sown in people’s hearts, in order to make them unfruitful to God. In this she shewed some symptoms of fear and reverence, and some regard for the cause of God, Though she thought it her duty to lay a private lash upon me. By these things it may be seen that a labourer in the Lord’s vineyard, and a good soldier of Jesus Christ, had need of patience.

I come now to treat of the meekness mentioned in my text, and wherein it differs from that which is common to flesh and blood, which produces what is commonly called candour, which is so much admired by hypocrites.

This meekness is a grace that is never to be found in any but regenerate people, though something like it may at times be seen in an alarmed sinner, or in a discovered hypocrite, which has deceived thousands of gracious souls, whose natural passions have been moved at their trouble, as Samuel was at the calamity of Saul, for which God rebuked him; yet this meekness that I have to treat of has not corrupt nature for its soil; the embalmed hypocrite may counterfeit it, but never can produce it; the person that is a stranger to real conversion, and to the operations of the Holy Ghost, has nothing of this invaluable grace; it is one of Zion’s ornaments; an hypocrite may counterfeit it, as a whore does the dignity of a wife, who feigns to be the lady of a nobleman, or as a concubine puts on the diadem of a queen; who has just as much right to it as Satan had to his dignity when he told the Saviour that the kingdoms of this world were his, and to whom he would he gave them; but he could never make his title gold.

Spiritual meekness is an ornament that God puts upon a regenerated and renewed soul, and has its existence in that which is called the new, or hidden man: “Let your adorning be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in

the sight of God of great price," 1 Peter, iii. 4. Here we learn that spiritual meekness exists in that which is incorruptible, namely, in the Holy Ghost, and is a fruit of him; "the fruit of the Spirit is meekness," Gal. v. 23. It is the compassionate bowels of the new or hidden man of the heart; and as it is a fruit of God's Spirit, it is in his sight of great price.

This softening humbling grace attends and assists the faith of a real believer in his attending on the preached word, when he is enabled to mix faith with it. Spiritual meekness softens the soil of the believing heart, and gives the word a deepness of earth to strike root in, and moistens it that he may not fall away for the want of root, Matt. xiii. 6, nor wither for the want of moisture, Luke, viii. 6. This softening grace makes way for the word of God to gender or engraft itself under the operations of the Spirit, to every faculty of the heaven-born soul; insomuch that the word becomes an incorruptible seed in the believer, that lives and abides forever, and assures him of salvation. Hence the believer is said to receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save his soul, James, i. 21. Without this fruit of the Holy Ghost there is no feeding on the word, there is no digesting nor concocting; man may fill his head with notions, but not his soul with good: 41 The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him," Psalm xxii. 26.

I shall now shew how this meekness is produced. We find it is to be found in none but regenerate men; this meekness is in the hidden man, and the residence of this hidden man is the heart; hence he is called the hidden man of the heart; but the sinner's heart must be broken, and thrown open too, before this new man can come in to hide himself, so as to become a hidden man there. A stony-hearted sinner can give this new man no residence; the stone must be removed from the well's mouth; sin purged; an heart of flesh given; and a new spirit be received; self be debased and abhorred, and God discovered as pacified towards us, before this meekness will appear. God's word is a hammer to break this rock, especially when accompanied with the thundering voice of God in his law, which pierces the deepest recesses of the soul, and makes inquisition for blood; demands perfect obedience on peril of damnation; carries the scrutiny with all imaginable rigour; strikes the sinner dumb at the dreadful tribunal, until he is sinking between a double sentence, namely, that of a broken law and an honest conscience, until the sting of death and wrath of God acquaint him with the snares of death and pains of hell, which give him a foretaste of what he justly deserves. This man is sore broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death, and knows the terrors of the Lord; yet all this will not produce meekness.

Such a sinner will be drowned in tears, filled with self-pity and universal

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candour; his deport and countenance will discover a deal of humility; he will cry out against sin, and his words will be smoother than oil; but in heart he frets against the Lord; he curses the clay of his birth; blames his Maker for bringing him into existence; wishes there was no God to punish him; fain would fly out of his hand; or, like the devil himself, he would be glad to ascend above the height of the clouds, and be equal to the Most High, while he is sensibly sinking into hell to the sides of the pit, Isa. xiv. 14, 15. But when the Holy Ghost opens the heart, and lets a divine ray into it, there is an healing balm that attends this wing or beam of the Sun of Righteousness; the understanding receives the unction or eye-salve; and, beginning to see, the poor sinner pursues the beam up to the blessed face from whence it came, and discovers something of the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This unction dispels the veil from the understanding, influences the mind, and conveys to the heart the pleasing tidings of a door of hope being discovered; while the heart appears wide open, broken with desires, pouring out petition after petition, backed with ten thousand wishes, longings, sighings, and groanings, that the object of hope who has shewed himself through the lattice, will but come into the garden, where he is to meet with the kindest reception and the best entertainment that can be prepared by a lost, ruined, self-loathed, and self-condemned sinner.

At length the Lord descends on his own beam, and tells the sinner that he has overcome him, and appears the author of faith, and dwells in the heart by it; where the sinner finds such an entertainment as none know but God and himself; now he feeds on the hidden manna; sings a song, that none can learn but the redeemed; the new name of a son of God by adoption is written on him; the white stone, that witnesses his sonship, is received; he is established in hope like a pillar, and the name of God is written in legible characters on him, and appears as conspicuous to others as, "Holiness to the Lord," did on the high priest's mitre. Now he arises and shines, for his light is come, and the glory of God is risen on him; this man knows what spiritual meekness is; Christ crucified, and his broken spirit have had a meeting; he knows something of the meek and lowly Jesus experimentally; but those that are strangers to all these things, have no more of this meekness about them than those that Christ calls weepers and wailers in hell. Such a soul as this cannot give an account of the goodness of God to him without being sensibly and deeply affected: "He will sanctify the Lord in his heart, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him, with meekness and fear," 1 Peter, iii. 15.

But the hypocrite goes another way to work; he calls for meekness and candour; and if you ask him a reason of the hope that is in him, he waives the

subject, being conscious that it is experience that worketh hope; and knowing he has no experience, he is afraid of his hypocrisy being discovered; for if his false hope be taken away, his countenance, profession, and reputation, all fall together. These call for meekness but not for a reason of our hope; meekness without hope, is like the full assurance of faith without a spiritual birth; one contends for the bowels, and the other for the feet of the new man; yet can give us no reason of this hidden man of the heart, or of Christ in them the holes of glory. They have yielded up the palace by a profession; out they cannot tell us, whether the strong man armed keeps it, nr he that is mighty to save; but I suppose the former, because Christ says, he keeps it in peace; and if so, he chuses not to be disturbed with a perpetual outcry about the power of religion, but to be rocked to sleep with gentleness and candour. These serve us as Talkative served Bunyan's Christian; he eras all knowledge and candour, until Christian began at his heart; then, says John, "like the moon into the wane he goes," and so will all but he that heart work knows. This is a truth John, and I can set my seal to it, fur I have seen it verified in numbers of professors. John tells us, he knew nothing of the burden falling from his back at the cross; he had met with no difficulties at the wicket gate; he was a stranger to those things that make the gate so strait, at the head of the path of regeneration. John says, he came in of himself, and he will go out of himself, which is another truth. This meekness, that I have described, lays in the hidden man; is a fruit of the blessed Spirit of God, which makes the new-born soul behave itself before God as a weaned child; nothing afflicts it so much as the loss of the breasts of consolation, after which it will pine like the dove, until the sounding of God's bowels is felt again towards the believer. A clear discernment of the depravity of nature, and the desperate evil of sin, together with the long-suffering, mercy, and immutable love of God in Christ Jesus, will perpetually draw forth in private before God these bowels of spiritual meekness in a believer. Moses found grace in God's sight, and dwelt perpetually in his favour, and none so meek; but this did not destroy his faithfulness; he was zealous for his God, and faithful in his house. But nothing of this is to be found in unregenerate men; they may be quiet and shew something like it, but there is a woe to them that are at ease in Zion; sinners at ease are not troubled like other men, not plagued like them; they can talk about the meek and lowly Jesus, and well they may; for he has never "met them as a bear bereft of her whelps, nor rent the caul of their hearts," Hosea, xiii. 8, therefore they feel no plague, fear no wrath, nor see any danger; they are alive (to sin) without the law, and dead (to God) being without the power of the gospel; strangers to divine inspiration, and to divine instruction; hence they always ran counter to the spiritual man's

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judgment, both in preaching and conversing; nor can they ever touch upon, or run parallel with, the tender feelings, or keen sensations, of a quickened and new-born soul. I have given you a description of the meekness of the Lord's servant, and how he came by it, together with the manner how he receives the law, and the gospel also. This man knows by experience, the righteous attributes of God; he knows the righteousness of the law, and the blessedness of an imputed one; and to such souls as these God speaks, and for their attention he calls. "Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation; for a law shall proceed from me (not from old women) and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth, and mine arm shall judge the people; and the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust. Hearken unto me ye that know righteousness; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings; for the moth shall eat them like's garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation," Isai. li. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Reader, whenever thou bearest a man talk about the law being the only rule of a believer's life, ask him, how he came by the law, and whether it proceeded from God to him? How it operated on his heart? What it discovered within and without him? What his sensations were, under the operation? What occasion or advantage sin took by its rigorous demands? What it wrought in him, love or hatred? Whether it did bring him as a schoolmaster to Christ, or whether it drove him from him, revealing forbidding wrath, instead of attracting love and mercy? and whether he did not fly before it in his soul, as far as the very gates of hell would let him go, instead of coming by it to Christ? or to speak in scripture language, whether he did not find an hatred to the light, and skulk from it rather than approach it, seeing it reprov'd him for his sinful deeds; and try all that be says, not only by thy judgment, but by the powerful and lively oracles of thine own conscience; for the believer has both law end gospel there, and if he cannot touch thy feelings have nothing to do with him; he has not got the law, it is not written on his heart, he knows nothing of righteousness, he has not passed under the rod, nor is he brought into the bond of the covenant. Pay no regard to the speech of them that are puffed up, but inquire and feel after the power; the kingdom of God is not in word, but to power. Saints are to speak of the glory of God's kingdom, and to talk of the power; they are to make known to the sons of men the mighty acts (that have passed on their souls) and the glorious majesty of the kingdom, when Christ sets it up in their hearts. If they are strangers to these things, they are the subjects of Satan; he reigns under their veil, never was discovered by the light of God,

nor cast out by his power; under a mask of religion, under the veil of ignorance, and in the centre of an impenitent heart, the prince of darkness reigns, rules, and triumphs. Is my reader a believer in Christ? if he is, I tell him the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Was it words of candour that laid affliction on thy loins at first, and kept thee impending on the brink of hell, or was it power? Was it the cant of hypocrites that brought thee up out of the horrible pit, or was it power? Was it empty words that wrought faith in thee, or was it the arm of God revealed, that “worked in thee the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with power?” How hast thou been delivered in six troubles, and escaped the seventh? Was it the empty sound of carnal professors, or was it the right hand of God’s power, that upheld thee and brought thee through? Has it not been the mighty power of God that has given thee spiritual might in the inner man? that has appeared the most conspicuous in thy weakness, and that has often appeared when a temptation has discovered itself, and thy deceitful heart has already given in to it, and the death brought forth by sin conceiving has been felt in thy conscience. I ask, if it was the doctrines of the law that appeared and kept thee, and delivered thee, or the power of God? and whether by word thou art kept through faith to salvation, or by the power of God? and lastly, whether the word candour will prop thee up in a dying hour, or God who is the strength of his people’s heart and their portion for ever? If thou sayest all this is right, then I ask, Art thou now staggering between the omnipotent arm of the Saviour and the cant of old women, who walk in craftiness, and by idleness deny the faith, and are worse than infidels; and all for the sake of a few pence, or a morsel of bread. Thou art not to receive the law from old women; they are to “teach younger women to be Toner, to guide the house, love their husbands and their children,” this is their sphere; out of this, they are out of character, and put the church of God to shame; “it is a shame for women to speak in the church; came the word of God to them, or came it out from them only,” 1 Cor. xiv. 35, 36. God tells thee, that a “law shall proceed from him; Receive the law, I pray thee from God’s mouth, and lay his words in thine heart,” Job, xxii. 22. thy faith is not to stand in old wives’ fables, nor in human wisdom, but in the power of God. It was Mr. Worldly-wise-man that sent Christian to Mr. Legality to get rid of his burden, till Sinai was ready to fall on his bead, and others who have been directed by Evangelist, have forsook his council, and gone to Sinai for rules, till they have brought a fresh burden on their souls, and an old yoke on their necks, conceived fresh enmity in their minds, and have not spared to spit their venom at the grace of God; this shews what wrath the law works, and what bondage it genders; such preachers can only prejudice, plunder, ensnare, and strip thee; when

God will use others, to settle, comfort, support, and succour thee; these latter are they that he makes manifest in thy conscience, whether thou knowest it or not, 2 Cor. v. 11; and such, agreeably to thine own heart's experience, thou wilt be glad to live and die with. This divine manifestation brings about the divine cement or bond of union which the carnal professor cannot get at, for savoury souls will smell them out, though they labour hard to deceive them. I come with one more appeal to conscience, which is, whether this doctrine of the law being the only and all-sufficient rule of life, was the doctrine in whole or in part that God applied to thee, when thou escaped the damnation of hell at first; or whether it was any thing like it; if you say, No, nothing bore me up, nor brought me out of the regions of the shadow of death, but that experimental preaching that set forth Christ as all in all; very well, the kingdom stands in the same power still, and on that same shoulder whereon, as a lost sheep, thou wast laid at first, and brought into the fold; as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him. He has appeared the author, believe in him as the carrier on, and hope in him as the finisher of faith; and thou shalt have hope in thy death, nor shall thine expectations be cut off. Let others contend for legal rules, run thou the race set before thee, looking to Jesus; walk in him, and in union with him; he has promised to keep that man in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on him, and continue thou so to do to the very last for they, and only they, are blessed, that die in the Lord; that is, in confidence in him, in view of him, and in union with him: As the Lord God of hosts liveth, this must be thy confidence and thine hope at last, if thy dying head finds any support; therefore, recline on this arm in thy life, which alone can support thee, when heart and flesh fail. The law, or the doctrines of it, will afford thee but little comfort in a dying hour. Footmen who never get into the chariot of love, have sometimes set thee a running a wrong road and wearied thee; and if thou hast been often wearied of the warfare in a land of peace, how wouldest thou smite the waters with such a mantle at the swellings of Jordan, Jer. xii. 5. Surely Israel did not enter into that land of Canaan for their righteousness sake, nor for their obedience to the rule of the law; it is called the land of promise; God gave it to Abraham by promise, and God brought them in, and by an high hand drove he the Canaanites out. I have written thus that you might have somewhat to answer them that glory in appearance, but not in heart. Let these men and women who call for meekness and candour give us a better account than this of it, that we may know what it is, and where they got it; whether it is from heaven, or of men; whether from grace, or from themselves, and whether they mean the thing, or the name only. It is true, men may cull scripture, and write something like it, who never tasted that the Lord is

gracious, yet the wise will find them out; for if they borrow, or steal the words, yet, the broad seal of God is wanting; therefore their attempts make no impression, nor can they be received as a part of the mystical body, which (by the Spirit) is to be fitly joined together; for before they can be a part of this connected body, they must have an unction; without this joint oil, there can be no union; the body is compacted by that which every Joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in every part, making increase, Eph. iv. 16. But, alas, a noise about candour produces no joint oil; these pretended members have no effectual working in them; they have got no hold of the head, and consequently cannot be spiritually joined to the body, nor afford guy increase to it. I come now to show, that this meekness does not destroy the zeal nor the faithfulness of the Lord's servants.

Of all the children of men Moses is reported to be the meekest man; and no wonder, when God had so clearly revealed himself to him, telling him, that he had found grace in his sight, and that he knew him by name, and that he would be with him. Moses had seen God's providential care over him, and his people, the dreadful severity of God to the Egyptians, and the deliverance he wrought for Israel; the destruction of the one, and the salvation of the other. He had received the law, and - quaked and trembled at the promulgation of it, therefore he knew the terrors of God; and on the other hand, God had revealed himself to him as his God in covenant; he had proclaimed his name before him, and communed with him mouth to mouth. He dwelt perpetually under the cloud of divine favour, and was led by the pillar of eternal love for forty years together, and had seen God rise up at his request, and return at his desire; and had been kept perpetually crippled in spirit by a stiffnecked people, who had so grieved his spirit that he spake unadvisedly with his lips; nay, it went ill with Moses for their sakes. The princes, yea! almost the whole congregation, besides the company of Corah, had at times opposed him; Aaron his brother, Miriam his own sister in the flesh and in the spirit, had at times added to his burthen, and tried the meekness of this good soldier, which was enough to keep him meek and humble with a witness; but this did not root out his zeal for God. As a good soldier Moses was still God's honourable servant, and faithful in all his house; he was not afraid, at his farewell sermon, to tell them, that he had led them forty years in that wilderness, and yet God had not given them eyes to see, ears to hear, nor hearts to understand. He rebuked them for their rebellion against the Lord, and called them foolish and unwise, for their base requiting, forsaking him, and lightly esteeming the rock of their salvation; for which he tells them, their feet should slip in due time and their calamities should make haste; that God would provoke them to jealousy with a foolish

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I have known some that have sat under the word of God for years, and frequently drowned in tears; I have observed it, and when I came to be in company with them, I heard of nothing but the success they had formerly in business, and the various methods they used in order to accumulate their independency; they seemed as ignorant of the plan of salvation, and as destitute of the power of religion, as those that never heard a sermon or read a bible. I received a little instruction from this, and by observation I found that the subjects that mostly affected them, were those that were levelled at the sin of covetousness, which described the awful end of a man that has his portion in this life, the impossibility of the love of God dwelling in a heart that loves this world or the things of it, and that if the salvation of God was applied to such souls as it was to the heart of Zaccheus, the root of all evil would lose its soil, the grace of God would give covetousness no ground to root in. We know the rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit; but this wall can stand no firmer before the everlasting love of God, when' applied, than the walls of Jericho could before the blasts of the rams' horns. Treating of these things has stirred up the meekness of the above described misers; they have heard it with many tears, and like the young man in the gospel, they have gone away sorrowful because they had great possessions; this is the sorrow of the world that worketh death.

2dly. I have known women of the town who have sinned with so high an hand, that their consciences have been like a nest of vipers, who have run for refuge to bear the gospel, and if unclean persons have been cut at in the discourse, and the visible mark that God has set on a whore's forehead, Jer. iii. 3, has been described, together with her attire, leer wanton gait, her nets and snares with which she entangles her prey, the wrath of God that she incurs by increasing transgressors among men, together with the certainty of God's judging whoremongers and adulterers, and their woeful end if grace prevent not; these things have set such characters to weeping and wailing; they have discovered much meekness, but never left off their old trade; they never cried to God with their hearts, though they have wept in a chapel and howled upon their beds, Hosea, vii. 14. This meekness is like Ephraim's goodness, compared to early dew, which vanishes before the sun, but is

nothing like that which is called a fruit of the Spirit, which Mary Magdalen had when she poured out her soul at the Saviour's feet, and obtained the pardon of her silt and a sense of the love of God in her heart; she vomited up her folly at the Saviour's feet, and left it for good and all; but these, after all their crying and howling, act according to the proverb; "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool like these returneth to his folly," Prov. xxvi. 11.

3dly. An empty graceless professor, who has heard the gospel till his brutal enmity against the preachers and professors of it has been slain; who has been tamed and become tractable, and on the account of this and its being attended with the use of the tongue and an outward reformation, he has been received into the church; and if the ministry has been rather superficial he has become one of the greatest note in it; but when heresies have crept in, to make manifest who are the Lord's and who not, he is the man that is generally caught in the net; and this column, in appearance, has been a stumbling-block to many of the poor weaklings, who have thought him more than man.

Sometimes God discovers him by removing the old pastor and bringing in one more acquainted with heart work, in order to separate the vile from the precious; this is a ministry that his soul hates, because it lays him open; he becomes the greatest opposer of it; but if God's hand is with the servant, and he comes in to be the pastor in the face of all opposition, this opposes sets no bounds to his rage, he discovers himself daily in the eyes of others what he really is, and conceives such an implacable enmity against both the minister and his ministry as slays the silly one. He will at times seem to shed tears on the account of his sinking reputation, when he gets with those who condole him in his degraded point of light, when with shame he takes the lowest room. This meekness and candour was found in Saul, when in the like circumstances; ?? Then came up the Zephites to Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself with us. Now therefore, O king, come down, according to all the desire of thy soul to come down, and we will deliver him into thine hand. And Saul said, Blessed be ye of the Lord for ye have compassion on me," 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, 20, 21; but all this meekness and candour sprang from malice against David, because God was with him; it had no other root than murder; he that hateth his brother without a cause is a murderer; he that hateth a believer in Christ hateth Christ. This meekness appeared in Esau when he sought the blessing carefully with tears; he lift up his voice and wept, and said, Bless me, even me, O my father; and after he had wept he received comfort; for it is said, "that Esau comforted himself, purposing after the death of his father to kill his brother Jacob," Gen. xxvii. 42; and if he had done that, he had but one more blow to strike in order to

extirpate the whole church of God, and that was to kill his mother Rebecca, and then the fraternity of heaven had been extinct, and Esau had been more renowned than Cain, who killed the third part of the world at one blow.

Self, self-pity, self-seeking, and self-applause, is the only root of all this feigned meekness; it is a fruit of fallen nature; like loves its like; sinners love sinners; it savours not the things that be of God, but those that be of men; to fallen nature it is candid, especially to discovered hypocrites, to desperate rebels, and to apostates; to these it shews much candour, it is gentle, it calls for meekness; but its enmity against the experimental preachers of Christ, or the spiritual children of God, is such, as breaks through all bounds of God and man, of decency and modesty, and would venture on the bosses of God's buckler, and expose the whole cause of God to contempt, and their own souls to every curse in the bible, in order to seek revenge on a minister of the Spirit. The report of power attending the word, and of sinners being called by it, is what they cannot endure: "From the time that it goeth forth it takes them; for morning by morning it passes over them; yea by day and by night; and it is a vexation to them only to understand the report of it," Isaiah, xxviii. 19. And as it was then by professing Israel, so it is now by hypocritical professors; they cannot endure the power of religion to be enforced.

Not long ago I had a two-penny pamphlet on candour addressed to me, and sold at my chapel doors, which I did not much wonder at; as I know hypocrites cannot love the saints, nor can the righteous nation that keep the truth find much love to them. Besides, there had been a penny address sent to me in Feint some time before, throughout the whole of which the author contradicted and condemned himself; which I did not wonder at, when I perceived it to be the work of a poor arminian, who had nothing in his head but wind and confusion; a friend desired me to answer it, but I told him "it was written by some poor faithless free-will monger, who being destitute of the grace of God could not trust his Maker for a loaf; and if he could get a bit of bread for his poor children by an I Address to Mr. Huntington; he was very welcome; I was willing to live and let live;" which I am informed he did; for it was reported to me, that he cleared fourteen pounds by it, which might help to pay his rent, if he was not too far gone with his landlord.

But this last two-penny pamphlet on candour, which was first sent out without a name, seemed to cause great triumphs in Gath; the Philistines shouted, supposing that Sampson was bound by a woman; and to be sure, when I heard that it was written by a female, I was surprised at her brazen brow, especially when I was informed it was done by a woman that professes religions woman that is a member of a church - a woman that gospel ministers countenance and visit; I never was more surprised; and must confess it was

such a piece of infernal presumption, such contempt of God, such rebellion against his command, and such daring insolence, as I never read nor heard of as coming from any of the weaker sex since I have been in the world.

I turned my thoughts to all the honourable women mentioned in scripture, to their writings, and to their conduct; I considered the lesson that Bathsheba taught her son Solomon, and of the council she gave him, together with the description she gives of a virtuous woman; who seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; that she layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff; that she is not afraid of the snow, for her household are clothed with scarlet; that she maketh fine linen and selleth it; that she looketh well to her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness, Prov. chap. xxxi. This prophecy I admire; and as Solomon was the son of her womb, and the son of her vows, she acted the mother's part in endeavouring to instruct him, and took her part of the burthen. as all mothers ought to do, instead of laying the whole weight upon the father; but when Solomon came to the throne, the dignity of the mother did not devour the obedience of a subject: she laid by her power to command, and took a petition, "I desire one small petition of thee, I pray thee say me not nay," 1 King: ii. 20.

I considered the conduct of the virgin mother, who at the age in Cana of Galilee, when the mother of Jesus said unto him, "They have no wine;" and of the rebuke she got for limiting the power of God, "Woman what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not come," John, ii. 2 - 4. I considered the reproofs she gave him at his first public appearance, when she said unto him, "Son, why hast thou dealt thus with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" Luke, ii. 48, 49. I perused the conduct of Deborah, that pious prophetess in Israel, who, upon the delivery of her divine message to Barak, refused to go with, out her; who declared to him that a woman should take the honour of the victory; yet she did not bring against him a railing accusation. She joined with Barak in the song, instead of publishing a two-penny ballad against him; "Then sang Deborah and Barak, the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying, Praise ye the Lord for avenging of Israel," Judges, v. 1, 2; "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song: arise Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam," verse 12.

There is no two-penny squib in all this song fired off against Barak, though he skewed such unbecoming cowardice. It is true, she did not write with that meekness and candour that hypocrites call for in our days. "Curse ye Meroz," says Deborah; but this rancour must be overlooked, seeing "the

Angel of the Lord said, Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty," Judges, v. 23. If they are cursed who come not to help, they are not likely to be blessed who hatch mischief in the chimney corner, on purpose to hinder the Lord's helpers against the mighty.

I have considered the conduct of Abigail toward David, when he and his men were equipped and armed to destroy her whole house; which certainly savoured of a little spleen and bitterness; but she did not throw it in his teeth, nor tell him that he was too big by one-half, but fell at his feet, and said, "Upon me, my Lord, upon me' let this iniquity be, and let thine handmaid I pray thee speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal; for as his name is so is he; Nabal is his name and folly is with him; but thine handmaid saw not the young men whom thou didst send. Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand; now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid; for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days: yet a man is risen up to pursue thee and seek thy soul, but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life," I Sam. xxv. 24-28. This woman does not accuse him of any rancour, spleen, or bitterness; she brings no railing accusation against the man after God's own heart; she complains not of his being too big; she gives no rule to him to go by, nor limits the divine power that was with him by prescribing to the Holy Ghost that came on him after Samuel had anointed him. She enforces the promise, predicts his salvation and the destruction of his enemies, and desires to be remembered by him when it would be well with him.

I have considered the song of Hannah, who suffered so long (on the account of her barrenness) under Peninah, who is said to be "her adversary, who provoked her sore to make her fret because that the Lord had shut up her womb; and this she did year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, so she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat," 1 Sam. i. 6, 7. Nor did the conduct of Eli, who charged her with drunkenness, divest her of that modesty and candour that becomes women professing godliness: she never mentions a word against her husband Elkanah, who I think dealt very unkindly and untenderly with her; she only acknowledged that by strength no man could prevail over the womb or any thing else, Nor does she bring one slander against the priest, who had innocently brought a false

charge against her, who was one of the best of women; which must be very provoking to one of a broken heart, influenced by the Holy Ghost, smashed and shattered by the repeated insults of an hypocrite, who had been her rival in the bed as well as her adversary in religion; for it is said she made her fret, because the Lord's hand had gone out against her in shutting her womb. But Hannah brings no charge in a two-penny pamphlet against either the priest or the husband; she speaks of the providence of God, of the salvation of the saints, and of the destruction of hypocrites: "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them," 1 Sam. ii. 9, 10.

I have considered all the good prophetesses of the old and new testament, together with all them that are called faithful or honourable women in Paul's days, who had lodged strangers, brought up children, washed the saints' feet, laboured with Paul and helped him, who carried his messages or epistles, who served the churches, who were to be received; relieved, and brought on their ways by the members of the same, or to be conducted safe over the difficult or dangerous parts of their road, so that nothing was to be lacking to them; but not one of all these women, who were called faithful or honourable, ever wrote a word against a penitent sinner or a believer, much less against a minister of Christ Jesus.

I have considered the false prophetesses against whom Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy, Ezek. xiii. 17, who were to be rebuked, and against whom God pronounces his woe: "Wo to tile women that sow pillows under all arm-holes, and make kerchiefs upon the head," verse 18. These were accused of polluting God's name among his people for handfuls of barley, and for pieces of bread, rather than work; "wherefore, saith God, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye bunt souls to make them flee from the truth. I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go; your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand; because with lies ye have made the righteous sad whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked," Ezek. xiii. 20-22. But I cannot find that one of these ever wrote against a servant or prophet of the Lord.

Even the witch of Endor, though she was a pimp for the devil in private, yet had modesty enough to conceal her friend, and her private converse with him, until the king of Israel disguised himself, and went to her with a petition, and an "oath of God in his mouth, swearing unto her, as the Lord liveth there shall no punishment happen unto thee for this thing" 1 Sam. xxviii. 10. This woman's wickedness was exceeding great; she is said to hold converse with a familiar spirit; to correspond with the devil be a bawd to

him, and stand pimp for him, is the quintessence of spiritual wickedness; yet to give this daughter of the devil her due, it must be granted that she was not without some modesty, for she never reproaches the king for what he had done, only says to his messenger, "Behold thou knowest what Saul has done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards out of the land, wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?" 1 Sam. xxviii. 9. Yet even this woman, who had lost so many brothers and sisters in profession, did not write to ridicule the king, though he had destroyed so many of her own synagogue, that belonged to the same fraternity, or was familiar with the same father; nor does she inveigh against any of the children of Israel whom Saul employed to cut off the wizards and witches; and so far is she from writing twopenny volumes against the Lord's servants that she is frightened at the appearance of her own father when he had swaddled himself up in the likeness of Samuel's mantle. "For when the woman saw Samuel she cried with a loud voice, and the woman said, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid, for what sawest thou? and the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth, for an old man cometh up covered with a mantle," 1 Sam. xxviii. 12, 13, 14. This woman is so far from opposing the prophets of God, that she could not stand before the devil when he was disguised in a prophet's mantle, until the king encouraged her, and told her not to be afraid.

Among all the women that are called mothers in Israel; among all the women that are called blessed; among all that are called faithful; among all that are called prophetesses of the Lord; among all that are called honourable women; among all that are said to minister to the Saviour, or help his servants; nay, not one among the false prophetesses, not Herodias herself; not one among Paul's tattling women, who waxed wanton, learned to be idle, wandering about from house to house; not one of the old wives that dealt in fables; not one of the witches that held familiarity with the devil himself, had ever courage or insolence enough to write against the servants of the Lord but Jezebel; who, among all the females that ever were born of women, was the most infamous for spiritual wickedness and murder; and her end was as dreadful as her life was vile. She "wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders, and to the nobles that were in Ahab's city dwelling with Naboth." This woman was not afraid to send her address from house to house; she desired to skew her abilities; she was not ashamed of the cause she espoused. "She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast [this woman was not without religion; she enforced fasting, and set Naboth on high among the people;" that is, she

pretended to exalt him as one of God's servants, but conceals her villainous intention; and when you have done this then set the children of the devil at him?" set two men, sons of Belial [or the devil] before him, to bear witness against him [charge him with antinomianism and disloyalty, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king; and then carry him out, and stone him that he may die. And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles (who are no great friends to religion), did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent; and they proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people." I suppose they said they had no doubt of his being a servant of the Lord: "And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him." I suppose one was a plaisterer, and the other a musician; be that as it may, they enforced the law, and shewed they were no friends to antinomianism, nor to party spirits, for they agreed in their verdict. "And the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king." These men enforced the moral law, and shewed their loyalty in bearing a public witness against this singular man, who would not part with his vineyard; "Then they carried Naboth forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones that he died," 1 Kings, xxi. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

This venerable mother Jezebel is all the precedent that our present prophetess has got to countenance her in writing against the servants of God; and the mystical body, to which this name Jezebel is now applied, is as pregnant with mischief, and as unsatiated for the blood of the saints, as her literal mother was, and all the artillery of God is levelled at her; even at popish Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and pretends to teach. From these few observations it may be seen how the servants of God have fared in every age; and I shall endeavour to shew that the best of men have been charged with antinomianism, and of being influenced by a bad spirit; though it must be acknowledged, that the devil never could harden any women to write against the servants of God but Jezebel.

In prophetic times the "prophets were called fools; spiritual men were called mad; the snare of a fowler in all his ways, and was hated in the house of his God," Hos. ix. 7, 8. If he was a fool he was tintured with enthusiasm, and if mad he was influenced by a bad spirit, for all madness is of the devil. Christ was accused of being influenced by a bad spirit; they said he cast out devils by Beelzebub, who was the God of Ekron; he was accused of antinomianism "This man is not of God;" he makes void the law; he keepeth not the sabbath, John, ix. 16; he was accused of disloyalty?" he speaketh against Caesar," John, xix. 12.

Paul was accused of teaching the people to forsake Moses, and of doing

evil that good might come; and all these enemies pretended great zeal for the law; even Jezebel herself fled for refuge here, as hath been already observed. It appears evident that the worst adversaries that ever Christ or his church have had upon earth, were hypocritical professors of religion; and all their rage and murder that they committed upon the saints, was always done under a cloak of zeal for the holy law of God. Jezebel pretended to act by this rule: Naboth blasphemed God and the king-stone him to death. "Whosoever curseth his-God shall bear his sin; and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him," Levit. xxiv. 15, 16.

The Jews took shelter under the law when they crucified Christ; "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God," John, xix. 7. But the holy law of God was no protection for them; it countenances no murderer, no false witness, no hypocrite, no slanderer, no false teacher, no false accuser; Did not Moses give you the law? and yet none of you keep the law: why go ye about to kill me, John, vii. 19. When the Saviour brought the law against them, they accused him of a bad spirit; they said, Thou hast a devil. Who goeth about to kill thee? verse 20. This was the Jews' plea against Paul: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses; saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs," Acts, xxi. 21. The rulers that attempted to put Paul to death at Jerusalem put on this cloak:- Thou west brother Paul how many thousands there are that believe, and they are. all zealous of the law," Acts, xxi. 20. And under this cloak of maliciousness they laid violent hands upon the apostle, crying out, Men of Israel help; this is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place, verse 28. Poor Stephen was murdered under this cloak: "Then they suborned men which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us," Acts, vi. 11, 14.

Thus it appeals how the children of the free woman have been put to death by the children of Hagar; and all under a cloak of zeal for the law. Modern hypocrites fly here when they attempt to ridicule the grace of God; yea, even pharisees, who are farther from the kingdom of God than publicans and harlots, will charge the children of God with want of love to holiness. Yet none of these persecutors and murderers were destitute of candour. It is true, they used sharpness against the saints; yet even Jezebel, though she charged Naboth with antinomianism, or making void the law, by blaspheming, God and the king, yet she shewed much gentleness and candour to some that

were of a different persuasion, for she kept four hundred of these at her own table.

But I suppose you want to know what these people mean by candour. Let me once more describe an hypocritical professor of religion; though I have touched upon him before in this discourse, yet I will stir up your pure minds again by way of remembrance.

First, they attend alarming preachers, and receive some light into the letter of the law; which light does not teach the heart to discover sin, but the bead only, which is enlightened into the letter of the law; they have a form of knowledge [that is all] and of the truth in the law, Rom. ii. 20. This form of knowledge is the lamp which these foolish virgins take; the law is a light to their feet, the commandment is a lamp, Prov. vi. 23. These are said, as Paul said of himself, to be alive without the law; that is, they are alive to this their form of knowledge, and accordingly make this form their only and all-sufficient rule of life: and no wonder, when they have not got the law at all? they are alive without the law-the law has not killed them. To this form of knowledge which they are alive to, they perform a deal of eve-service, which is mercenary; such as the elder son boasted of, who told his father that he never transgressed his commandments at any time, saying, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, Luke, xv. 29, in the oldness of the letter, Rom. vii. 6. To this form of knowledge out of the law, the hypocrite adds an assent to the truths of the gospel; the law is his lamp and his rule; the gospel serves only for a cloak. To this assent to the truths of the gospel, they add a reformation of life and manners, which is called escaping the pollution that is in the world; and their apostasy is called a turning from the holy commandment, not from the promise of Christ, nor the grace of God, but from the holy commandment delivered to them, 2 Peter, ii. 20, 21. To this form of knowledge out of the law, and assent to the gospel (or what is called a feigned faith), and an external reformation, they add one thing more, which makes the hypocrite pass -n disguise into the church; which is, they skew their wisdom, in being forward to talk; they are diligent in their will worship, and put on the garb of voluntary humility, Coloss. ii. 18, 23. which completes the spiced or perfumed hypocrite, who hath been sweetened and embalmed by an empty profession, and appears to be changed by the gospel just as lemon-peel is by clarified sugar; hence their flummery or candour is called a sweet spirit; and such a disguised perfumed hypocrite is called a candid person. There were great numbers of old women in Jerusalem who made a livelihood by such meekness and candour as this; they were called mourning women, and used to be hired at burials to weep and mourn when the surviving could not do it; you might have enough of it if you had but

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money to pay them for it. God talks of these hypocrites: Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider ye, and call for mourning women, and send for cunning women that they may come, and let them make haste and take up a wailing for us, Jer. ix. 17, 18. But what has all this to do with a saint of God? he is quite another thing; the law proceeds from God to him; he receives it at his mouth, and lays up his words in his heart; the commandment comes with power, sin revives and he dies, and then rises with Christ under the operations of the Spirit of God; such walk in newness of life, and serve in the newness of the Spirit, follow Christ in the regeneration, and go from strength to strength till they appear before God in Zion and as many as walk according to this rule, mercy on them and peace, and upon the Israel of God.

From what has been said, it is plain, there is nothing in this text that militates against a labourer in the Lord's vineyard, or against a good soldier of Christ Jesus; nor is there any thing in it that countenances or encourages sensual men or mourning women, to vilify, slander, or ridicule the servants of God as being destitute of candour. The same God that tells me to be gentle, tells me to use sharpness where it is wanted; to be gentle to all men, yet to reject an heretic after the first or second admonition to be apt to teach, and yet to stop the mouths of gainsayers; to reprove and rebuke, as well as comfort and encourage; to honour widows that are widows indeed; but not to suffer idle, tattling, canting women to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man; to insist upon such women's using the spindle and distaff, instead of eating the bread of idleness and living upon the labour of others. "Behold this was the iniquity of their sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness," Ezek. xvi. 49; and it is women that give themselves over to the same lazy life, that are bringing the same fiery judgments on their own souls; who, rather than work with their hands, will pretend even to the Spirit of grace, counterfeit religion, injure the ministry, oppose the servants of God, and expose the worshippers of him to contempt at the doors of the congregation, and set the uncircumcised to triumph in order to pick up a few pence, to indulge their idleness rather than stoop to the needle, or to the honest calling of; gathering a few rags, or selling laces and pins. Such set themselves up for prophetesses and teachers, and so blind the eyes of poor simple people and mump a livelihood out of them, while these poor honest souls think they are serving Christ, by housing and feeding his saints; whereas they are only serving the devil, nursing his hypocritical family, and bringing themselves to poverty. God says, if they will not work neither shall they eat; keep such tattling hypocrites as these out of your houses; enquire after the experience of their religion, and keep your pantry door locked, and they will soon leave clone with you, when they find you destitute of

candour. Remember, a real believer thinks it is more blessed to give than to receive; a true Christian's diligent in business and fervent in spirit. Such idle, tattling, and graceless women who pretend to the Spirit of God, while they are destitute of his operations and act so diametrically opposite to the word of the Lord, sin with an higher hand than I did when in a state of nature; for even then there appeared something so sacred and awful in the name Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, that I never cared even to mention it unless in reading; but these hardened hypocrites are more undaunted than Simon Magus; he offered to buy the Spirit with money, and these pretend to be influenced by him in order to get money. God shall discover this woman, whom I believe to be destitute of all reverence of God or fear of him. And Mr. Holywellmount, who bought ninety two-penny volumes to circulate in order to injure me in the work of the Lord, he knows nothing of the plague of his own heart, nor of a spiritual birth; and as for Sir Ham Cottish and Mr. Belly, God never sent them at all to preach his word. As I have obtained mercy, I hope to be found faithful, to try the spirits whether they are of God, and to try them which say they are apostles or evangelists, and to prove them liars if they are not. This is a work that belongs to the Lord's servants, and God in his own time shall bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon day; and then it shall be made manifest who are his and who not. Now to the King eternal, immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, now and for ever. Amen and amen.

FREE THOUGHTS IN CAPTIVITY (TO ZION)

Honourable and highly honoured, venerable and virtuous Mother,

I Wish electing love, sovereign mercy, promised peace, and the abundance of light, life; and comfort; ever to remain with thee and thy highly favoured fraternity.

Some time ago an anonymous pamphlet was sent to me by one of our stewards of the household, affirmed to be written by a Mr. Skinner; with an earnest request that I would publish an answer to the same; upon perusal of which I thought it required one, because the whole contents are levelled against our palaces, walls, towers, and bulwarks. The language of every free thought concerning Zion is, raze it, raze it, even to the foundation. The whole piece contains notions diametrically opposite to the doctrinal articles which he must have sworn to and subscribed, if ever he was licensed; nor has he spoken as the oracles of God; nor do I believe that the contents of this pamphlet are consonant with the confession of faith that he delivered at his

ordination; if they are, I am bold to affirm, that the presbytery did not bring his thoughts to the touchstone, nor sufficiently prove the free-thinker, but laid hands too suddenly on him. The person that can swear and subscribe to doctrines which he doth not believe; confess truth with his lips, and hug a lie in his heart; abjure the doctrines of popery with an oath, and then publish a defence of the same; declare that he believes in his conscience the doctrines of the protestant church, and then preach and write the sentiments of the popish, must be hardened to a dreadful degree, and past feeling; and if ever he was licensed, which as an obedient subject he ought to be, then he is the man. If a man takes no heed to himself, nor to his own conscience, he will take none to his doctrine; therefore there is little likelihood of his saving himself, or them that hear him; dissimulation is more worthy the pillory than the pulpit.

The author of this piece gives us to understand by his title, that he is a free-thinker, such as Paul was before he was called by grace; and he has acted with tongue and pen, as Paul did with his authority from the chief priest; who thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, which he also did, Acts xxvi. 9. And our author thinks he ought to speak and write many things contrary to the doctrines and household of Jesus, which he also hath done.

God, who best knows the heart of man, has declared that the wickedness of man is great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually, Gen. vi. 5. The scriptures intimate that every natural man, or free-thinker, will endeavour to debase his Maker to a level with himself, arraign his conduct at the bar of his reason; the mystery of his sovereign will must comport with the freedom of his, and the thoughts of God must run in the channel of his thoughts: "Thou thoughtest," says God, "that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set them [thy sins] in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." Between the sovereign will of God, and the free-will of man, there is an infinite discomparision; and as infinite a distance between the good thoughts of God toward his elect, Jer. xxix. 11; and the thoughts of free-thinkers concerning themselves; "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Hence the free-thinker, who so often censures and condemns his Maker's counsel and conduct, is called an unrighteous man, and is commanded to forsake his thoughts before he presumes to approach his Maker; Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, before he return unto the Lord,

Isaiah lv. 7: but as this forsaking our free thoughts cannot be performed by free-will, or human power, the gospel furnishes Christ's ministers with weapons which are always attended with a divine power, where any good execution is done, and then this scouting party of free thoughts are taken prisoners, reduced to gospel obedience, and under a divine control they are taught to march in a narrower path, without breaking rank or order: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Under this divine power, free thoughts lose their presumptuous liberty, and the tamed sinner becoming tractable will be ashamed, and complain of his thoughts and of their wretched freedom; and, instead of exposing them so freely, will expose his hatred of them; "I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love." Thus the free-thinker's intoxication submits to gospel sobriety: "For I say to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly."

Our author styles himself a friend to all mankind. By the particle, all, I suppose he means not the heirs of promise, but the children of the flesh, which are not the children of God, Rom. ix. 8; for I am sure he is no friend to Zion, nor to the testimony that God has given of her; there is not one of that chosen family, not one of that royal household, if taught of God and made free by the spirit of truth, but what would be sensibly injured and disgusted at such free thoughts as these, which are levelled at the sovereignty of God, the counsel of his will, his eternal purpose in Christ, the foundation of Zion, and her eternal establishment. Take heed that ye offend not one of these little ones which believe in me, Mark ix. 42.

Mr. Skinner is for enlarging the bonds of the covenant; the sounding of his bowels reaches to all the offspring of old Adam; the mercy of God, and the death of Christ must follow wherever his free thoughts lead the van; for he supposes that God is just such an one as himself; the Bible is to speak the imaginations of his heart; the thoughts are his own, the voice of God is only to articulate them. He has nothing to offer in behalf of God's elect; no encouragement for the children of promise; it is the cause of old Adam, and of the children of the flesh, that he has undertaken to plead; and no doubt but the Edomites and Ishmaelites will greatly rejoice to see so nervous a logician step forth as their advocate in the great day, when God appears a swift witness against the workers of iniquity. He has taken care to shun the severe spirit of Paul. He has no notion of leaving the curse where God has fixed it; he would rather bless Moab than Israel; "If any man love not the

Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha;” nor does he approve of the apostle’s narrowness of spirit, who would endure all things for the elect sake only, that they might obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, 2 Tim. ii. 10. He informs us that he is an advocate for free inquiry into matters of religion; and we may justly reply, that he does not inquire wisely concerning this matter. For as the Bible reveals a blessing and a curse, and mentions children of God and children of the flesh, heirs of promise and heirs of wrath; while the cunning hunter and the plain dealer, the man of the field and the man of the tent, are struggling together for the birth-right and the blessing, the best way is, not to inquire of free thoughts concerning the mystery of election, but to do as Rebecca did, go and inquire of the Lord; and if the answer be, Two nations are within thy womb; the one, a chosen generation, an holy nation, 1 Peter ii. 9; and the other, a people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever, Mal. 4; if two manner of people are to be separated from her bowels, one being children of the flesh and the other children of the promise; if the elder in old Adam is to serve the younger in the second Adam; if Jacob is beloved, and Esau hated, Gen. xxv. 23; Mal. i. 2, 3: then the blessing is to be applied to the proper heir, according to the mind and will of God, not according to our free thoughts. Isaac was going to err in this point, but God stopped him. Upon mount Zion God has commanded the blessing; not on mount Seir, which is Esau; nor upon mount Sinai, which is Hagar and Ishmael. The inheritance is entailed on Abraham’s chosen family, on Isaac’s blessed race, and on the Israel of God. This is the nation that God owns for his, the nation that he has blessed: “The counsel of the Lord standeth fast for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.”

For a free-thinker to pretend to entail God’s blessing where God has denied it, is no less than daring arrogance; “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his [free] thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help.” He is an abomination that justifies the wicked; and he is no better than an abomination who declares that the heirs of promise whom God hath blessed may fall away, and be cursed at last. Balaam, who lost both his life and his soul by attempting to curse them whom God had blessed, never went so far, though the devil helped him; there is no enchantment against Jacob, there is the beloved father; no divination against Israel, there is the elected seed; who can curse Jacob, or defy Israel? “I have received commandment to bless,” though we know his free thoughts run in another channel, for he intended to curse; but he is obliged to own God “hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in

Jacob," our everlasting father; "neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel," who stand complete in him. I would advise our author to act as Salaam did, listen to the voice of God, and consult free thoughts no more about the matter, seeing it cannot be altered: "And when Balaam saw that it pleased God to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to seek for enchantments;" he laid the devil's vain help by, and spoke the truth plainly: "He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion; who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee."

Our author takes the whole Bible as the only code of Christian laws; by which he would give us to understand that he belongs to mount Sinai, the bond-woman in the figure, which is in bond, age with all her children; and it is clear that the old veil is still upon his heart in reading this code of laws. Had he been a child of light, or an heir of promise, he would have found something in the Bible besides a code of laws; it is a strange will and testament that has got nothing but commands in it. However, the Bible is his code of laws; and we know that whatsoever that code said], it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped from boasting, and the whole world become guilty before God instead of innocent.

He is willing that men should enjoy their religious sentiments, however they may differ from his, though he has spent all the free thoughts of his quiver against their sentiments; and he is 'persuaded that right of private judgment, and liberty of conscience, are inseparably connected with a day of retribution, when every one shall give account of himself to God.' Whether this right pleaded for be human or divine we are not informed; but as divinity is the subject, the right ought to have a divine grant from God; spiritual rights and privileges being included among the good and perfect gifts that come from the Father of light. No man by nature has any hereditary right; nor is any man upon earth empowered to grant any right to spiritual things. Private judgment in spiritual matters, as well as public judgment, ought to be according to truth. For want of light to discern; for want of a right granted from God; for want of knowing the scriptures, and the power of God, wrong judgment proceedeth, Hab. i. 4.

'A day of retribution.' A day of repaying what is due to God; a day of giving up accounts to God for every free thought, word, and action; for the doctrines he subscribed to; for the confession he made at his ordination; and for every false doctrine he has advanced; and all this under a code of Christian laws, according to a scheme of free thoughts; God be merciful to such poor blind souls, who darken counsel by words without knowledge, and utter things they understand not. If vindictive Justice makes a demand of Mr. Skinner by law, the retribution, repayment, or recompense, will be

scanty enough, God knows. "Will ye render me a recompense? and if ye recompense me, swiftly and speedily will I return your recompense upon your own head." Should this be the case, our author had need to seek for a surety, and adapt the ancient petition, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant," O Lord, "for in thy sight," neither by a code of laws, nor by the free thoughts of man, "shall no man living be justified," Psalm cxliii. 2. But this right of private judgment, and liberty of conscience, so closely connected with a day of retribution, seems not to be a right granted from above, but from beneath; for it follows,

'And it is the felicity of Britons, that they enjoy liberty, not only of private judgment, but of exposing their sentiments to the world.' This liberty was enjoyed by Simon Magus, Arius, and Pelagius, as well as Mr. Skinner, though they were not Britons, and they had the felicity of dragging thousands into the snare of the devil as well as themselves; they sent many proselytes to their wicked works beforehand to judgment, and they left their damnable heresies to entangle others that shall go after them, by which means their felicity will be increased; or, to speak in the language of Milton, they will be supreme in misery.

If a man's liberty and sentiments be from God, he has a divine right to expose them to others; but if a man hates instruction, if he casts God's word behind him, if he hates to be reformed, whatever liberty or felicity he may boast of as a Briton, God has forbidden him to declare his statutes, or take his covenant in his mouth, Psalm 1. 16, 17.

'By exposing my sentiments, error is detected, and truth established, in defence of which these pages are made public.' By error our author means the doctrines of the gospel, which, if he be licensed, he swore to maintain; and by truth he means his own thoughts, or mischievous devices that he has uttered against the counsel of God; we know there are many devices in this man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand, Prov. xix. 21.

Our author has no 'sinister ends to serve,' though he writes against the word of God in behalf of the world; 'no party to please; no system that must be supported, because it has long been established by men.' The doctrinal articles of the church of England were not established by men; they were drawn from the word of God, which was established in the secret purpose of God in Christ Jesus from all eternity. The system that our author's free thoughts are offered in defence of, has been long established by man; he is writing against the secret purpose of God, against his absolute choice of his people, and against discriminating grace. And has not this system been long established by man? These were the things that provoked Cain; "God

had respect to Abel and to his offering, but to Cain and his offering he had not respect." Cain saw this; and God, who knew his heart, and knew that he was for a free-will establishment, dealt with him accordingly, that is, conditionally, as he has dealt with all his followers ever since: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? but if not, sin lies at thy door;" and Cain is as sure to do well as the Ethiopian is to change his skin, or the leopard his spots. God left him to his own free-will, and in his own religion; in defence of which, and in rage against the grace of God, he slew his brother. There are but two classes of men in the world, heirs of promise, and heirs of wrath; no more than two foundations, the rock and the sand; the one is mount Zion, which God has founded, the other is Sinai in the figure, the children of the flesh, whose foundation is in the dust, Job iv. 19; whose basis is free agency. This religion was founded by Cain; in the behalf of which human establishment Mr. Skinner's free thoughts are made public. This human establishment has never wanted its advocates; in every age there have been some zealous defenders of it; Ishmael, Esau, false prophets, Judas, false apostles, Pelagius, Van Hermin, and John Child in the puritanic age, stepped forth and published a legion of free thoughts, the same in substance as our author's, but more nervous a great deal. He wrote against the doctrines of grace, and the preachers of them, until the band of God touched him, then he sunk into black despair, where he lay bellowing and cursing his book of free thoughts, till like Judas he hanged himself, The history and writings of John Child are well known in the world. One would have thought. such a visible stroke from God would have been sufficient to have awed every free-thinker in the world; "Every morning doth God bring his judgments to light, he faileth not; but the unjust knoweth no shame."

Our author wishes that his thoughts may be blessed to his readers, and Christ is to have the praise. Will a man speak wickedly for God? will he talk deceitfully for him? Job xiii. 7. Will he contradict his Maker, oppose the word of his grace,. and attempt to secure a tribute of praise by encouraging rebellion? Surely God gets no praise from lying lips, nor from a deceitful tongue, Psal. lii. 3, 4. I shall dismiss the title and the preface, and consider our author's thoughts, and set the revealed thoughts of God against them; and as he has jumbled five or six doctrines together, I shall pick them out, one by one, and quote as little of his work as possible, lest I swell my own too big.

The first doctrine that is to be levelled by free thoughts is the doctrine of election, which is stated in the following manner: First, "That God, before the foundation of the world, chose from among mankind a certain number of persons by name; and that this number is so determined, that it can be

neither augmented nor diminished. For these persons, and for these only, Christ died; and of consequence they must be saved; they are therefore termed the elect.' These are the errors that he is going to detect; this is part of the system that he supposes has been long established by man, whereas these are the doctrines that God has established, these are truths that shall be settled in heaven. First, Their choice: "According as he [God] hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love." Secondly, These are chosen from among mankind, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen," John xiii. 18. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Here is a world that loves his own; here is a number chosen out of the world; a number that are not of the world, and this number the world hates, because they are chosen: "Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Thirdly, These are chosen by name: "And he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem." "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." "The general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven," Heb. xii. "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers whose names are in the book of life." These names are written in heaven, in the book of life, and their record is on high, Job xvi. 19.

This number cannot be augmented. "And all that dwell upon earth shall worship him [the beast], whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire," Rev. xx. 15. "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

This number cannot be diminished. "It is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish." "I give unto them [my sheep], eternal life; anti they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. My Father is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." They are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; they shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end, Isaiah xlv. 17. They shall be delivered every one that is found written in the book, Dan. xii. They shall return to Zion with songs and everlasting joy

upon their head, Isaiah xxxv. 10. "Whom he [God] did foreknow he also did predestinate; and whom he did predestinate them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified." Whom God predestinated he glorified: it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? God is for us; who can be against us; who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect; who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

This number can neither be augmented nor diminished. "I know, that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it; and God doeth it [not that men should dispute the point of sovereignty with him, but] that men should fear before him." The elect number of God's family is determined, there is no room left for augmentation or "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." In the business of election there is no work that free will or free thoughts, head or tail, branch or rush, may do, Isaiah xix. 15.

Reprobation comes next among this troop of free thoughts: 'The rest of mankind were passed by, or left in the ruins of fallen nature; and as Christ did not die for them, they must perish; these consequently are called reprobate,' Page 2.

This is brought in again in page 64: 'On this supposition, can the sentiments vindicated do any injury to mankind at large? Whom can they hurt? not the elect, they are secure; not the reprobate, for they are secure also; for on the principles opposed, the elect must be saved, do what they will; and the reprobates must be lost, do what they can.' "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God." That God has chosen in Christ Jesus a certain number by name is already proved; and a choice implies some left, or not included in the choice; these are chosen from the rest of mankind; they are chosen of God; "And except the Lord had shortened those days [of affliction], no flesh should be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days," Mark xiii. 20. They are chosen in Christ, they are chosen from among them that perish, they shall never perish; they are chosen out of the world, and the world hates God's choice of them, and them on account of the choice. This chosen number is but few when compared to the rest they were chosen from. It will be hard to prove that one half of the human race ever heard the gospel call; and those that really have are a large number when compared to the elect; "Many be called, but few chosen." This chosen number are couched in the promise made to Christ; "A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." This promised generation is well known to God, and to him

only, until he makes it known to the seed whom by grace he enables to make their calling and election sure. Who shall declare this generation; Isa. liii. 8. Why Mr. Skinner has; he declares it to be all the offspring of Adam; but the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; and so far from all Adam's offspring being included, all Abraham's seed are not included; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; "That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed," Rom. ix. 7, 8; which Peter applies to the elect; "But ye are a chosen generation;" to whom in Christ the promise of life was made "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." These chosen ones are called the faithful seed of Abraham, God's friend; heirs of promise, called in Isaac not in Ishmael: "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise." They are called the Israel of God, the seed of the spiritual Jacob, whom God hath chosen, Isa. xli. 8; on which account God styles himself the God of Abraham, whom he called alone and blessed; the God of Isaac, in whom the seed was to be called; and the God of Jacob, the father of every subject of mercy, or son of peace: "Peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." This God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, doth not call himself the God of Terah, the God of Ishmael, nor the God of Esau; he is not the God of the dead; not a covenant God to those who were not ordained to eternal life, but the God of those to whom he gave life in Christ Jesus before the world was; not the God of the dead in law, called the bond-woman and her children she is desolate, she is not the married wife; she is Ruhamah, not my wife, saith the Lord, Hosea ii. 1, 2; nor is he the God of the dead in sin, who stand in the first Adam, for in Adam all die; these are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, Rom. ix. 8. The ministry is a savour of death unto death to these; God works a work that they shall in no wise believe, Acts xiii. 41; he is therefore not the God of the dead, but he is the God of the living; namely, of all that he predestinated to the adoption of sons; all that he ordained to eternal life; to these, and to none else, he gives gospel faith; "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Thus Jehovah is not the God of the dead but of the living; the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The God of Abraham, who is the father of us all, who considered not his own body dead though an hundred years old; he is the God of Sarah the free woman, the mother of us all, whose children we are, at whose deadness Abraham staggered not, but by faith surmounted the

deadness of Sarah's womb, on which account the elect are commanded to look to Abraham their father, instead of Adam, and to Sarah that bare them, instead of Eve. And when God styles himself the God of Isaac, Ishmael is excluded; and when he styles himself the God of Jacob, all his seed are not included: "They are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called," Those that are predestinated to the adoption of sons; those that God gave life to in Christ Jesus before the world was, are the heirs of promise, and the promised seed, and no other.

Abraham was typical of Christ, as the everlasting father of the faithful; and Isaac typical of Christ, as the promised seed; "He saith not of seeds as of many, but to thy seed which is Christ," and Jacob was typical of Jesus, as that prince that had power with God and man: "Thou art my servant, O Jacob, in whom I will be glorified." Abraham's seed were those that were ordained to eternal life; these believe as Abraham did; Isaac's seed are the heirs of promise, and Jacob's seed is the spiritual Israel of God, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles; on which account God saith, "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel whom I have chosen: thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant, and Jeshurun whom I have chosen. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." Thus God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the elect are called the children of Abraham, the house of Isaac, and the seed of Jacob, or Israel of God. The elect are never styled the children of Adam, for the promise was made to Christ in their behalf before Adam fell; on which account it is said, the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God. The elect are a seed given to the second Adam, called the children of the promise, which are counted for the seed; nor are they called the children of Cain, who was of that wicked one, to which father the Saviour pointed many of the Jews who laid claim to Abraham, "If ye were the children of Abraham ye would do his works; ye are of your father the devil;" nor are they called the children of Hagar, for the bond-children which are in the flesh are palmed upon her; nor are they called the children of Ishmael, he was born after the flesh, and persecuted him that was by promise, and so it is now; nor are they called the children of Esau, whom God hated, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright; his offspring are to be called the borders of wickedness, against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.

Before universal love, universal grace, and universal redemption can be proved, it will be necessary to point out the promises that were made to the

old Adam, to Cain, to Hagar, to Ishmael, and to Esau. Paul says, to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made; he saith not of seeds as of many, but to thy seed which is Christ, to whom a generation is to be accounted; and the children of the promise are counted for the seed. The whole book of God entails the promise and the blessing on Christ and his chosen, called children of the promise; from which promise old Adam as the head and his children after the flesh are excluded; unless Mr. Skinner can produce it from a new bible, of his own making.

I own the doctrine of reprobation is a most tremendous and awful subject; but I am as sure that it is a truth as I am that there is a God in heaven. The first moment that God shone with a divine ray on my soul, that moment the human race were divided into two classes - the one under the law, the other under grace; the commands and the promises were arranged over the head of each class, as is related in my 'Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer;' and when Mr. Skinner can give some account of a work of grace upon his own soul, and of his ever being taught of God, I shall give more attention to him. Free thoughts upon the Letter of divine revelation is not sufficient; a divine power is wanted; the kingdom is not in word but in power; the free-thinker doth therefore err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God. The Lord created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created, Rev. iv. 11; and his pleasure will be done: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:" "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things." "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the wicked for the day of evil." God's chosen sheep shall be sought out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day, Ezek. xxxiv. 12. "I am found of them that sought me not." Others shall seek him and shall not find him, and where he is they cannot come, John vii. 34. "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified," Isa. lx. 21. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." To the nation that God makes righteous, the gates shall be open, but to none else; others shall strive, but in vain. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

All that shall enjoy the land which is very far off for ever, are branches of the Lord's planting, Mr. Skinner is for a second plantation; but their stock shall not take root; for "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." To the heirs of promise it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to others it is not given. To the elect, who are called babes, and therefore very incapable of receiving them,

these things are revealed; and from the wise and prudent, the best capable of instruction, these things are hid; and so it seemeth good in our heavenly Father's sight, though it seems evil in the eyes of Mr. Skinner. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee. I will build thee, saith the Lord, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel." To the elect God imputes an everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24; Psal. cxix. 142; and for these righteous ones he has laid an everlasting foundation, Prov. x. 25. Our answer, therefore, to every messenger is, that "The Lord hath founded Zion." Our sovereign Lord is a sanctuary to some, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to others; "And many shall stumble and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken," Isa. viii. 14, 15. "Many shall be purified and made white, and tried: but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." This is speaking as the oracles of God.

The Lord hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? Isa. xiv. 27. Some are predestinated, called, justified, and glorified. The elect obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory, 2 Tim. ii. 10. These he predestinated according to his purpose; predestinated to the adoption of sons, Ephes. 5; and to glory.

All men are not included in this decree; all the human race are not elected; there is a world that is left out of this choice; "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The rest are left to the freedom of their own will, of which they boast; on the basis of free agency they stand; for this bottom they contend; under the law they are, and to the law they cleave, and they have a right so to do; for the law to them will never be dead, therefore they have no right to marry another, Rom. vii. 3.

These bond children hate election, and the elect; they hate an unconditional promise, and the heirs of it; they hate sovereign grace, and the subjects of it. "He that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit; even so it is now: nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son, for he shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." So then the elect are not of the bond woman, but of the free.

Cain began the controversy; and as he could not control the will of his Maker, nor gain the point of his brother by the force of argument, he ended it with the fist of wickedness, and the children of the flesh have carried on his cause against the heirs of promise ever since; in behalf of which our present author has thrown his free thoughts into the treasury, that the rising generation may produce their cause, and bring forth his strong reasons, if the King of Jacob should give them a challenge. Cain was of that wicked one;

and we are of God, says John; and there are children of God, and children of the devil to this day, notwithstanding all the pains that men and devils have taken to make these two staves called beauty and bands become one staff in the hand of God, Zech. xi. 7-9.

Some have preached a decree of their own, and have brought in a second sort of elect persons, who have chosen God, without his previous choice of them. These have augmented the determinate number of God's elect, just as the devil is said to augment a congregation by a number of hypocrites: "The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but tares are the children of the wicked one: the enemy that sowed them is the devil." But after all this labour and toil, there are some chosen, and some rejected: "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them;" they will not pass for current coin; their superscription will not do. God shall despise their image. But the chosen part shall be purified as silver is purified, and be tried as gold is tried; "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them; and I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God," Zech. xiii. 9 These shall pass for current coin; their superscription is good; and God knows their image; "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Who can give a saving knowledge of Christ to them to whom it is not given? Who can reveal these things to the wise and prudent, from whom God has hid them? Who can apply Christ to those that are to seek him and not find him? Who can open the door to those that shall strive to enter in and shall not be able?

Men's free thoughts are not the keys of the kingdom of heaven: they can be of no force against the Lord of life and death, with whom are the keys of the house of David, as well as the keys of death and of hell, Rev. i. 18; who "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?"

Notwithstanding the awfulness of this tremendous subject of reprobation, which has made many a chosen vessel to tremble, and which free-thinkers are so dreadfully disgusted at, there is no set of men under heaven that paddle so much in it, and treat it so irreverently, lightly, and contemptuously as they; which, beside scripture testimony, gives me reason to believe that there certainly is such a doctrine as reprobation, and that there is such a people as reprobates, or else our opponents would never discharge such legions of strong reasons, forcible arguments, and free thoughts against the same. If there be no such strong hold as reprobation to besiege, no such people to defend, why this perpetual calling to arms? Why these warm attacks, and

repeated discharges? Men of their wisdom and sense would never so fight as men that beat the air. I am persuaded better things of them; that they have a conviction that there is such a doctrine, and such a people, though they thus speak.

Our author brings in the holiness, wisdom, power, justice, and mercy of God, but takes heed to evade his sovereignty, which I think is wisely done; these attributes of God he styles the first principles which are to be admitted as the standard of all Christian doctrine; then he touches upon the death of Christ, and flies to the universal benevolence of God, whose name is love, and whose tender mercies are over all his works. "God so loved the world," saith our author, "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life," John iii. I shall endeavour to rescue these things from this labyrinth of free thoughts, and set them in their own proper light; in doing which I shall consider,

First, The love of God.

Secondly. The mercy of God, and

Thirdly, The text quoted.

God loveth his people with an everlasting love. All that find grace in God's sight are thus loved: "Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness, even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." All that are thus loved, are given to Christ Jesus: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The objects of this love are drawn to Christ; "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day," John vi. 44. Not one soul, thus loved of God, given to Christ in the decree of election, and by loving kindness drawn to him, shall ever be lost. "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand; my Father which gave them me is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

These are the elect, who are loved with an everlasting love, to whom God hath given everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, which comforts their hearts, and establishes them in every good word and work, 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17. This love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. This is that charity which never faileth; that

charity that abideth for ever; even when faith shall end in open vision, and hope in eternal enjoyment.

Thus are the elect loved with an everlasting love; these find grace in God's sight, are given and drawn to Christ, ordained to salvation, and to the resurrection of eternal life by the will of God; secured from the free thoughts of men, and the gates of hell, by the everlasting arms of God the Father and God the Son, confirmed by the promise of everlasting life, by the witness and seal of the Holy Ghost, and by the inviolable oaths of God, who has sworn to Christ our covenant head, and to the elect, who are the chosen generation, or covenant seed: "I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant," Psal. lxxxix. 3; which is Christ. "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David, his seed shall endure for ever."

Next, the Lord swears to the chosen seed: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." Is this promise and oath made to all the race of Adam? No; "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed;" and to these, and these only, is the oath and promise made: "Surely, in blessing I will bless thee" there is the promise. "And because God could swear by no greater, he swore by himself. Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of his council, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

If all the forts of carnal reason in the world were to be opened at one time, assisted with all the floating batteries of free thoughts, and they should continue one perpetual and unremitted storm, even till the archangel's trumpet proclaim the God of armies coming, Zion's foundation, and her chief corner stone, would stand as unshaken as the everlasting hills, the bases of heaven, or the throne of God. Not one lively stone of mercy's building could ever be removed or displaced: The Highest himself hath established her, she shall not be moved, Psal. xlvi. 5. "Mercy shall be built up for ever."

“..once more, I shake not the earth only, but also heaven; which signifieth removing of those things that are shaken [free thoughts among the rest], that those things which cannot be shaken may remain: but we have received a kingdom that cannot be moved, Heb. xii.26 - 28

It hath been proved that the heirs of promise are loved with an everlasting love; and that the children of the flesh are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed; that the elect are such as God fore knew; they are the sheep, which the Saviour knows: “I know my sheep, and am known of mine.” The others are the children of the flesh, which are not the children of God; are called strangers: he provides for these, and displays his care over them; they are the work of his hands. “He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.” These persons are not foreknown in God’s decree; strangers they are called; strangers they will remain; and such they will be esteemed at the great day: “Depart from me, I know you not.” “Depart from me, I never knew you.” These are not the promised seed of Christ; For they shall all know the Lord, from the least of them to the greatest of them. All Christ’s children shall be taught of the Lord. The rest are strangers; he loveth them in executing judgment for them, and giving them food and raiment, and no further.

I come now to consider the mercy of God. “The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.” But these works are distinguished from the saints in the next verse; “All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall, bless thee.” This goodness and tender mercy that is over all God’s works, is extended both to man and beast. God saves them from many dangers. The Lord it is that preserveth both man and beast, Psal. xxxvi. 6. God is kind to the unthankful and to the evil, Luke vi. 35. “He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Thus far is the goodness of God extended to the non-elect; but to the small number of God’s elect, his goodness is spoken of on this wise, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” But to those excluded from that number he speaketh thus, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.”

I shall now consider the mercy of God more fully. It hath been observed, that God’s tender mercies are over all his works. And this is sometimes displayed in a conspicuous manner, as it was to Saul, by making him king, and delivering Israel by his hands. But this is only a temporal mercy, and is conditional, and may therefore be taken away in case of non-performance,

because it is not secured by a covenant of grace. Children of wrath may have this. The Lord took hold of the hand of Lot, and of his wife, and of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to them, and bid them escape for their life, and not look back, nor tarry in all the plain. The conduct of Lot's two daughters is well known; and we are commanded by way of caution to remember Lot's wife, who was an unbeliever. God gave the house of Israel a king in his anger, and took him away in his wrath. God calls the gift of the kingdom to Saul a mercy, which afterwards he recalled from him. But the mercy of God to his elect is spiritual and eternal, and eternally secured by a covenant of grace, made with David and his seed, which is Christ, and is sure to all the elect seed which were chosen in him.. "And when thou [David] shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee," which is Christ, the fruit of David's loins according to the flesh, Acts ii. 30, "He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." So said Christ, "Upon this rock will I build my church." "And I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house, [which is the household of David, upon which the Spirit of grace and supplication is poured,] and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever," 2 Sam. vii. 12-16. "God hath fulfilled the promise made to our fathers, in that he hath raised Jesus from the dead;" as it is also written in the second Psalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; and as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David," Acts xiii. 33, 34. This mercy is not temporal nor conditional; it is one of the spiritual blessings given us in Christ Jesus. It is the mercy promised to the fathers, which God performed in remembrance of his holy covenant, confirmed by the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, Luke i. 72, 73. This mercy is eternally secured to Christ and his seed by covenant. "I will make him, my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore; and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven."

What is a web of free thoughts, spun out of human brains, polluted both in the warp and in the woof, confusedly jumbled together, in craftiness and hypocrisy, when compared to such a covenant as this? Such webs may serve to entangle a few silly flies, which will stick in every stinking pot of the apothecary's ointment, Ecc. x. 1; rather than fly to the balm in Gilead, or to the great Physician there. But it never can destroy the elect of God; they cannot be deceived. Christ's seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the

days of heaven. God has promised to the elect every necessary blessing, even the hearing ear. "In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness." Then the dead in sin, like others, shall both hear and live. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." These are the blessed of the Lord; "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." To these, and to these only, God speaks in new covenant terms. "Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good [namely, strong meat]; and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

To the chosen seed in Christ Jesus, God speaketh on this wise, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." The covenant blessing promised to these souls in whom God puts his fear, is the sure and everlasting mercies of David, secured by covenant to Christ and his seed "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." This covenant and covenant mercy shall never fail nor decay. God has said, that mercy shall be built up for ever, Psal. lxxxix. 2. It is secured by the eternal veracity of God, and must be accomplished. "For ever, Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

Let the free-thinker muster his thoughts, and utter his mischievous device; let the eloquent logician produce his cause, and bring forth his strong reasons, Isa. xli. 21; let the bowels of universal charity sound like an harp for Moab, Isa. xvi. and contend for the conversion of the world; let the whole select band of mumping prophetesses enforce their candour, and bring their repeated appeals to a candid public; we speak as the oracles of God. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." "And if it be not so now, who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?" Job xxiv. 25. Yea, we dare appeal to a candid public of free agents in behalf of our assertions; "for their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges." Their candour is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah. "Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps," Dent. xxxii. 31-35.

Is this Mr. Skinner, who told a friend, that he would dispute the point of universal redemption with the whole fraternity of Calvinists? Poor man, he seems never to have been favoured with one glimpse even of the frame of

God's covenant. Surely God never sent the halt and the blind to turn people from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

I am inclined to think, that the least stripling in Sion's family, if taught by the Spirit of God, is sufficient in the strength of the Lord to go against any man that defies the armies of the living God.

I come, in the third place, to consider the text that is entangled in this web of free thoughts. 'As the scriptures never confine the death of Christ to a few, but frequently assert that he 'died for all mankind; among many others let the following specimen suffice: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but 'have everlasting life," John iii. 16.' This text, according to the author's free thoughts, is to suffice his readers, without inquiring any further for themselves. This might suffice Esau, who was contented with a mess of pottage; or it might suffice Hagar, the bond-woman, and her son, who went off satisfied with a bottle of water at her back. But Abraham left all that he had to Isaac, and we, as Isaac was, are heirs of promise; and it is well known that Isaac loved savoury meat, and so do his children; nothing else would suffice Isaac; the salt of the covenant of his God must not be lacking, Lev. ii. 13, when he pronounces the covenant blessing of heaven upon the succeeding heirs of promise.

Our author has not quoted this text wisely. The first part, "God so loved the world," is intended to fix, according to free thoughts, the mercy of God and the death of Christ on all the human race; but how he will establish his false doctrine, of final apostasy from grace and redemption, by this text, I know not. The last clause should have been left out of his free-thought system, as that is altogether against his future doctrine of apostasy. "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life;" then the believer is safe, he is not to perish, he is to have everlasting life.

"God so loved the world;" by which world the Gentiles are meant: "Take no thought what ye shall eat or drink, for after all these things do the Gentiles seek;" which is afterwards explained thus; "For all these things do the nations of the world seek after," Luke xii. 30. The phrase is mentioned to throw down the middle wall of partition; the persons intended by the world are the chosen sheep of Christ among the Gentiles, which he explains thus "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold [not of the Jewish, but of the Gentile fold], them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." The whole human race are not intended by the world, for the world is not redeemed, but the sheep are redeemed from among them; "No man could learn that song, but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth; these were

redeemed from among men.” The world that these sheep are redeemed from are, not to see Christ, but the sheep redeemed shall see him, and live too; “Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me; because I live ye shall live also.” “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world;” these, and only these, can ever receive the Holy Ghost. “And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” But why cannot the world receive, know, and see the Spirit of God as well as the elect? Because the Spirit never comes to them; they are not the seed to whom he is promised. The promise, as hath been observed, runs thus: “A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.” “Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” These are called the seed that the Lord hath blessed, Isaiah lxi. 9; the holy seed, Isa. vi. 13.

As the children of the promise are counted for the seed, it will not be amiss to examine what the promises are that this seed are heirs to, and how the promises are fulfilled to these heirs. Christ hath a promise, and so hath the seed; “When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days; he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” “I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather them from the west.” “I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.” Here is the Spirit of God, and the blessing of God, promised as the portion of this seed. “As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever,” Isa. lix. 21. We have considered Christ the everlasting Father of this seed, and the promises made to him; we have also considered the seed, and the promises made to them in Christ their head; from which seed, or heirs of promise, the children of the flesh are excluded. These are not the children of God, -whether they descend from Shem or Japheth, from Abraham or Nahor; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called; they shall be heirs of promise as Isaac was. And, for my part, I have no doubt but the promised blessing, the word of promise, and the Spirit of promise, will be applied by Christ, the testator and executor of the testament, to the proper heirs, according to the will of God; for the Saviour came not to do his own will, but the will of him

that sent him, John vi. 38.

This seed is called the blessed of the Lord; and he sent his Son to bless them, Acts iii. 26. This seed is to receive the words that God put into the Saviour's mouth; and so they did: "Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee; for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I am came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

Now let us see what seed this is, whether the whole world be intended or not. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word," John. xvii. 6. This seed is a number given to Christ out of the world; these receive the word; and they are to receive the Spirit that was upon Christ also, which is never to depart from him nor his seed, according to the will and promise of God; which will, Christ the testator is to confirm and execute. if the world were included in the promise, they would have the Spirit sent unto them: but they are finally excluded. "The Father shall give you another Comforter; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Thus the blessing of God, the promise of God, and the Spirit of God, are promised to this seed, exclusive of all others. Let us see how these things are applied to this chosen seed, called heirs of promise; and whether free-thinkers are intrusted with the division and application of these promised blessings. Paul tells us the blessing is to believers: "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are children of Abraham: so then, they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham." The blessing we find is promised to the believer. The next inquiry is, how we come by faith? The answer is, God hath concluded all men in unbelief.

Some inform us, that it is the duty of every man to believe; they must also prove that it is the duty of every man to beget himself to a lively hope with the word of truth; that it is the duty of every man to quicken his own soul, though God declares none can do it; that it his duty to produce a spiritual birth in himself, though man be born again, not of the will of man, nor of the flesh, nor of blood; and that it is the duty of every man to transform himself; for God says, that such as he forms shall show forth his praise: and that it is the duty of every man to create himself anew in Christ Jesus, without the aid of him that sits upon the throne and says, "I create all things new." This is a system that has lately appeared in the world, and agrees in substance with our present system of free thoughts. And surely the man that can do these things is a freethinker indeed, a free agent with a witness: he is his own father,

his own maker, the father of his own spirit, the life of his own soul, and the God of his own existence. These men may well say, "We are lords," Jer. ii. 3 1; "Who is lord over us?" Psal. xii. 4. All these things must be done before faith can be produced; faith is the active hand of the new creature: "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." I should like to hear how this motley monster, partly carnal, and partly spiritual, as it has been lately exhibited to the world, I mean a living faith, produced by human power - I should like, I say, to hear such a believer describe the glorious object that he believes in, which the world never saw, and the hidden mystery that he builds his faith on, which none of the princes of this world ever knew: for I am inclined to think, that his description of the Saviour, and of the mystery of the gospel, would be of the same nature as his faith, that is, earthly, sensual, and devilish. And for my part, I should think that if a carnal man, destitute of the grace of God, could be prevailed on by the force of human reason, to give a fleshly assent to the gospel of Christ, according to the command of the same, that he would deceive himself, unless the Spirit of God applied it to him, and endanger his own soul, by his carnal application. No man can call Jesus his Lord but by the Holy Ghost: no man can call God his Father but by the Spirit of adoption, which is the manifestation of the poor sinner's predestination to the adoption of sons, and therefore enables the soul to cry Abba, Father. To call Christ Lord, or God Father, without the Holy Ghost, is no less than presumption; such cannot be upright before God, nor innocent from the great transgression, Psalm xix. 13. The Jews told the Saviour that they had one Father, even God: but he reprov'd their presumption, and told them they were of their father the devil. I know the gospel is truth: but if all the children of the flesh, or of the bond-woman, in the world were to lay claim to the blessings of it, without they were applied by the Holy Ghost; or to claim Christ as theirs, without that faith that is of the operation of God, they would be no less than presumptuous liars; "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The elect, and only they, are lions' whelps, the predestinated offspring of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Others may call themselves Jews, but Christ says he knows their blasphemy in so saying, and declares he will make them of the synagogue of Satan. "Every man at his best estate is altogether vanity." And all his thoughts, whether free or limited, are vanity also, Psa. xciv. 11. Then it is vain to place any confidence either in carnal self, or in free thoughts, for both are vain; and God has said, "Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity, for vanity shall be his recompense." If he trusts in himself, self must be his reward; and what can man reap from the flesh but corruption?

If I was to see the whole human race driven by the force of human reason, or by enforcing the legal commands of God, to lay a fleshly claim either on Christ or his gospel, without the Spirit of revelation, supplication, and adoption, I should think it my duty, as a minister of Christ, to dispute such presumptuous Antinomians out of all their false claims. I know fools will rage and be confident. Their excellency may reach unto heaven, and their head touch the clouds, yet such shall perish like their own dung, their confidence shall be rooted out of their tabernacle, and they shall be brought to the king of terrors, Job xx. 6, 7. Job xviii. 14.

Man, fallen, consequential man, notwithstanding all births produced by the will of man, the will of the flesh, or of blood, is but a fleshly conception, and a fleshly birth at best; and the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Real believers are born of God, they are predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son; these shall bear the image of the heavenly Adam, when the others bear only the image of the earthly. By this image they shall all be known in the great day. Neither the self-begetter nor the free-thinker will ever be able to palm one child of the flesh upon the everlasting Father: "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." But I must return to my subject.

The predestinated heirs of God, who are entitled to the blessing of Abraham, to the promise of Isaac, and to the promised Spirit of God, must undoubtedly receive the same according to the will of God, and according to the testament of Christ. The particular distribution of the Spirit is of God; and the Spirit of God reveals and applies the blessings, who is omniscient, and therefore cannot err. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life;" which eternal life, God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, Tit. i. This promised life the elect were ordained to; on which account the Holy Ghost works faith in their hearts, which is the gift of God. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed," and none else, Acts xiii. 48. The promise of life, the grace of faith, and the Spirit of God, come altogether to God's elect. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Here we have the blessing, which is life, promised to Abraham, promised likewise to Zion; for there God commanded the blessing, even life for evermore. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Here we have the word that was promised, the word came unto you in power; we have here the promised Spirit also, it came in the Holy Ghost; here we have the gift of faith likewise, it came with

much assurance.

Thus, God so loved the world, the Gentiles as well as the Jews, who were to be fellow-heirs of the same promise, Eph. iii. 6; that he gave his only begotten Son, who hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us, and hath made both one, Eph. ii. 14; that whosoever believeth on him, as all that were ordained to eternal life have done, and shall do, might not perish, according to this system of free thoughts, but have everlasting life, in spite of men or devils.

Our author's intent, in this pamphlet, is to prove that Christ died for all men. In order to overthrow this arrant lie, and make this speech nothing worth, it will be necessary to consider what the elect are redeemed from, and the absolute promises made to them in Christ.

First, They are redeemed from under the law, that they may receive the adoption of sons, Gal. iv. 5.

Secondly, They are redeemed from the curse of the law, Gal. iii. 13.

Thirdly, They are redeemed from among men, Rev. xiv. 4.

Fourthly, They are redeemed from all iniquity, Tit. ii. 14.

Fifthly, They are ransomed from the grave, and redeemed from death, Hos. xiii. 14.

Sixthly, Christ hath obtained eternal redemption for them, Heb. ix. 12.

Seventhly, They are redeemed from hell: "Deliver him from going down to the pit, nave found a ransom," Job xxxiii. 24.

If the elect are redeemed from under the law, and the curse of it; from all iniquity; from among men; from death, and from hell, with an eternal redemption; it follows, not one of these can be cursed, damned, eternally die, or go into the pit; and if Christ died for all mankind, all mankind are thus redeemed by Christ. But that all are not redeemed from the curse of the law is clear, for many will be sent from the judgment-seat under that sentence, Go ye cursed. Nor are all mankind redeemed from death; for the children of the flesh are the children of old Adam; these are not the children of God, Rom. ix. 8. In Adam all die, 1 Cor. xv. 22. All are not ransomed from the pit; some are in hell already, Ezek. xxxi. 16, 17. And the gate that leads to destruction has many that go in thereat, while there are but few that find the strait gate that leads to life.

The truth of the matter is, Christ laid down his life for his sheep, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hands, John x. 28. But of some he says, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said

unto you.” These are goats, and they will appear so, and I be set at the left hand of the Judge in the great day.

The promise made to the elect, which are the sheep for whom Christ laid down his life, is, that they shall never perish: “The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” By the Holy Ghost they are sealed to the day of redemption; that is, to the day of redemption for the body, when body and soul shall enjoy full and complete redemption. Hence the Holy Spirit of promise, by which the elect are sealed, is called the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, Eph. 14; until the redemption of the purchased church, which God will possess to all eternity, be completed, and they completely glorified, and settled in the heavenly possession, which is the glorious kingdom that the saints of the Most High shall possess for ever, even for ever and ever, Dan. vii.

Thus the redeemed shall never perish; they shall return with songs, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away; they are sealed to the day of redemption, and have got an earnest of the purchased possession in their hearts; they shall possess the kingdom for ever and ever. These were chosen in Christ before the world was, and had life given them in Christ before Adam was formed; they were predestinated to the adoption of sons; and because they are sons, by predestination and pre-adoption, God sends forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father, Gal. iv. 6. They are called sheep before they are called by grace, and sons of peace, before ever they hear any thing about peace: “Into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house; and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if not, it shall turn to you again.” To these predestinated heirs of promise were the promises made in Christ; to these God has sworn that he never will be wroth with them, nor forsake them: and when God can be perjured by free thoughts, and made a liar, then shall the elect fall from grace, but not till then. “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things [his promise and oath], in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.”

When our author has done his best, he will find, that those who were chosen in Christ, and given to Christ, were redeemed, and no more. Those that were left out of this choice are in old Adam. They are called the children of the flesh; Adam is their father, and Hagar is their mother, in the allegory;

for the seed was not to be called in Ishmael, but in Isaac, who was a child of promise in every sense. Cain and Abel; Shem and Canaan; Ishmael and Isaac; Esau and Jacob; the son that promised to go into the vineyard, and went not, and the other that said that he would not, but went; the elder son displeased at sovereign grace, and the younger, called the prodigal, that was saved by it; are all set forth, to shew the difference between the elect and non-elect; the children of the flesh and the children of the Spirit; the heirs of wrath and the heirs of promise; the children of God and the children of the devil, 1 John iii. 10. And how our author will bring these two families together, I know not. The elect are in no danger of perishing, because they have got better security than our author's free thought; they have the absolute decree of God, the promise of God, and the oath of God, besides the covenant of grace, the atonement of Christ, and the seal of God's Spirit. This is their security, and all these things must become a blank before one elect soul can perish.

Our author goes on to prove universal redemption by the following scriptures. "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth; for the Mediator gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," 1 Tim. ii. 1 - 6. The Spirit of supplication never put up one petition in this world for the eternal salvation of all men. Nor did Christ ever pray for all men. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gayest me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me out of it," John xvii. 6, 9.

It is true, Christ prayed for some of his murderers "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Yet it is clear, those that he then prayed for were some of them that his Father gave him out of the world, upon whose consciences Peter charged the blood of Christ. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." These Were pricked in their hearts, received the word, and were added to the church; while the children of the bond-woman stood mocking the heirs of promise, as Ishmael their father did before them, saying, "These men are full of new wine," Acts ii. 13.

The apostle's exhortation, that prayers may be made for all men, is with this restriction, for kings, and all that are in authority, that the saints may lead a quiet and peaceable life, 1 Tim. ii. 2; that is, that God might put a stop to the persecution of these Kings and governors, as all hearts are in his hands, and incline them to minister justice unto evil doers, and defend them that do well; that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in godliness and

honesty; or that God might convert them, if it were his will; as some kings and queens have been, and are yet to be, nursing fathers and mothers to the church, who are to come to the light and to the brightness of Zion's rising.

Christ gave himself a ransom for all, signifies no more than a ransom for some of all nations, agreeable to the promise made to Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Some of all ranks, some of all sorts of sinners, agreeable to the oracles of God; some out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, Rev. v. 9. It may have reference to the time coming, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ; which there is little sign of at present.

The word, all, does not mean the whole human race, ransomed from the curse of the law, the wrath of God, and damnation of hell; this cannot be proved, until it can be proved that the gate that leads to destruction is locked up; which never will be while so many free-willers, free-thinkers, and universal liars, get into pulpits. Before the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ, the mouths of them that speak lies must be stopped, Psalm lxiii.; and the everlasting gospel must be preached to every nation under heaven, Rev. xiv. 6. When this day appears, free-thinkers shall be discovered by the light of the Lord, and free-agency consumed by the breath of his lips; for it cannot be supposed that the free thoughts of carnal men can be called the everlasting gospel, or that life and immortality should be brought to light by them. If the words, all, and every man, mean the whole human race, our author would make a strange hand of the Bible by his thoughts on the following texts: "They be all adulterers," Jer. ix. 2; "and great grace was upon them all," Acts iv. 33; "that they all might be damned," 2 Thess. ii. 12; "that all should come to repentance," 2 Peter iii. 9; "they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us," 1 John ii. 19; "if one died for all, then were all dead," 2 Cor. 14; "for all seek their own, not the things that are Christ's," Phil. ii. 21; "every man shall eat the flesh of his own arm," Isa. ix. 20; "then shall every man have praise of God," 1 Cor. iv. 5; therefore "every man's heart shall melt," Isa. xiii. 7; "every man in the chambers of his imagery," Ezek. viii. 12; "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith," Rom. xii. 3; "every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts," Prov. xix. 6; "every man was determined to send relief to the brethren," Acts xi. 29; "the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," 1 Cor. xii. 7; which Spirit "the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." "I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." God shall justify the circumcision through faith. "For every man shall bear his own burden." "We preach, that we may present every man perfect in Jesus Christ," Col. i. 28. "Ye shall be slain all of you; as

a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence." Free Thoughts will make a strange jumble of these universal expressions; but if he draws God's line between the children of God and the children of the devil, they will appear very consistent; they are all right to them that have understanding, there is nothing froward or perverse in them. Our author goes on.

'God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; for which purpose he commands all men every where to repent; and since he does not require impossibilities, and then punish for non-performance, every man might repent, and consequently be saved; for Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man.' This is the doctrine of free-willers, these are free-agents and free-thinkers: these are them that justify themselves before men; these are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight; these are of those who asked the Saviour "Are we blind also?" these are the sons to whom the Lord said, "Go work to-day in my vineyard; who answered, I go, Sir, but went not." This is the nation that is pure in their own eyes, but was never washed from their filthiness. These are the men that say, We are lords, we will come no more unto God, Jer. ii. 31; "our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?" And such, with respect to Christ, are unanimous in their declaration; for as a sovereign, and as the Christ of God, they will not have him to reign over them, Luke xix. 14.

To such pure, self-sufficient, confidential, and consequential men as these, who call themselves lords, contend for human power, and freedom of will, who think God is just such a one as themselves, who can produce their own cause, and bring forth their strong reasons against the King of Jacob, he deals with in a conditional way, according to the abilities they boast of. If they are, as they say, lords, or Jehovahs, nothing can be impossible to them; hence God sets them a task agreeable to their boasted omnipotence, "Cease to do evil, learn to do well;" there is the command. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil;" this is the lot of them that trust in falsehood.

Men that say, we are lords, who pretend to deity, God sets them a task equal to that divine power they boast of: "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby you have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" These men are commanded to believe also; which is no hard task, if they be lords according to their own declaration. Mr. Skinner tells us, that God does not require impossibilities; according to his assertions he has power to cease to do evil, to learn to do well, to turn himself to God, to repent, to create a

new heart, and a new spirit, and to believe in Jesus; if he can do this, make a new heart and a new spirit, I say he is God; and if he had done this for me, I would have fallen down and worshipped him; for I know the preparation of man's heart and the answer of the tongue is from Jehovah, Prov. xvi. 1; and if Mr. Skinner can make a new heart and a new spirit, he is God. However, the elect that are partakers of the Holy Ghost, they say the way of man is not in himself; it is not in him that walketh to direct his steps; turn thou me and I shall be turned; that repentance is God's grant; "Unto the Gentiles hath God granted repentance unto life;" that it is Christ's gift, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins; that a new heart and a new spirit are God's gift and God's work; that faith is the gift of God; that to believe in Jesus Christ is a work that requires an exceeding great and mighty power; that ye may know "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." And our author, who supposes that he has ability to do whatsoever God commands, appears to me to be an entire stranger to a new heart, a new spirit, real repentance, a turn to God, and to the faith of God's elect, to this day; if he were not, he could not have sworn and subscribed to doctrines that his soul hates. What can be expected from a man that can publish his own perjury, swear and lie to the Holy Ghost contrary to his thoughts, and then send the wicked thoughts of his heart into the world to contradict his confession, oath, and handwriting? Our author goes on.

"The command to preach the gospel to every creature supposes that Christ died for all, or there can be no gospel for all; and if so, it impeaches the sincerity of Christ in commanding it to be preached to all, and the ministers preach an untruth to the reprobate. I answer, the gospel is to be preached to every creature, with this promise, that he that believeth shall be saved; and they that were ordained to eternal life believed, and ever will believe, and none else; and if the preachers do preach an untruth in declaring the gospel to the reprobate, it is in obedience to their Lord's will, who by his servants invited many to the supper, though they were not worthy, and commanded them to say, Peace be to this house, though peace was to return to them again if the son of peace was not there. Our author adds,

'Who can justify his [that is, the Saviour's] conduct, who sends a minister to preach a gospel, so called, to myriads of men for whom it was never intended, and then punishes them most severely for having heard it? that is, for having done their duty.' If men, like our author, can perform what God requires, as he declares God does not require impossibilities, that is, he requires nothing but what man, fallen man, can perform; for he says, there is not a damned soul in hell but what if he had done well, as he might have

done, had been a glorified saint in heaven,' p. 36. then an ineffectual call is quite enough; for I think, when men talk at this rate, and call themselves lords, it is sufficient to send them an invitation, and so expose their free-agency to contempt for choosing their farms, yokes of oxen, and wives, before the gospel feast. If men can perform what God requires, a command or an invitation is sufficient; God does nothing in vain; and if men, with power to perform, refuse the invitation, and slight the banquet and the Lord of the household, I think it is an act of unparalleled kindness in the Master to send his servants into the streets and lanes of the city, to compel those that cannot help themselves. The Lord tells us when we make a feast not to call the rich, but the poor; and he does the same; he orders his servants to bring in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, Luke xiv. 21. The promise of God is not to be made of none effect by free, thinkers nor by work-mongers.

What reasonable man, who might be a glorified saint in heaven if he would, who has power to perform what God requires, and yet rejects the feast and damns his soul; I say, what ground has he to be offended with the Saviour for his free grace and mercy in sending a compulsion to his own elect, who are altogether helpless? Surely the Saviour is more justifiable in helping cripples that cannot help themselves, than he would be in lending his aid to men who are lords, who can make a new heart and a new spirit for themselves. The Saviour is called the hope of Israel, and a Help that is mighty to save; but he will not lend his help to them that need it not. Uzzah was struck dead for lending unwarrantable help, 2 Sam. vi. 6. But the Saviour will not do so. He came to fulfil the promise. "I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment." He makes the proud helpers stoop under him, Job ix. 13. The man that can deck himself with majesty and excellency, is to be saved by his own arm. Job xl. 10-14. The Saviour eyes the blessing, and keeps under it. Blessed is he that respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies, Psal. xl. 4. God rewardeth the simple, and none else, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer, Psal. xxxi. 23; who can make his own heart, and create his own spirit; who stands in no need of help. This our author affirms; for he says, Every man has power sufficient, if used, at one period or other of his life, to believe or obey the gospel. It will be hard to prove, that every man has heard the gospel, or that one part in ten have ever heard it; and they that have heard it, and perished under it, are more in number than those that were saved by it. Many be called, but few chosen. As for the heathens, I have no doubt but God will judge them with equity. They being without the law, are a law to themselves. For they have all acted as our

author used to declare he had; that is, they have done those things that they ought not to have done, and left undone those things that they ought to have done; and there is no more health in them than there is in Mr. Skinner.

Our author tells us, The Saviour's yoke is easy, and his burden is light.' It really is so to the saints. Christ's yoke is a living faith; and that which makes the burden light is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy- Ghost, which is easy enough to a man that can make a new heart and a new spirit. For if a man can make a spirit, he can easily produce faith and love; for they are only the fruits of it. God does not, he says, demand impossibilities; therefore he takes it for granted, that when God says, The man is become like one of us, that he means, that every man is a God. What an inconsistent being is this free-thinker, who stands fast in himself, and talks of the Saviour's easy yoke and light burden, when he never felt either.

The next thing he handles is universal light. But he never quotes this text, "Behold darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," Isa. lx. 2. But he goes on. It is not asserted nor supposed that man naturally possesses this power,' though he declares, there is not a soul in hell but might have been a glorified saint in heaven.' Then he contradicts himself, and saith, But, on the contrary, that man is spiritually blind and dead.' If so, his light and free thoughts are little worth. For who can see that is blind? and who can think that is dead? But notwithstanding man's being blind and dead, he says, that experience proves that every man has some knowledge of sin; he feels the reproofs of conscience. Now these must proceed from human nature, Satan, or Deity. But they cannot spring from a soul totally blind and dead;' though before he said they were so. Nor do they spring from Satan, for he blinds the mind of unbelievers.'

To all which I answer, the eye of God upon the Egyptian host, that looked through the cloud, troubled the host, and destroyed them, was the eye of offended justice. And those that lift up their eyes in hell, being in torments, will see the same.

This is divine light, but no more salvation annexed to it than there is to our author's free thoughts, which are nothing but a confusion of darkness.

The accusers of the adulterous woman were convicted by the light of their own conscience, which is a ray from the law. And this will be seen, and felt too, even in hell. He will have light for reflection, though none to salvation. God, as a reconciled Father in covenant, can only be known by his own ray in the gospel, by which he brings life and immortality to light. "God who caused the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The scriptures inform us, that Satan is transformed into an angel of light;

therefore, it is no marvel if his ministers be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. If the devil can do this, he may enlighten some in our days, for aught I know. The Jewish Rabbies said, "Are we blind also?" whom the Saviour answers, "If ye were blind, ye should not have sin; but since you say, We see, therefore your sin remaineth." He tells them, they were of their father the devil, and cautions others to take heed, lest the light that be in you be darkness. If it be, how great is that darkness? Matth. vi. 23. Thus some see whose sin remains; others have light that is nothing but darkness; others see in the rays of justice; others boast of the light of nature, or natural conscience; and others lift up their eyes in hell.

The Saviour doth enlighten every man that cometh into the world. He planted the eye and ear both; he created the seeing as well as the hearing. The light of reason, before man fell, was the candle of the Lord; but it is so dim now that it can only lead a sinner to erect an altar to an unknown God. But to the elect Christ brings life and immortality to light: he is the saints' everlasting light, their God, and their glory, and their sun shall no more go clown, Isa. lx. 19, 20. And if our author was thus enlightened by Christ, he would repent of these his free thoughts in dust and ashes, and curse the day, as John Child did, that ever he sent them into the world, to darken counsel by words without knowledge.

Our author goes on to illustrate his argument by the parable of the talents, that the servant that hid it was pronounced wicked because he was slothful. It is sometimes objected, this was 'not grace; and by the same authority it may be asserted that the five talents were not grace.' To which I answer, if the one talent was grace, the man would not have been condemned for sloth; for God worketh in his people both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. Christ declares to his elect, that without him they can do nothing; and the church owns God hath wrought all her works in her.

If the one talent had been grace, it could not have been hid; for if such hold their peace the very stones would cry out. The more the Saviour charged the objects of mercy to hold their peace the more they spread it abroad. If the one talent had been the grace of the Spirit, he could not have hid it, he must have spoken as the Spirit gave him utterance; for he would have found the word of God, as Jeremiah did, a fire shut up in his bones; the Spirit of God is a springing well, and out of the belly of such flow rivers of living water; they cannot be pent up; they must speak if they die for it. The one talent was a lamp without oil, and surely this cannot be grace; the law is a lamp, and that seems to be all that Mr. Skinner has got at present, God grant he may not find it so to his cost at last. The one talent is what Peter calls a well without water; Jude calls it a cloud without rain. 'God's witnesses are called a cloud;

and there is a cloud of false witnesses who have not the waters of life, nor the witnessing Spirit in them. These are instruments without life giving sound; that is, they are preachers that were never quickened by the Spirit of God. Solomon calls it a false gift, from whence Jude took it; "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him; for he refresheth the soul of his masters. Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift, is like clouds and wind without rain."

Judas had a talent, he had a gift for preaching; hence, saith Peter, "He was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry;" Acts i. 17; which was the worst part, a gift to preach and no more, for Jesus called him a devil before he sent him out with the rest to preach the kingdom of God; and surely, if he had been a partaker of grace, the Lord would not have called him a devil, unless it can be proved that devils have grace. I believe Judas was the man that the Saviour struck at in the parable of the talents as he often did, "Ye are clean, but not all," Judas the traitor being there, therefore said he, "Ye are not all clean." "I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." "Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me;" "But wo be to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed." Take the talent from him, and give it to him that has ten talents," that has many gifts and graces; which was to fulfil the prediction, "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and his bishoprick let another take;" and they chose Matthias. But, if I am not mistaken, his talent was given to Paul, who had an abundance of grace and truth, and used his ministerial talent well.

The elect are sons by predestination, pre-adoption, and regeneration; they have grace in Christ, and out of his fullness they receive it at the set time appointed; and if God gives a preaching talent to one of his elect to make him a minister, it is called giving twopence to the host, Luke x. 35; one penny more than a private Christian, who receives a penny a day; such are sons of God, and sons of Christ, as well as servants to his Church; 339

and what these receive is not to be taken away; but if he gives a gift to a legal servant, who is not a son, it may be taken away. The parable of the talents is taken from Ezek. xlvi. 16, 17. "Thus saith the Lord God: If the prince give a gift to any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons'; it shall be their possession by inheritance. But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after, it shall return to the prince; but his inheritance shall be his sons for them." Hence we are called heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; and the inheritance is not to be taken away. Our author proceeds:

'If Christ did not die for the non-elect, their existence is a necessary curse to them. It is undeniable that mankind are brought into existence without

their consent; and it is equally certain that existence is a curse to them that perish.' This is the man that produceth the old cause of Cain, and brings forth his strong reasons against the King of Jacob, Isa. xli. 1; and appeals to the world for the equity of his plea. "Wo to the rebellious children." "Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker," Isa. xlv. 9. "Wo unto him that saith to his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" The Judge of all the earth will find little difficulty in vindicating his proceedings both as a Creator and a Judge in the great day; the wicked will be condemned out of their own mouths. Mr. Skinner has left an all-sufficient and an everlasting verdict against his own soul, should the Judge of quick and dead take the advantage that he has offered. He insists upon it that the damned might have been in heaven if they had done as they might; and that man has power to obey the gospel; that he can perform what God requires; and yet owns that his experience teaches him that he feels the workings of sin, which is discovered by the light that he says is of God. If sin work in him, where is his power? where is the task that he might have performed? and where is his meetness for heaven?

Our author's talent amounts to this, God commands nothing impossible; he with his talent can perform it; there is not a soul in hell but what if he had done as he might have done, had been a glorified saint in heaven.' Upon the old covenant he stands; for his own ability and conditions with his Maker he pleads; and upon those legal terms will God deal with such men? He looks to the work of a servant, but to the heart of a son; but this our author is ignorant of; he stands and triumphs at present upon his old bottom; and if God should push him down from this pinnacle, he would plead as the servant with his one talent did, "thou reapest where thou hast not sown, and gatherest where thou hast not strewed." But this was rebellion; out of his own mouth he was judged; for if his master was so austere a man, he ought to have been the more careful about the improvement of the stock, especially as he had power to perform whatsoever his Lord commanded; but notwithstanding all his logic he was cast into outer darkness, and that justly; for if natural men have so much light and power, they ought to do what they are commanded; for he that knows his Lord's will and doth it not shall be beaten with many stripes.

As for the elect they have not this light and power that free-thinkers are possessed of, they dare not urge their plea against God, nor send out their free thoughts with an appeal to the world in behalf of Cain's cause. They dare not plead for their mother if she is not God's wife, nor he her husband, Hos. ii. 2. If God puts her away by the old covenant, it is no more than what the bond-children desired, and Moses, because of the hardness of their hearts,

granted unto them. God adopts the desire of Israel concerning divorce, and uses their own request; “For your transgressions is your mother put away,” Isa. I. 1.

To be short: Upon the old covenant the bondwoman and her children stand; and the law says, He that doth these things shall live in them: for this covenant they plead; for the commands, and their own strength to perform the conditions thereof, they contend; and if they perform, as our author affirms they can, then he declares, they may be all glorified saints in heaven. The conditional promise is before them, let them look to it: if they will enter into life, let them keep the commandments; but if they offend in one point, they are guilty of all. This old way is so strait that not one, except Christ, ever entered by it. But our author has power to perform what the Lord commands, therefore he bids fair for the prize.

He will find three difficulties attending this way; the one is, the accusations of Moses against every transgressor; another is, the flaming sword of justice, that keeps the way of the tree of life; and the third is, the city gates, that will open to none that hold a lie in their hands, as Mr. Skinner holds many: “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in.” The elect, who make Christ all in all, find the sword sheathed in the Saviour. Moses has nothing to say against faith: and he that has Christ formed in his heart, keeps the truth, and shall enter the gates. But we go on.

‘The general resurrection is a consequence of the resurrection of Christ; “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” To which I answer, The elect were chosen in Christ before the world was, consequently before they were formed in Adam: these are preserved in Christ Jesus, and called; they are justified in him; both Christ and they, the elect head and elect members, were both included in God’s decree from everlasting. Hence it is said, “For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,” Heb. 11. These were joined to the Lord in the eternal decree, and are united in the everlasting covenant, and are of one spirit with the Lord by regeneration: “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit:” and what God hath joined together let not Mr. Skinner put asunder. These put on Christ, walk in Christ, and die in the Lord, and shall be glorified together; they are called a seed that shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation; this is the generation that seeks the face of Jacob; an holy nation, a righteous nation, that keeps the truth, and shall enter the gates of heaven: these are all written in the book, and shall every one be delivered. There is a generation of Adam, that are in him, not in Christ; that are under the law, not under grace; children of the bondwoman, not of the free; servants, not sons; children of the flesh, not children

of the promise: these are in the earthly head, and are earthly; others are in the heavenly head, and are heavenly: “The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” In Adam all die; for they are under the law, which is the ministration of death those that are in Christ shall be made alive; nor can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection, Like xx. 36. These are the heirs of the promise of life, which God, that cannot lie, gave them in Christ Jesus, before the world was. Our author is going to prove universal salvation from Peter,

‘False teachers who privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord, that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, 2 Pet. ii. To which I answer, The scriptures often speak of men, as men speak of themselves. The Pharisees justified themselves before men; and Christ calls them righteous: “I came not to call the righteous.” There is in our day a class of people who call themselves perfect, and God calls them a nation that are pure in their own eyes, though never washed from their filthiness, Prov. xxx. 12. Those that followed the Saviour for the loaves and the fishes, were called his disciples, but when Christ preached eternal election to them, and enforced eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, they were offended; then these disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Judas is called an apostle, because he was chosen to bear the bag, though he was a devil. Some call themselves lords, as has been proved; and as Mr. Skinner thinks he is, by the power he boasts of, able to perform what God requires, God has set him such a task as none but God can do, to make a new heart and a new spirit; which, if he be a Lord, or a Jehovah, God knows he can do it.

In the apostles’ days it was common to say, “We are not our own, we are bought with a price;” Christ hath bought us with his own blood; we are redeemed with the precious blood of the Lamb of God. The false apostles adopted the language of the true ones; We are bought with a price; as Balaam imitated the prophets of God, saying, “I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God.” It is not very likely that these men should be redeemed from all evil, when they had nothing to prove it by, but the damnable heresies that they brought in; a damnable heresy is but a damnable reason of hope at best. However, they called themselves the purchase of Christ; and then God made it manifest that they were not of his family, by their going out from them, which, if they had been, they would no doubt have continued, says God. However, they went out, after all their boast of redemption; and, in their own language, Peter tells us, .they denied the Lord that bought them, and brought upon themselves destruction, which the redeemed never can: Zion is redeemed with judgment, which was executed upon her. Surety;

and it shall never be executed upon her: her converts are redeemed with righteousness; and God is faithful and just to her, to forgive her her sins on the Surety's account, and to cleanse her from all unrighteousness, agreeable to the promise, "I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed:" "The ransomed of the Lord shall return:" the redeemed shall walk in the heavenly Jerusalem: Christ laid down his life for his sheep, they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hands; neither free thoughts nor free will, the snares of death, nor the gates of hell shall ever prevail against them. To talk of souls being redeemed from death, hell, and sin, by the blood of Christ, and ending in swift destruction, is a doctrine that none but a devil dictated, and none but a free-thinker would ever publish. Our author himself contradicts this in the 65th page, where he promises that Christ shall have all the praise for his present and eternal salvation.' If he who is but a free-thinker is saved with an eternal salvation, how come the redeemed of the Lord to end in swift destruction? But for my part I would as soon believe that the pope of Rome is intrusted with the keys of death and of hell, as I would believe that ever Mr. Skinner had the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of, sins; for how can a surety pardon those that can pay their own way? Truth has said, that when they had nothing to pay with, he frankly forgave them all. But our author is going to bring forth another mystery, contrary to his own salvation, for that he says is present and eternal.

For though Christ is the author of initial salvation to all men, he is the author of eternal salvation only to them that obey him.' Our author has taken care to jostle himself out of initial salvation; his own salvation is present and eternal,' though he leads others in the bog where he would not venture himself. But what is initial salvation? A salvation not complete; a salvation not perfect; an introductory salvation; a salvation introduced by free thoughts; a salvation not completed by him that trod the wine-press alone, and finished it upon the cross; a salvation not perfect, till the co-working family of free-thinkers have performed their part? Or does he mean it is a salvation that stands mumping at the gates of free will, to be received or rejected just as the free-thinker pleaseth? and that it is an eternal salvation only to him that puts forth his omnipotent power to complete the same, and bring it in? Surely this salvation has nothing to do with God's elect: the heirs of promise, the seed of Israel, "shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." The elect shall obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory, 2 Tim. ii. 10. The elect are not appointed unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. v. 9. The heirs of promise are appointed unto this: "But we are bound to give thanks always to God, for you, brethren, beloved

of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." If the elect are ordained and appointed to it, they shall therefore obey the gospel; the grace of God shall enable them, "by whom we have received grace for obedience to the faith, among all nations for his name," Rom. i. 5. The elect of God are not left to refuse or clause as they please; God deals not with them as with the bond-woman and her children; "As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me," says the Saviour. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," says the Father. "Bring them in; compel them to come in," says the Saviour. "These I must bring," says the shepherd; "There shall be one fold and one shepherd; all that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "I will put my fear within them, they shall not depart from me." The salvation that Christ wrought out, and is the author of; is an eternal salvation, and the elect shall obtain it with eternal glory, and none else; the others, like our author, can save themselves from this untoward generation; they can do what God requires; an initial salvation is all they want; but the poor helpless elect of God are better provided for. Our author goes on.

'It appears therefore, that the sufferings of Christ were something by way of satisfaction, rather than the payment of the proper debt; for otherwise pardon of sin, of which there is such ample proof in the gospel, would be, superseded. Let it be considered, that the sufferings of Christ and those of the sinner who is punished for his own sins differ materially; Christ never felt the stings of a guilty conscience, nor the horrors of despair, which undoubtedly will be a capital part of the torments of hell; it is therefore inferred that Christ did not pay the proper debt for any man.' Is not this uttering vain knowledge, and filling the belly with the east wind? Is not this reasoning with unprofitable talk, and with speeches wherewith a man can do no good? We are informed that the sufferings of Christ were something by way of satisfaction rather than the payment of the proper debt.' How these children of the flesh are obliged to obscure the severity and sovereignty of God, and to pare the edge of the law and diminish the sufferings of Christ, in order to make way for free-thoughts and free-will to act. How a God, who is strictly just and an infinite creditor, against whom the sins of men are committed, whose wickedness is- great, and whose iniquities are infinite, Job xxii. 5; how such a creditor could be satisfied, and a debtor in infinite arrears be honourably discharged, without the satisfaction of full payment, is a mystery to me, but which Mr. Skinner unfolds thus: It is something by way of satisfaction rather than a payment of the proper debt.' The surety compounded with the creditor; the infinite demands of law and justice were compromised with the surety; God the creditor did not exact the full

payment, nor did the surety pay the total sum: it was something by way of satisfaction, not a proper payment of the debt.' He that strikes hands and becomes surety for debts, must pay if he loses his bed from under him, Prov. xxii. 26, as our surety did when he said, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it," which the Saviour did in his body, in his soul, in his reputation, and in his mystical members: there was no compounding in this matter; his threefold petition in the garden put up through the weakness of human nature could not remove the cup; he that is imprisoned in hell for his own debt shall not come out thence till he has paid the very last mite, Luke xii. 59; and he that becomes surety shall pay no less; heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot or tittle of the law shall fail of its demands, whether it fall on the debtor or on the surety. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil:" but how an imperfect satisfaction can be called a fulfilling I know not; "till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled," Matt. v. 17, 18. No compounding, no compromising here; God spared not his own son, Rom. viii. 32; the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all; he was oppressed and he was afflicted; the debt was exacted, and he made restitution, Isa. liii. 6, 7. God spared not his Son, the total sum was exacted and paid. The surety complains and says, "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head; they that would destroy me being mine enemies, wrongfully are mighty; then I restored that which I took not away."

This blasphemous free-thinker tells us that, Christ never felt the stings of a guilty conscience nor the horrors of despair, which are the capital torments of hell.' To which I answer, Christ never died for serpents nor vipers, who cannot escape the damnation of hell; nor did he die for the goats, who shall go into everlasting punishment. Christ never laid down his life for any that are or ever will be damned. "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month, and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. Then said I, I will not feed you; that that dieth let it die, and that that is to be cut off let it be cut off, and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another." Will any one say that these were redeemed? "So the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that this was the word of the Lord," Zech. xi. 7-11. Christ laid down his life for the sheep which the Father gave him; for these he died; for these he prayed; these as a prophet shall all be taught of him; these as a king he will govern; and to these the Father gives the kingdom, and to none else. Christ died not for the world, he prayed not for the world, he is not the prophet of the world, nor

is his kingdom of this world. For the elect and only them he became surety; these shall never perish, though all others will; they have everlasting life, and shall never (lie; Christ and God the Father are stronger than all, and none shall ever pluck them out of their hands, nor shall the gates of destruction or gates of hell ever prevail or unfold to receive one of them. The wicked are a ransom for the righteous, and transgressors for the upright, Prov. xxi. 18; but the elect shall never be a ransom for any, much less a prey for the devil.

Despair, which is a capital part of the sufferings of the damned, is no part of the law's demand; it demands perfect obedience, not despair; despair springs from the dreadful arrest of vindictive justice, when the sentence of the law begins to be executed for disobedience; and although the elect, when the commandment comes with its utmost demands, may well despair of paying the sum, yet the surety who is able to answer the demands of an infinite creditor in behalf of his own brethren, so dearly beloved by him, has no ground of despair. He that is able to save to the uttermost, being equal with God, has no ground to despair of ability to answer the demands of an equal, when himself has equal property. An omnipotent surety, equal to the creditor in deity, perfection, and personal property, can never despair; so far from that, the Saviour had a joy set before him, for which he endured the cross and despised the shame.

The Saviour needed not feel the stings of a guilty conscience that I know of; it was impossible that any bitter reflection could recoil with guilt on the mind of him that never sinned. The debt exacted of us is perfect obedience to the law; in case of failure the curse is incurred, the sword of justice awakened, the wrath of God revealed, sins detained, and a final separation from God threatened. The surety gave to the law a perfect obedience, he was made a curse for us, the sword of justice was awakened against him, our sins were borne in his own body on the tree, and God departed from him; "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; he was numbered with the transgressors, though he never transgressed; he made his grave with the wicked, though he had done no violence; and with the rich in his death, being buried in the sepulchre of a rich man, and being heir of all things when he had overcome the world and redeemed the people; as he declares at his resurrection, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." But our author goes on.

"The sufferings of Christ were something by way of satisfaction, rather than a payment of the proper debt; for otherwise the pardon of sin would be superseded.' Take notice of this paragraph; the sufferings of Christ were something by way of satisfaction, not a proper payment of the debt; it was a compound, not a proper payment; a compromise between the creditor

and the surety; the creditor gave, and the surety took a little, which argues unfaithfulness in the lawgiver, and inability in the law-fulfiller; God did not exact the law's demand, nor did the Saviour pay the proper sum; the just creditor compounded, and the surety paid a part; so that God may demand payment of the redeemed should they get into the business of free-thinking; and the surety may lose his ransomed flock if the creditor should make a second demand on the debtors; and all this, lest the death of Christ should be superseded; lest the death of Christ should be made void, set aside, or made of no force, by superior authority.

Who could have thought that an imperfect satisfaction, short of proper payment, could set aside the demands of a creditor, or secure the debtor from a second arrest? If without an imperfect satisfaction, short of payment, a creditor cannot be satisfied, and without which imperfect satisfaction, a surety's discharge may be made void, set aside, or superseded, then it follows that God must be unfaithful to his law, Justice must warp from his infinite and immutable demands, Truth must yield to a dissembled compoundage, and the surety who came to do the will of a just God, as revealed in the law and the prophets, only compromises the debt; heaven and earth must stand for ever, and many jots and tittles of the law must fail of their demands, and go unfulfilled, before the poor imprisoned debtor can be finally discharged with honour; for without the above-mentioned yielding terms the death of Christ may be superseded, set aside, or made void by superior power.

I will suppose that Mr. Skinner when he comes to London calls upon me and offers to lend me fifteen guineas; I take it without a word to the contrary; he informs me that in three months he shall call upon me again and insist upon his own without fail; I understand him, and, in the language of his own doctrine, tell him that he does not demand impossibilities, I can pay him. At the end of three months he calls, and as a just man demands his own without fail. I tell him I cannot pay it; he orders me to get a surety to stand in the gap; I reply, I have not a friend on earth that can or that will do it; he sticks to his demand, sends me to the sponging house, and threatens me with a gaol; after this Mr. Skinner, according to his love to all mankind, pities me among the rest, and sets his free thoughts to work on my behalf, and provides me a surety among his own friends, who undertakes to pay my debt and procure my enlargement, which Mr. Skinner approves of. On the day of accounts the surety pays fifteen green peas instead of fifteen guineas, and insists upon my enlargement according to agreement; Mr. Skinner storms, and insists upon the cash; I William Huntington fly to Mr. Skinner's code of laws, called the Statutes of Free Thoughts, published in the reign of George the Third, entitled Some acts for the ease of sureties and release of debtors; according to which

something by way of satisfaction is to be given; and so the peas are given, by way of satisfaction, fifteen for fifteen; that is, fifteen green peas instead of fifteen guineas; for should it be otherwise, my final release could not be procured; something must be given by way of satisfaction, not a payment of the proper debt, lest the surety's undertaking for me should be superseded, made void, or set aside, by superior authority, and I be apprehended again and imprisoned for life.

Here is a doctrine! These free thoughts or sentiments are made public to detect and confute error; these are to level and destroy systems established by men. Poor deluded man! If ever Mr. Skinner or any soul living enters the kingdom of God by such a doctrine as this, God's faithfulness and truth must fail for evermore.

When God created Adam he impressed his soul with his own image, which was accompanied with a demand of perfect obedience; and in case of failure in the latter, the former was forfeited, being rather lent than given. Man sinned, the image left him, and he died. God holds his power still to command, though man cannot obey; he insists upon receiving his own with usury whenever he comes; he will demand his own image on the soul, and a perfect obedience to his law. Hence he commands the free-thinker to make him a new heart and a new spirit, such as that in which God's image consisted, and to do that which is lawful and right, which is obedience to the law, which our author says, every man may do if he will; and if God cannot be unjust in demanding it, he that becomes surety for the elect must obey the law perfectly, satisfy justice fully, clear truth honourably, and discharge the debtor eternally, to the infinite satisfaction both of law and justice, and present the debtor before God created anew and renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him at first, Col. iii. 10; which is the new man, that after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. In this image, and in a perfect obedience to the law, must every soul appear that enters heaven; the righteousness of the law must be fulfilled in them, and they be led to walk in the Spirit to heaven, if ever they enter there. Without this divine image and perfect obedience not a soul living shall ever escape the clam-nation of hell; but Christ has magnified the law, and paid a full ransom for his own sheep; the second Adam will present them in his own image; he will restore that which he took not away, and by his knowledge shall he justify many; which is all couched in this text, "he is made of God unto us wisdom," as Adam had before he sinned; "righteousness" which Adam stood in before he fell; "sanctification," or holiness, in which Adam's image chiefly consisted; "and redemption" from that death which reigned from Adam to Moses through his disobedience.

Could all the human race have produced one righteous man, could they have brought forth one person that could make a new heart, a new spirit, and obey the law as Mr. Skinner can do, even then he dared not strike hands and become surety to God for another; he could only deliver his own soul by his righteousness, or enter into life by the new creation of himself; he could deliver neither son nor daughter, friend nor brother; no man can redeem his brother, nor pay a ransom to God for him. God appointed the surety, and set him up from everlasting, and prepared a body for him, Man had no band in this work; God formed this Jacob to bring the preserved of Israel, and to be for salvation to the ends of the earth: He made him strong for himself, Psal. lxxx. 17. God sent him into the world to do his will; and according to his determinate counsel and foreknowledge he was delivered, and by wicked hands he was crucified and slain; neither free-thinkers nor heirs of promise had any hand in providing this surety, in upholding him in his work, or in treading the wine-press. Many have talked and still do talk of co-workmanship and co-partnership, Of of doing their part, but that is nothing but noise: "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me. I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold," seeing so many had talked of it; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me." If God the creditor put a surety in with the chosen debtor, as Job desires, which no creditor by law is bound to do, then the surety is the creditor's gift; I will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, Isa. xlii. 6. There is but little difference between a creditor's giving me a surety out of his own bosom to pay my debt, and forgiving me the debt; I neither procured the surety nor paid the debt, therefore am frankly forgiven. God has declared he will have life for life, and blood for blood; if so, I cannot be cleared without the shedding of blood, as God must be true to his word.

In short the language of the Lawgiver is, obey my voice. "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people," Jer. vii. 22, 23; this is the command: the threatening is this, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Jesus became surety of the better testament; he magnified the law, and died the just for the unjust. He died a temporal death, the soul was separated from the body; he died a legal death, he was made a curse for us; he died a spiritual death, his Father departed from him; and what would this author have more? Is not this a proper payment? Is not this a full satisfaction for God's elect? If the author of free thoughts says nay, then let him shew me what law and justice demanded more; he replies,

“The stings of a guilty conscience, and the horrors of despair.’ I answer, he never died for one soul that ever was or will be damned; they cannot be ransomed from the pit that go into it, they cannot be redeemed from death that die eternally, Christ bore the sins of men, he endured the curse of the law, the wrath of God, and was tormented with the powers of darkness; as to the stings of a guilty conscience, they could not lay hold of one that was holy, harmless, and undefiled, who had never sinned; nor had he any more room for reflection that recoils with guilt than I should have if I undertook to pay another’s debt; I might reflect I upon myself for such an undertaking, but could never blame myself for imprudence in contracting the debt; my undertaking is an act of benevolence, not of imprudent wrong; I serve two persons, the creditor and the debtor, but wrong none except myself; nor did the Saviour, he became surety and smarted for it.

This author seems to intimate, nay he affirms, it is inferred that Christ did not pay the proper debt for any man.’ Then I say, prison doors can never be opened, deliverance to captives cannot be preached, nor the acceptable year of the Lord be proclaimed; for God must appear just to his law before he can be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. By this mode of free-thinking this author might infer, that my paying twenty pounds as a surety for another who owes that sum, is not sufficient to procure a gaol delivery for my friend, unless I remain in a gaol myself. Christ’ paid the proper debt, and gave a full satisfaction, without either going into hell or rotting in the grave; his soul was made an offering to God for sin: “When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” His body descended into the prison of the grave, but did not consume there; God suffered not his Holy One to see corruption. God raised him from the grave, and highly exalted him, as a proof that the work was finished, and God was glorified.

The main drift of this author is? to lessen the merits of Christ, that free thoughts may perform their part in discharging the debt; to lessen the pardon of sin, that some ground may be laid for human boasting, and room be left for apostasy from grace, the creditor not having’ received his proper demands, and that the main branch of redemption may be left for the sinner to complete, that his free thoughts may make the Saviour’s satisfaction void or valid, by the task that he performs or not performs; and by this means all the glory of redemption redounds to the creature; for it is well known that he that completes an undertaking gets the glory. But the surety declared with his dying breath, “It is finished;” if so, the proper debt must be paid; satisfaction and pardon do stand together according to God’s law. Let this author look, and he will there find, that a sinner who had sinned, when his

sins came to his knowledge, he was to bring a male kid of the goats without blemish, an offering to the Lord; “ And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt-offering before the Lord; it is a sin-offering.” Then, says this author, how is the doctrine of pardon established, if the goat dies in the sinner’s room? The answer is, the goat is God’s gift; the law that favours the sinner thus is God’s law; therefore atonement is made and forgiveness is established: “ And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put t upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering; and he shall burn all his fat upon the altar; and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

If Mr. Skinner will examine the following texts, he will find redemption and pardon coupled together; which pardon is intended to bring the mean man low, and humble the haughty, that the Lord alone may be exalted. “ He [God] hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Here is redemption and pardon, and both of free grace: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, atonement, or sacrifice, to make satisfaction and reconciliation, that we through faith in his blood might see how God declares his righteousness, or justice, in the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time God’s righteousness, or justice; that God might appear just to his law in the eyes of men, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? Rom. iii. 9,5, 26. In short, Jesus was made the surety of a better testament, and as such his perfect life and passive death was what law and justice demanded; and it was a full payment of the proper debt. If the Saviour be viewed as a sacrificing priest, he hath, by his one offering, made an atonement, and perfected for ever them that are sanctified. The elect, for whom he undertook, and for whom he laid down his life, had no hand in procuring the surety, priest, or sacrifice, nor had they any hand in the work which was finished on the cross; therefore redemption and forgiveness, shedding of blood and remission of sins, are both applied to them. But with the children of the bond-woman the matter may be otherwise; they can perform what God requires, God doth not demand impossibilities of them, they may all be glorified saints in heaven if they will; therefore they need neither surety, priest, sacrifice, nor forgiveness; and it is well for them that they have such a stock of power, in hand; and it is well for such helpless sinners as I am, that God hath given us all things in Christ.

This author owns God is a sovereign, and may dispose of men as he pleases, undoubtedly he may, and he certainly does. Israel sought righteousness by

the works of the law, and stumbled at Christ; the elect Gentiles sought it not, yet attained to it. Others, as soon as they hear of Christ, shall obey him, and others shall be taken at the gospel's going forth; by day and by night shall it pass over, and be a vexation only to understand the' report. Christ is found of them that sought him not; and others shall seek him and shall not find him. To babes the gospel is revealed, from the wise and prudent it is hid; and what shall we say to these things? But he adds, "This does not prove that he has created any man on purpose to punish him, merely to display his sovereignty. " As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live: turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. I answer, God hath created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created, Rev. iv. 11. "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Some are predestinated to life, and some are not; and this we declare, that none but the elect ever was or ever will be saved; "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the fire," Rev. xx. 15. This author mentions a second sort that may augment the number of God's elect by doing what God commands, which according to his account, is easy; but we know that salvation is by grace, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified, and that there is nothing to be added to or taken from God's work of salvation, which is finished. Nor can any be added to or taken from the number of God's elect, which number as well as persons are complete in Christ. Beside, if any of this second sort could, by doing what is supposed to be so easy, enter the kingdom of God, there would be salvation in every free-thinker that performs his task; whereas the scriptures declare, that there is salvation in no other name but in Christ Jesus; and that by grace men are saved through faith, not of themselves; it is the gift of God; not by works, lest any man should boast.

God punishes men for sin, and will display his sovereignty both on the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy; and if Mr. Skinner had never been guilty of any other acts of rebellion but the publishing of these free thoughts, it contains enough, should God judge him out of his own mouth, to silence and condemn him, if he be the brightest freethinker in the world; and this he will confess if ever he should be brought to see or feel the severity of the law, or have his soul impressed with the truth, holiness, immutability, and justice of God; but, alas! a corpse feels no lash, and the blind see no danger; hence human insensibility and infidelity can wantonly sport, while angels damned believe and tremble, James ii. 19, God punishes men for sin, not merely to display his sovereignty; and it is well if this author has none about him; by the disobedience of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation;

and as all are born in sin, so all are by nature the children of wrath. But Mr. Skinner quibbles at this; then he must prove the sentence of the judge, of the law, and of his own thoughts and conscience, to be unjust. All men are brought in guilty by the law; condemnation came on all men by Adam's sin, and the old Adam's image God will ever despise, and in that image all the children of the flesh die for they are not the children of God. God will give grace to whom, and withhold grace from whom, he pleaseth: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure;" "My word shall accomplish that which I please, and prosper in that whereto I send it;" he hides these things from the wise and prudent, he hath hid them from Mr. Skinner, and he will reveal them unto babes, who are less capable of correcting and instructing their Maker.

In short, there are some called reprobate silver, whom God hath rejected; these are the world which Christ prayed not for; these love their own, but hate the elect because he hath chosen them out of the world; these are not of Christ's flock, they believe not because they are not of his sheep; these are the wise, from whom the mysteries are hid; the wicked that shall not understand; the children of the flesh, which are not the children of God; these do not hear Christ, because they are not of God; these cannot receive the Spirit; for these Christ prayed not; these shall seek him and shall not find him; from among these men the elect are redeemed; these are children of the desolate woman, which are more in number than the children of the married wife; they are the people of God's curse, against whom he hath indignation for ever.

Mr. Skinner declares there is not one of this number but what, if they had done as they might have clone, might have been glorified saints in heaven; but we defy him and all the free-thinkers in the world to prove that any of these, or that any but the elect, with all their doings, ever entered the kingdom of God. All that are with Christ are called chosen, and faithful. Salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; the only qualification for heaven is a new birth, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, John i. 13.

The oracles of God inform us that the children of the desolate are more in number than the children of the married wife; that many are called, but few chosen; that many enter the gates that lead to destruction, but that few find the gate of life. According to these scriptures the children of the flesh and of the bond-woman, which are called the children of this world, are by far the greatest host; these have undertaken the cause of Cain; the antediluvians renowned for wickedness, Ishmael Esau, Saul, Ahithophel, Judas, Simon Magus, Arius, Pelagius, and all the bond-children which God hath palmed

upon Hagar, who began to vent her spleen at the good old Sarah, have maintained a perpetual controversy with Zion; they have ever encompassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city. They have counted Zion's towers, marked her bulwarks, and considered her palaces, and to little purpose. They have produced their cause, and brought forth their strong reasons against the king of Jacob; they have defied the armies of the living God from age to age. They have denied the fall of man, reprobated the decrees of God, withstood the counsel of the Most High, contemned imputed righteousness, boasted of light, of freedom of will, of human power, of fleshly perfection, and even of sovereign prerogative; and yet not one of this fleshly family, whether distinguished by the name of heathen, pagan, mahometan, papist, protestant, or dissenter, notwithstanding all their united efforts, superiority of number, power, and policy, though they have maintained a perpetual siege against Zion's bulwarks, and attempted to take the kingdom of heaven and the throne of God by storm for upwards of five thousand years together without the least intermission; yet they cannot to this day, if it were to save their souls from hell, produce one champion among all their formidable host that ever succeeded in the attempt or carried the siege; salvation is not of works, it is not of him that willeth, it is the gift of God; "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the fire."

None but the righteous nation that keepeth the truth have ever entered into the heavenly Jerusalem. No bond-child, no son of the flesh, no Hagarene, no free-willer, no free-thinker, no merit-monger, no fleshly perfectionist, nor nervous logician, could ever say that the banner of everlasting love was ever struck to him; it is displayed to the elect only; nor even to them till they are humbled. The children of lies have never been able to carry away these imperial colours; "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." If so, none but those in whose hearts God puts his fear, and who receive the truth in the love of it, can ever unfurl this banner of electing and everlasting love; the others are given up to strong delusions that they might believe a lie; "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."

The text that Mr. Skinner has produced from Ezekiel, of God's having no pleasure in the death of the wicked; Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? is perverted; he is not enlightened to see the meaning of it; he does therefore err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God; it is a political death that is there intended. Israel, removed from the hill of Zion to the plains of Shinar, are compared in their state of captivity to dry bones in a valley, whose hope of return was lost: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, our hope is lost, and we are cut

off for our parts." Their enlargement and restoration is called a resurrection: "Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, I will open your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel; and I shall place you in your own land, then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it," Ezek. xxxvii. 11-14. They were sent into Babylon for their idolatry, from whence their idol worship came, which was to be restored again and settled in the plains of Shinar on its own base, Zech. v. 11. Babylon seems at that time to have been the fountain or spring head of idolatry; and what Israel received from thence, was to be left behind at their return; and at their restoration, Ephraim, the forwardest tribe for idolatry, was heard to say, What have I to do any more with idols? From these evil ways they were to turn, on account of which they went into captivity; and the king's golden image in the plains of Dura gave them their fill of it, When they must worship the image, which 'was not a God of their own making; if it had it might have done better; but as it was an image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up, and must be worshipped at the expense of the burning fiery furnace, it was an irksome service to them; for although they were dotingly fond of a god of their own making, yet they could not endure to worship one made and set up by another. Some of the captivity might understand the prophet, not of a political but of a spiritual death and resurrection; to these he enforces the making of a new heart and a new spirit, to cease to do evil and learn to do well, as the only qualifications for heaven; but we have no account that any man upon earth ever did this, though many as well as our author have boasted of great power; nor is there any hope of it, seeing they are fools that trust in their own heart, and cursed of God who make flesh their arm; therefore let the children of the flesh perform what they may, they are under the law, and their works can be no more than the works of the flesh; and God declares, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living, be justified.

It is true, God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, no more than he hath in their life: he is angry with the wicked every day, and what pleasure can God take in the objects of his hatred? He calls them the borders of wickedness, the people against whom he hath indignation for ever, Mal. i. 4. They are called the people of his curse, Isa. xxxiv. 5; his soul loaths them, and their souls also abhor him, Zech. xi. S. When he drives them to darkness and dimness of anguish, they will fret themselves, look upward, and curse both their king and their God, Isa. viii. 21, 22. And what pleasure can God take in such worms, who are the objects of his just indignation, the vessels of his wrath, the people of his curse, and the rivals of his honour; who are rebels to his throne, disputing his sovereignty, opposing his will, resisting his discriminating grace, violating his laws, corrupting his subjects, and

exalting flesh and blood in opposition to his tremendous majesty? Instead of God's having pleasure in the death of these, it is called easing himself of his burden: "Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies." He may be eased of these enemies, he may laugh at their calamity and mock when their fear cometh; he may have them in derision, and scatter them in the imagination of their hearts, and his anger may cease in their destruction, Isa. x. 25; but he hath no pleasure in wickedness, nor in the death of the wicked. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." Mr. Skinner goes on.

Certainty and necessity are very different things; for, if we may credit Milton, God's foreknowledge does not necessitate human actions.

'If I foreknew, fore-knowledge had no influence on their fault, which had no less proved certain unforeknown.'

To all which I answer, Man is born. With his back upon God, and goes astray as soon as born, speaking lies; if left to the freedom of his own will, he chooses his own way, and delights in his abominations: but God reserves this prerogative to himself; "I also will choose their delusions, and bring their fears upon them." Man, if left to himself, Will turn aside to his crooked Ways; but it is God that will lead him forth with the workers of iniquity, Psal. cxxv. 5. The brutal free-thinker will by natural aptitude run rusty; but God bridles, him, and holds the reins, checks him at his pleasure, and guides him into those errors that he is to be damned in; "There shalt be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err."

God's predeterminate will concerning the wicked, and rebellious man's natural inclination; ½ which needs no impulse nor influence to evil, but that which comes by natural generation, often run, agreeable to scripture, in one channel: "Abraham, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years: And also, -that nation whom they shall serve will; I judge." For some time a divine restraint lay on the hearts. of the Egyptians, and Israel was a welcome guest; but at the time appointed, God turned their hearts to hate his people, and to deal subtly with his servants, Psal. cv. 25; which turn lay in the removal of God's restraining power. Christ -was delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God; and the wicked fulfilled the Scriptures who slew him, and it was done according to the natural bent of their will: "Whom will ye that I release? Not this man, but Barabbas;" they desired a murderer might be granted unto them. Thus God's declaration to Abraham and Egypt's malice, God's determinate council concerning Christ .and Israel's desire of a murderer, run directly in one channel. God declares that the vile person will speak villainy, and his heart work iniquity, to practise

hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to devise wicked devices, to destroy the poor and needy with lying words, Isa. xxxii. 6, 7; And it is fulfilled in this book of Mr. Skinner's, agreeable to the word of God; 6o God says, he will work a work in gospel days that men shall behold, and wonder at, and perish, and in no wise believe though a man declare it unto them, Hab. i. 5. Acts xiii. 41; which is fulfilled to a tittle by our free-thinker, who calls the decrees of God a Human system, and his own thoughts a detection of error.

Mr. Skinner may put what difference he pleases between certainty and necessity. What God declares to be certain must of necessity come to pass, If God leaves a sinner to himself, he must of necessity sin, because there is nothing but sill in him; Satan keeps the palace, works in his heart, and takes him captive at his will; but then both the devil and the sinner are awed, checked, turned, and directed, just as the sovereign Saviour pleases: "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." Judas, influenced by the devil, and who was a devil, who stood like a bent bow to his mark, was held by the strong hand of the Saviour. Christ knew that himself was the object he aimed at, but he could not perform his enterprise till he gave command: He laid down his life for his sheep: "No man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself:" Hence we read that they often attempted to take him, but his hour was not yet come: "Now when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world," the devil was let loose, and Judas was commanded to do his office; the supper being ended, the devil having now put it into the heart of Judas to betray him, Christ gave Judas the sop; and then Satan entered into him; "Then said Jesus, that thou doest do quickly." So to this day the wicked bend their bows to shoot at the upright in heart, who are the only butt of their envy; but then God overrules them, so that he either permits his elect to be wounded by them, or he delivers them from the arrow that fleeth by day, just as it seemeth him good. Devils arid sinners are both bent in malice against God's elect; but God chooses their delusions, leads them forth, turns their course, and keeps his bridle in their jaws; their free thoughts may stagger some of God's elect, but those that erred shall come to understanding; for the elect shall not be finally deceived. Their thoughts may harden and deceive many, but both the. deceiver and the deceived are the Lord's; it is he that leads them away spoiled, and makes them fools, Job xii. 16, 17; yea, there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people causing them to err.

Man in his fallen state, if left to himself, cannot act contrary to his nature any more than water can run up hill, or stones fly to heaven; his, nature is earthly, sensual, and devilish; and unless he be predestinated to life, and free-grace prevent, he will cleave to the earth, gratify his brutal appetite,

end in the devil, and be damned for his earthly, brutal, and devilish actions: “Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

If we may credit Milton, the devils had some knowledge of this; for he says,

They reasoned high
Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate;
Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute;
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

Providence neither promised nor afforded them perpetual support; To free-will they were left, in free-will they stood, while they stood; With freedom of will and freedom of thought they rebelled, left their own habitation; for which free-will rebellion these aspiring free-thinkers were charged with folly, bound with the chains of their sin, and reserved under darkness to future judgment; but neither free-will nor free thoughts altered fixed fate, which must be resolved into the uncontrollable will of the divine sovereign, as well as in his absolute foreknowledge; prescience preceding fixed fate, according to the Spirit's arrangement by Paul; “Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate.”

The fall of apostate angels must doubtless alarm those that stood; these readily renounced their free-will standing, and accepted confirmation by Christ: hence their submission is called a reconciliation, Col. i. 20; and Christ is called the head of all, principality and power, Col. ii. 10. The angels' acquiescence with the divine will, and their confirmation by Christ, must both be resolved into the decree of election, for these angels were elected, 1. Tim. v. 21.

One would think the fall of angels and the fall of Adam would be sufficient to bring the doctrine of free-agency into contempt; but this system will never be out of favour nor out of fashion while there is one of old Adam's fleshly race upon earth. Their aspiring in Eden to be as Gods, knowing good and evil, has left such a towering tincture upon their children, that they will ever be soaring aloft, till humbled by grace, or drowned in perdition. Mr. Skinner goes on.

‘The plain truth is, God knows what will be and at the same time he knows it might be otherwise; or, in different terms, God knows all things, and man is a free-agent; for if he be not free, he cannot be said to act at all, but is merely passive, or acted upon; and every sensible person knows that a necessary agent implies a contradiction.’ Man is a free-agent? I should be glad to know wherein his free-agency consists. He is estranged from the

womb, and goes astray as soon as born, speaking lies; he commits sin, and is the servant of sin; the strong man armed keeps possession of the palace; the prince of the power of the air worketh in the children of disobedience. They are in the snare of the devil, and taken captive by him at his will; they are holden with the cords of their sins; they are corrupt trees, and cannot bring forth good fruit; the tree is corrupt and the fruit corrupt; every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is evil, Matt. xv. 19. "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?" If this be true, where is the free-agency of these bond-children? their mother is called the bondwoman, and they are in bondage to the law, to sin, and to Satan; then where is their liberty according to Peter it is only to be found in their words: They speak great swelling words of vanity; but then the lust of the flesh and much wantonness actuates them, for they are said to allure through that; and while they promise others liberty, themselves are the servants of corruption, 2 Peter ii. 18, 19,

It is true, a sinner pursues the lust of the flesh with freedom of will, because he loves it; but even then the devil is his master, for he works in him or actuates him to disobedience; and if at any time conscience gripes him, and he binds his soul with vows and promises never more to give conscience such a claw against himself, as Mr. Skinner has often done, yet even then the sinner finds the strong man armed to be stronger than all his vows; the devil exerts his power, and drives him contrary, to his inclination, vows, and conscience: this is called captivity, or being taken captive by the devil at his will. How can man be free that has got so many masters? He wars after the flesh, is a servant to sin, and a captive to Satan; and is in a threefold bondage: he is in the strong hold of Satan, the yoke of the law is upon his neck, and he is bound with the chains of guilt; and every transgression adds to the weight. I may here retort upon Mr. Skinner in his own words, every sensible person knows, that a free agent, possessed, ensnared, and led captive by the devil, implies as great a contradiction as a necessary agent.

The most stanch advocates for free-agency are the Atheists, Deists, and Papists, or Arminians. Among the latter class this author intends to cut a figure: he is a free-agent, a free-thinker, and he is not ashamed to call the productions of his pen free thoughts; yet there is a bridle in his jaw causing him to err, notwithstanding his freedom; and I defy him ever to preach the truth or think aright, unless the grace of God bring into captivity all his thoughts to the obedience of Christ. But we go on.

'It is said, that Christ was delivered by the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God; that Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and Israel, were gathered together to do what God's hand and council determined to be done; and it is said they did it with wicked hands; and if so, they were not

necessitated to act as they did: for if it be supposed that God's command, Thou shalt do no murder, remains invariably the same, and at the same time that God laid the crucifiers of Christ under an absolute necessity to violate his command, it follows that God approves and disapproves; than which there cannot be a more direct and absolute contradiction.' To which I answer, What God in his council from eternity predetermined to be done, must, according to his will, and the prophecies revealed from thence, be fulfilled in time. The devil, as well as the sinner, goes about continually seeking, not whom he will, but whom he may, by divine permission, devour, Peter v. 8; but the devil and the sinner are both in the ruling hand of God: he knows the carnal mind is enmity against him, not subject to his law, nor can be, and this discovered itself plain enough against Christ in the Jews; and so it does in all the bond-children against his elect to this day; but then there is a restraining power on them, and without God's permission they cannot go on; shall there be evil in a city, and shall not the Lord do somewhat! Amos iii. The Jews despised Christ, and for envy they delivered him to Pilate; but it was God that delivered him into the hands of those sinners, and gave Pilate power against him. They all stood ready for the work, but it must be done at God's appointed hour, and according to his fore-determinate council. Herod sought to slay him as soon as he was born, and killed two thousand infants, to make sure to kill the right: but all in vain, his hour was not yet come; but when it was. come, God gave them up to all the rage of free-agency, but they did not act without the influence of their old master; their free-agency in this matter was under the infernal influence of the devil; the hour was theirs, the actuating power was Satan's: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." But it is plain that the rage of the Jewish free-willers, the cruelty of Herod, the injustice of Pontius Pilate, and the power of the devil, in hurrying Christ's death, was all appointed, permitted, directed, and overruled by God. God delivered up his own son, he gave the Jews their hour, he let the powers of darkness loose, he limited and superintended all their work; so that it was done according to the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God. "Then saith Pilate, Speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." Thus the son of man truly went as it was determined, Luke xxii. 22; and he went as it was written of him, Matt. xxvi. 24; notwithstanding the determination of Pilate, which was, to let him go, Acts iii. 13. In short, the death of Christ was pre-determined and immutably fixed by God; and the free-agents that killed him, with respect to themselves, acted voluntarily in conjunction with the

devil; God left them to their free-agency, only overruled it so that it should be done according to his fore-determination, and stopped them when that was done, or else they would have gone a great deal further.

The free-thinkers in Nazareth, when they heard Christ preach the sovereignty of God's grace in calling lepers and widows of the Gentiles, while the lepers and widows of Israel were neglected, were provoked to that degree that they tried to throw him headlong from the brow of the hill. They would have broke his neck then if they might; but he was not to die so, nor was his hour come. The free-agent disciples that crossed the sea of Tiberias after him, when He told them no man could come to him except the Father drew him, were so highly provoked, that they left him with disdain, and walked no more with him; as all other free-thinkers will do, if free grace prevent not. The other sort of disciples stuck to him, and no wonder, when it is affirmed that he had chosen them. When wicked free-agents get the bit in their teeth, and the reins oh their neck, none know where their rage would end; but there is a bridle in their jaws, causing them to err, God holds the rein, directs their course, lets them loose, or pulls them in, as he thinks proper. They would have altered Pilate's title on the cross, but there was a stop: what was written was written. They would have broken the Saviour's legs, but a bone of him was not to be broken. They sealed the stone of his sepulchre, and set a watch, to prevent his being stolen, and that he might corrupt in the grave; but here was another let; Angels removed the stone, and struck the keepers with fear till they became as dead men: God's Holy One was not to see corruption. The Jewish free-thinkers, or Arminians, such I call them (for I defy the world to prove that there was one soul among the murderers of Christ that held the Calvinistic doctrines of the everlasting gospel, or that had the faith of God's elect; these were among the mourners, not among the murderers), acted freely with respect to themselves; yet they were overruled and directed by God: they would have concealed the Saviour's resurrection, and paid large sums of money to the soldiers, promising to persuade the governor and secure them; but twelve witnesses were sent out to proclaim it; and when these were opposed, some were imprisoned, and some killed; the Lord appeared to five hundred more at once, and after that to Paul also; thus the resurrection of Christ got abroad, notwithstanding there was so strong a combination of free-thinkers against it.

The command, Thou shalt do no murder, stands immutably fixed; but that law was given to man: God's command to men given in time, did not overrule his sovereignty with respect to the decree of election settled in eternity: God works all things after the council of his own will. Is the law against the sovereignty of God? God forbid! for if it be, it is against his

promise also. Then what becomes of the elect? The law is made for the lawless and disobedient it is binding to all free-thinkers; hence they are called bond-children. God's law will be his rule of judgment in the great day with respect to them, because they will all be found under that covenant. But the elect will be judged by the book of life, in which their names are inrolled, and in which their life is secured. Their salvation, their resurrection to life, and eternal glorification, is according to God's own purpose and grace, who works all things after the council of his own will. It is God's good will toward them, and upon them he intends to display the riches of his free-grace in eternal glory by Christ Jesus. The command of the divine Master to a servant, does not control the sovereign will of the everlasting Father with respect to his regenerated children. Servants are under the law; they are not predestined to the adoption of sons; his command therefore is to them; for the disobedient and lawless it is given, and by that he will judge them according to their works. But God's own children are the objects of his sovereign choice; he has formed them for himself; he views them in his Son, and has appointed them to obtain salvation by him; their names are in the book of life, and he will be their God in covenant, and they shall be the people of his love, with which he will plant the heavens.

To be short: God's law stands binding to the non-elect for ever, and the uncontrollable Jehovah will remain a free-agent for ever. "Thou shalt not kill," stands fast to the children of men, and God's free agency is displayed also. "And him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay." Do not kill, said the Saviour to the Arminian Jews, Mark x. 19. "The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill him." Yea, and they shall kill many of his saints too, after the gospel has been preached for a witness, and the preachers of it brought before rulers for a testimony against them, Matt. x. 18. "Wherefore, behold I send you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel."

Mr. Skinner is dreadfully offended at Peter's saying, "They stumbled at Christ, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed."

'Appointed to disobedience,' saith he, 'is no less than a contradiction in terms.' He cannot allow that the sovereign will of God should precede, overrule, and interfere with the works of these free-agents: they would sooner rob the Godhead of prescience, sovereignty, and uncontrollable will, than allow free-agency to be under any superior rule or restraint. But so it

happens, that let them take what step they will as free-agents, it is according to God's sovereign will, predetermined and pre-revealed. "They stumbled and fell;" "They shall stumble and fall;" "Have any of the rulers believed on him?" "I work a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it." "Their eyes have they closed." "The Lord hath poured upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes." "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." "Many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ, and shall deceive many." The vile person will utter error against the Lord. "There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err." This people have made lies their refuge. "God shall send them strong delusions, that they may believe a lie." They have not all obeyed the gospel. They are disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed, 1 Pet. ii. 8. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." "He hath made the wicked for the day of evil." "Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life." They choose death rather than life. "That that dieth, let it die." "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage [of his decree] from God," Job xx. 29. There are ungodly men, who were of old ordained to this condemnation, Jude 4.

Let the free-agent take what voluntary course he may, he shall never deviate from the rule, nor exceed the immutable bounds fixed by the uncontrollable and eternal Ruler. God has declared the end from the beginning; his council shall stand, and his pleasure shall be done; nothing shall be added to his work nor taken from it. Nor shall Mr. Skinner ever deceive one of God's elect, though he threaten to preach every Calvinist out of his meeting; and if God leave him to his own thoughts, to deceive many nominal professors, even then he is God's instrument and the deceived are God's fuel, and he will consume them as stubble fully dry; The deceiver and the deceived are the Lord's. Nor shall he, if he be given up of God, ever utter one thought more against the Lord, than what will fill up his measure; Israel wandered in the wilderness, till the iniquity of the Amorites was full. The Jews were to fill up the measure of their fathers, but none shall exceed their measure.

Mr. Skinner adds, 'This passage therefore can only mean, that they were appointed to stumble in consequence of their unbelief.' And how came these free-thinkers to stumble? Because they knew not the Lord of life. But how came they so ignorant? God had hid these things from the wise and prudent. How comes Mr. Skinner to oppose the sovereignty of God, and the doctrine of election? Because the Lord as yet has not given him the faith of God's elect. How came the free-thinking Jews not to believe? "You believe not," saith

Christ, "because you are not of my sheep." How came they not to hear God's word? Because they were not of his choosing: "He that is of God, heareth God's word: ye therefore hear it not, because ye are not of God." How comes it that peace came not to all men? Because all men are not sons of peace. How comes it to pass that all those who hear the gospel do not receive the Spirit? Because all are not predestinated to the adoption of sons. They that are sons by predestination and pre-adoption, receive him: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." How is it, that all these free-agents, possessed of such power, do not come to Christ? Because they are not all given to Christ: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and none shall pluck them out of my hands." Mr. Skinner, with all his abilities, is not come to Christ yet; and I defy him to describe what coming to Christ, laying hold of Christ, and uniting with Christ, is. Every free thought that he has penned, serves only to proclaim him a stranger to Jesus. Free-agency, human power, fleshly boasting, pride, rebellion, and free-thinking, could no more exist in the presence of Christ, than Beelzebub the devil could stand in the regions of eternal felicity. He would find, as Daniel did, if the angel of the covenant was to approach him, that all his comeliness would turn into corruption, and he would retain no strength to do what the law requires. Or, like Job, he would cry out, "I have [only] heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Mr. Skinner must give up free-thinking, and contention for the world too, before he makes any pretensions to Christ, or else every chosen vessel will be suspecting him to be an impostor: for we all know, that a man must not only abhor the world, hate and forsake his own thoughts, but "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." This is the experience of them that come to Christ: but Christ has taught Mr. Skinner nothing of this. He has power to perform what God requires, and be a glorified saint in heaven if he will. God does not demand impossibilities of him: therefore he cannot be said to be lost, nor to be a debtor that has nothing to pay with. And so far from hating father and mother, he is contending for the redemption of all the world, and styles himself 'A friend to all mankind.' And we know the friendship of the world is enmity with God; "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." The world loves his own, and by Mr. Skinner's own account, he is of the world; he is a friend to the world; and no doubt but the world will love him, and the world will hear his preaching. "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them: we are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth

us: he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

As Mr. Skinner has contradicted his confession of faith, and denied the articles that he is bound to subscribe and swears to maintain, we must not wonder if he should offer a few thoughts in behalf of Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright, and swore to the bargain. We know, birds of a feather will flock together.

‘God chooses and prefers Jacob’s posterity to Esau’s, in making them his visible church, presenting them with laws, moral, ceremonial, and political. God’s purpose before they were born, has no reference to the eternal state of any of them.’ Here it may be observed, that God’s hatred of Esau, his eternal purpose concerning election in the choice of Jacob, and rejecting him; his profanity in the sale of his birth-right; his finding no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears; and being rejected of God when he would have inherited the blessing, has no reference to the eternal state of any of them; it has reference only to his posterity in a comparative sense. To which I answer: What God says concerning the Edomites, has reference to their eternal state, if the plain sense of words stand for any thing. When God is said to reject a person, that person is excluded from God’s purpose of grace; he is not an object of God’s choice; he is left out from God’s decree; he is a reprobate: “Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them.” “And the Lord said unto Samuel, how long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel?” “I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath,” Hosea xiii. 11. “When he [Esau] would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.” If he was rejected from the blessing, he must inherit the curse; if he found no place of repentance, it has reference to his eternal state fixed in hell; “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” What God says concerning Esau’s rejected posterity, has reference to their eternal state, as well as his. “Was not Esau Jacob’s brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste, for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished; but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever,” Mal. i. 2, 4. “Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom, I have made thee small among the heathen; thou art greatly despised: the pride of thine heart hath deceived thee: though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance; and there shall be holiness; and the

house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them, and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it." The everlasting indignation of God, his calling Edom stubble, fuel for fire, and burning them all up, till none remaineth, has no reference to the eternal state of any of them; according to this freethinker. O, what a vile perverting of scripture is here! Thus the wrath of God against sinners is obscured; rebels are hardened in their sins, and the convincing force of scripture is darkened, and God's meaning explained away, by this blasphemous free-agent, who contradicts his Maker, gives truth the lie, and wrests it, if grace prevent not, to his own destruction. When God says, "Saviours shall come down upon mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau," Obad. 21; "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their hosts shall fall down as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment," Isa. xxxiv. 4, 5, Will this Arminian say that these awful denunciations have no reference to the eternal state of any of them? Then I should be glad to know what is meant by the hatred of God, the bathed sword of justice, the curse of the law, and the eternal indignation of the Lord; and what the comparative sense of these things is? These things seem to me to be sufficient to sink the strongest free-agent into hell and damnation. And Mr. Skinner's comparative sense, if we compare scripture with scripture, according to its proper meaning, amounts to this, that those whom God loves as he did Jacob, with an everlasting love, must be saved; and those that God hates, as he did Esau, and has an everlasting indignation against, must be damned, if the Bible be true: this is the comparative sense, and is the true sense. And if we compare the elect and reprobate together, the comparison is awful, and is a, tremendous display of mercy and judgment, of goodness and severity.

Nothing can be plainer than the scriptures are concerning the two covenants, that of works and that of grace; the two covenant heads, Adam the first, and Adam the second, are as conspicuous: the children of the flesh, and those of the promise, the curse of the one, and the blessing of the other, appear from one end to the other of divine revelation. And these two families have appeared as conspicuous in the world as in the Bible, ever since men began to multiply in the earth; and there will be the beloved city in the world, and the reprobate host compassing it about, and besieging it, till by the God of heaven the final conflagration raises the siege, blasts the conspiracy, routs the confederates, and drives them into the confines of everlasting darkness.

After the expulsion from Paradise, Adam stood with all the human race, elect and reprobate, in his loins; he had a promise to build his own hopes upon; but there were two seeds mentioned, the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman; and enmity was put by God between them; by the seed of the woman, Christ and his mystical body are intended; this is the bruised party, whose heels have ever been trampled upon, but God heals her that halteth; the other party is the old serpent the devil and his seed, which Christ calleth serpents, and a generation of vipers, and are said to be of their father the devil. This is the bruising party.

When Adam became the father of two sons; the two seeds, and the enmity God had put between them, appeared. Abel obtains the grace of faith, and witness that he was righteous: God testifying of his gifts. Cain appeared to be of that wicked one, the devil. God's sovereign respect to Abel, and disrespect to Cain and his offering, stirred up the enmity of his heart, and he slew his brother, because his works were righteous. Here began the religion of free-thinking, free-agency, justification by works, and free-will sovereignty, which was displayed in the slaughter of Abel. Cain was the founder of this human system, and it was founded in blood; he was cursed from the earth, banished from the church, and from the presence of God with a falling countenance - the visible mark of a reprobate. Adam, as an heir of promise, with Eve, now stood alone, until God raised up another seed; and after that, men began to call on the name of the Lord; and God continued the covenant line down to the days of Noah, and distinguished them all the way by the name of sons of God, opposed to the daughters of men, until the flood came; before which he took the righteous from that evil to come, deluged the fraternity of Cain, with other reprobates, and preserved righteous Noah and the whole militant church circumscribed within the family of that just man. After the deluge, not only Noah but Shem appears a visible heir of promise, and a future enlargement is predicted to Japheth; then Ham, the father of the Egyptians, seems to step forward, with his son Canaan, as one of the reprobate, to inherit the curse of Cain: "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be." It is well known that God smote time chief of their strength in the tabernacle of Ham; and that he destroyed the seven nations of Canaan when their iniquity was full.

In the family of Abraham, Isaac appears an heir of promise; and Ishmael, that child of the flesh, that wild man, whose hand was to be against every man, stepped forth in the old enmity, mocking Isaac; or, as Paul says, persecuting him that was by promise, till by the command of God both he and his mother were banished from the church; and by his marriage with a woman of Egypt, he became, by affinity, one of the tabernacles of Ham.

In Isaac's family Jacob appears an heir of promise; and Esau, the cunning hunter, the man of the field, steps forth in the shoes of Cain, and the old enmity works afresh till murder was conceived: "And Esau hated Jacob, because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him; and Esau said, in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob." These chosen sons and rejected servants the Saviour found in his days: "The servant abideth not in the house ever, but the son abideth ever."

The reprobate part of the house of Levi, upon whose self-will, fierce anger, and cruel wrath, Jacob left the curse on his death bed; who slew a man, and digged down a wall, for which he divided them in Jacob, and scattered them in Israel, Gen. xlix. 5, 6, 7; appeared in Christ's days in the image and enmity of Cain; the priests bought his blood, and killed the Lord of life; and by their appearing in Cain's cause, all the blood shed from the blood of righteous Abel, is to be required of that generation; and it is plain the judgment of God began to be executed first at the sanctuary; for from the priests prophaneness had gone out into all the land; and the rest of them, with the other reprobated Jews, are left desolate, in bondage with their children, with the blood of Abel, and, according to their request, the blood of Christ upon them and their children; and will remain so, until the time comes that they shall look at him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn, Zech. xii. 10; which time certainly will come: but as yet they remain, as the Saviour calls them, the synagogue of Satan. For the elect's sake they were spared at the destruction of Jerusalem; and when those heirs of promise that are yet in their loins shall appear, then their fathers will fall in this wilderness, and leave their children to inherit the land of Canaan.

Thus it appears that there ever has been, now is, and ever will be, two seeds in the world, and an implacable enmity between them; and though we know not the one from the other, the Lord does, and will make manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. The old enmity is discovered by their hatred to the saints, and to the sovereign grace of God; and we shall never be at a loss to find some of either of these seeds while there are so many authors of free thoughts, and so many honourable testimonies for sovereign grace, pregnant with becoming zeal and just indignation against the blasted system of free-agency. It is the controversy of Zion, and it must be carried on, till the Judge of quick and dead bring the year of revenges on, and decide it, by fixing the blessing and the curse; and as a just Judge, send the devil and his children to their own place; and, as the everlasting Father, fix his own family as heirs of God in the enjoyment of the promised inheritance. Mr.

Skinner, who is no friend to the elect, but a friend to all mankind, or, in the prophet's language, who hates the good and loves the evil, makes nothing of plucking the fleece from the Lord's sheep; he will flay their skin from off them, Micah iii. 2, 3, but what he will get a plaster for the reprobate. He is coming now with a searchcloth for Pharaoh king of Egypt.

'The scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up; it is not said that God raised him up for damnation.' To which I answer, If he did not raise him up for damnation, he threw him into damnation when he knocked him down: "I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell, with them that descend into the pit. Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that be slain by the sword: This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God." God as the sovereign of the universe told Abraham, that his seed should be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: And that nation whom they shall serve will I judge: But in the fourth generation, his seed shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. The destruction of the Egyptians and the salvation of Israel was shewed to Abraham in vision, by the smoking furnace and the burning lamp, Gen. xv. 13-17. At the time appointed and predicted, Pharaoh was raised up with many more; God turned their hearts to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants, Psal. cv. 25; and whether he raised them up for damnation or not, it is said, "He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath and indignation and trouble, by sending evil angels among them;" and these things are no tokens for good, nor can they be called the things that accompany salvation. Fierce anger, wrath, indignation, trouble, and evil angels, are things that accompany damnation; and so the Egyptians found it, after they had uttered the thoughts of their hearts against the Lord, and displayed their free-agency in their rebellious pursuit. "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them;" till God blew with his wind; then free thoughts and free-agency all sunk together.

He tells us, 'God delighteth in mercy, but judgment is his strange work.' But this strange work seems to me to consist in giving the reprobate up to his free-agency, to trust in his bed of carnal security, to spurn at the gospel of Christ, and to ripen for damnation under the sound of it, until his covenant with death and hell, in which he promised himself safety, are broken by the terrors of God, and he falls into both: I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, and he that believes shall not make haste. Judgment will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, which when

uttered are free thoughts, and the waters of wrath, shall overflow the hiding-place of falsehood: Your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement, or confederacy with hell, or the inheritance of it, shall not stand, for your security; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it, into death and hell, notwithstanding your covenant with both. From the time, that the news of this sure foundation, and precious corner stone goeth forth, it shall take you as in a trap: For morning by morning shall it pass over, in the preached sound of it; by day and by night shall free-agents spurn at it, and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report, or the doctrine reported: For the bed of carnal security, is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it; and the covering, that is not of God's Spirit, is narrower than that he can wrap himself in it. Then what shall be the end of these free-agents? Why, The Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, when the five kings of the Amorites and their hosts fled before Israel, and were going to Bethoron, when the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them, and they died; they were more which died with hail stones, than they whom Israel slew with the sword; meanwhile the sun stood still upon Mount Gibeon, Joshua x. 10-12. This is called God's strange work, because this battle and the sun standing still was done but once. But here the prophet tells us it shall be acted over again; hail shall sweep away the refuges of lies. The Sun of Righteousness shall stand, and shine on the spiritual armies of Zion, while these shall be taken by it, and vexed at the report of it: For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his Work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act; which is making the bands of a mocker strong by the report of Zion's foundation; this is the Lord of Hosts' consumption that is even determined upon the whole earth, Isa. xxviii. 16-22.

The next thing taken in hand is, the sovereignty of the potter over the clay, from the 18th chapter of Jeremiah; the literal meaning of which is mentioned thus: "At what time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy; if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them," To all which I answer, God's language here is to the bond children; it is the language of the law; it is all conditional; there is not a word of divine grace nor eternal salvation in it. The conditions are, to turn from evil, if they will escape evil, and to perform

obedience to the law, called obeying God's voice; or else he will repent of the good wherewith he said he would benefit them. But alas! they have all failed of the conditions; and therefore forfeited all right, even to these temporal mercies; "The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to his law nor can be;" "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God," Mr. Skinner and all; and though the mouth of free-thinkers is not stopped, yet the whole world is become guilty before God; and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified; for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; these are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God. Let them do what they will, they can do nothing but sin; when the Ethiopian can change his skin, and the leopard his spots, then may these agents do good that are accustomed to do evil, Jer. 23; "They that are in the flesh cannot please God;" neither can Mr. Skinner, nor even please his own conscience; for conscience flogs him all the day long, though he is too stiff and proud to own it.

When God speaks to Christ and his own elect concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, he speaks in new covenant terms, without a single condition "I will be his father and he shall be my son; and I will not take my mercy away from him [for it is not conditional] as I took it from him that was before thee; but I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever; and his throne shall be established for evermore." We are not afraid of being plucked up; it is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom; we have received a kingdom that cannot be moved. "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever," Dan. vii. 18. When God speaks to his elect concerning plucking up and destroying a kingdom, he speaketh on this wise: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [not to the children of the flesh, for these are not the children of God], but it shall break in pieces all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever:" This shall be done by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, Dan. ii. 44, 45; which Christ explains thus: "But on whomsoever this stone shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

In the spiritual meaning of the potter, the sovereignty of God is displayed: the day is the whole human race; the vessels to dishonour are those that are excluded from the decree of election; from whom the mystery of the gospel is hid; to whom God is determined not to give grace: they are said to be before of old ordained to this condemnation; they are left to their own free thinking, until they are fitted for destruction, under the long-suffering of God, which he endures; while these free-agents oppose his sovereignty,

ridicule his counsel, contradict his truth, and plague his saints: these are called vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, Rom. ix. 22.

The elect shall know the riches of glory; for they are vessels of mercy which God before prepared unto glory: God forms them for himself, and says they shall shew forth his praise. He creates them anew in Christ Jesus: hence they are called vessels to honour; for God hath not appointed them to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. v. 9.

Now Free Thoughts starts again, and free-grace goes after him. ‘The rejection of the Jews was not in consequence of an unconditional decree, but unbelief; because they sought it not by faith, namely, justification.’ The reason the Jews were rejected was, because it was not God’s pleasure to choose them. The reason they did not believe was because God was not pleased to give them faith. And the reason he did not give them faith was, because they were not ordained to eternal life. The reason the Jews did not attain to justification was, because they were not predestinated to glory. The elect obtained justification; they were heirs of promise, and the Spirit of promise was sent to them, to work faith in them: these were ordained to eternal life, and therefore believed and obtained justification, being predestinated to it. “Whom God did foreknow, them he did predestinate; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” The faith of the saints is in consequence of an unconditional decree; and the reason others do not believe, is in consequence of their being excluded from the promise of life in that decree: they were not chosen in Christ, nor given to the good shepherd: “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.”

‘The Jews were blinded by their own sins and prejudices, which might have been removed in the day of visitation.’ To which I answer, Their blindness and prejudice might have been removed, if the Lord had been pleased to do it. But it pleased him to hide these things from the wise and prudent and to reveal them unto babes; for so it seemed good in his sight. Yea, the Lord poured upon them the spirit of deep sleep, and closed their eyes, Isa. xxix. 10. And the Saviour acquiesced with the sovereign will of his father herein: and instead of removing their blindness in the day of visitation, he made them more blind by his wonderful rays: “And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world: that they which see not, might see; and that they which see might be made blind.”

As for the bond-children working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, is nothing but talk: their works are like Mr. Skinner’s, wind and confusion: the wicked worketh a deceitful work: all their thoughts are

evil, free or not free: they are in the flesh, and cannot please God: they are without faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. The works of the flesh are nothing but corruption: the tree is corrupt, and cannot bring forth good fruit; no grapes from these thorns, nor figs from such thistles. And as for their fear and trembling, it is of the same sample as their works: it is the fear and trembling of a criminal in the chains of his guilt, when God's wrath begins to blast his free-agency. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isa. xxxiii. 14.

As for talking of obedience to the law of Christ, summarily comprehended in the term faith, in order to final salvation; and comparing the scriptures which maintain the doctrines of grace, with those which assert the necessity of gospel obedience, is a confused jumble of nonsense, like all the rest of it: and only serves to expose the foolishness of the author, God hath chosen Israel for his peculiar treasure: and "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: they shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." God's election of them is both the cause of their sanctification and belief. Knowing, brethren, beloved, your, election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance."

To make a difference between grace and obedience is making a difference where there is none. They that are in the flesh cannot please God. Without faith it is impossible to please him. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Where is their obedience then? The elect receive grace for obedience to the faith, Rom. i. 5. The grace of God that bringeth salvation from sin, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts; and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. ii. 11, 12. God works in the elect to will and to do of his own good pleasure. There is no obedience without grace, no fruits without the Spirit, no good works without faith, no honest labours without love. The obedience of bond-children is like this author's book, nothing but the pride and arrogance of a fleshly mind, vainly puffed up: spurting his free thoughts at his Maker's sovereign decree, and exalting his own free-agency; talking about grace, while he is veiled under the law; boasting of doing what God requires, while destitute of the Spirit; cannot think a good thought, and is an utter stranger to the plague of his own heart; contending for the redemption of the world, while his conscience is gasping for the atonement; confess one doctrine, and preach another; talk of preaching the elect out of their own meeting, and styling himself a friend to all mankind. Does grace teach any thing like this? Is this duty? Is this gospel obedience?

Grace and duty, promise and precept, are inseparably connected in the

salvation of God's elect: the Spirit is given, and the promise too; and they shall remain in the saints for ever. The law is written upon the tables of their heart by the Spirit of the living God. God puts his fear within them, causes them to walk in his statutes, to keep his judgments and do them. But as for men that are given up to trust in their free-agency, and to mutter their evil thoughts against the Lord; they are strangers to the covenant of promise; they are under the law, and know nothing but of the conditional promises thereof, which secures nothing to their souls but pride and boasting: "The strength of sin is the law." Such men break the commandments all the day long; they hate the elect. Christ says, his people shall be hated of all men for his name's sake. Such are murderers, John says; and if they offend in one point, they are guilty of all: they nurse that enmity that God" has put between them and the saints.

We know 'God's attributes are never opposed ' in his word:' they are revealed there: they harmonize in the Saviour as revealed there; and they shine there: and that of divine sovereignty appears first, and shines in all the rest; which this free-thinker has taken care to leave out of his assemblage, in order that poor, depraved, ensnared, captivated, and fettered free-agency may shine in all her brilliant lustre, and in all the dazzling rays of an insignificant glow-worm.

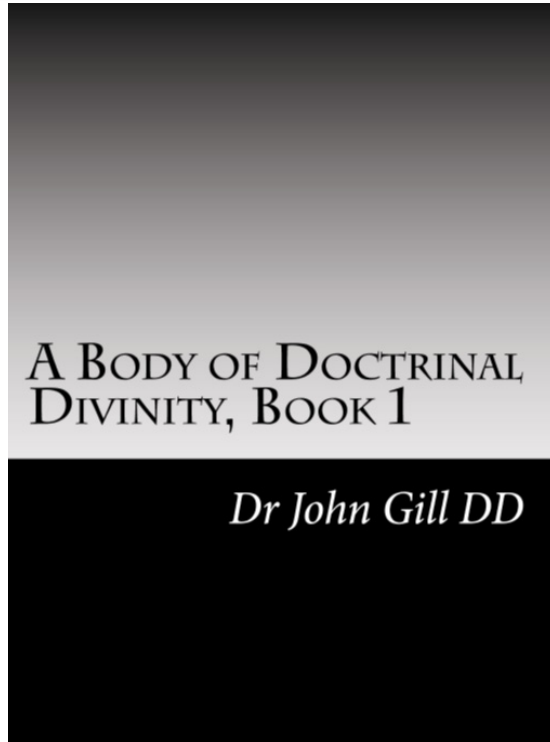
If it be granted, that 'some imagine they are elected, while they indulge sin, and deceive themselves,' they are then on as good a footing as Mr. Skinner. To trust in election, while destitute of the faith of God's elect, is nearly the same as trusting in universal redemption, while a stranger to the application of the atonement: both trust in vanity; one in a false heart, and the other in a false doctrine: the scriptures call the former a fool, Prov. xxviii. 26; and the latter a liar, Rev. ii 2.

Mr. Skinner concludes his Pamphlet with a flourish: To the mercy of God in Christ this free-agent is indebted and to whom he hopes to attribute all the praise of his salvation, when the mists of error, which now shade the universe, shall be dispersed by the refulgent beams of endless day. I answer: Indebted to sparing mercy he is, because he is yet alive; therefore God has not dealt with him according to his sinful thoughts. All the universe is not shaded with the mists of error, though free-agency has blinded his eyes. As for salvation, he knows nothing about it by the forgiveness of his sins; because out of his heart proceed evil thoughts.

I shall conclude also; and submit this answer to the decision of the great day: when all hearts shall be open, and their deepest recesses known: when the mystery of iniquity shall be revealed, free-agency shall be wounded out of the house of the wicked, and their sandy foundation be discovered even

to the neck: when the self-justifier shall be unmasked, and placed at the rear of publicans and harlots: when the mean man shall be brought low, the haughty humbled, and the mouth of them that speak lies be stopped: when freethinkers shall be holden with the cords of their sins; the universalists be condemned with the world; the proud helper stoop to the iron rod; the able performer shall be unable to deliver his soul, or the false prophet to say, there is not a lie in my right hand: Then shall mystical Babel be razed, and her builders be confounded, routed, and ruined: Then - then shall the elect, gathered from all winds, shine forth as the sun, see as they are seen, and know as they are known. They shall blaze in electing love, exult in divine joys, shine in everlasting light, solace in endless pleasure, and hymn particular redemption, till self-existing divinity can fail, and eternity find a period.

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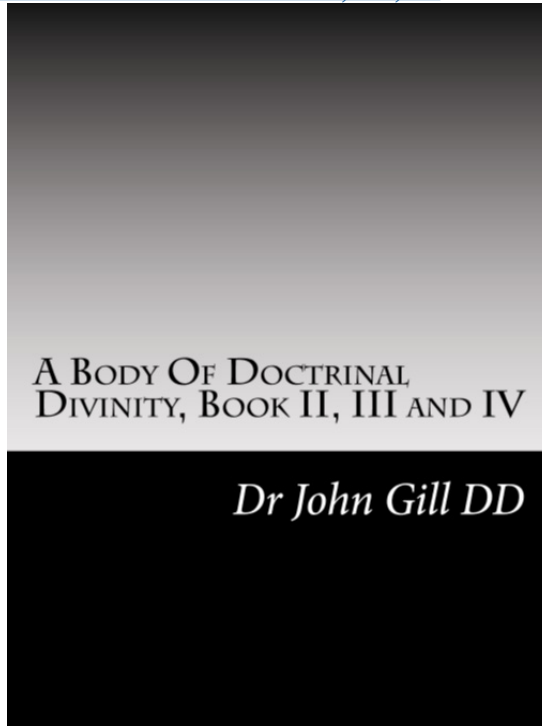
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Chapter 7 Of The Ascension Of Christ To Heaven

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Chapter 9 Of The Prophetic Office Of Christ

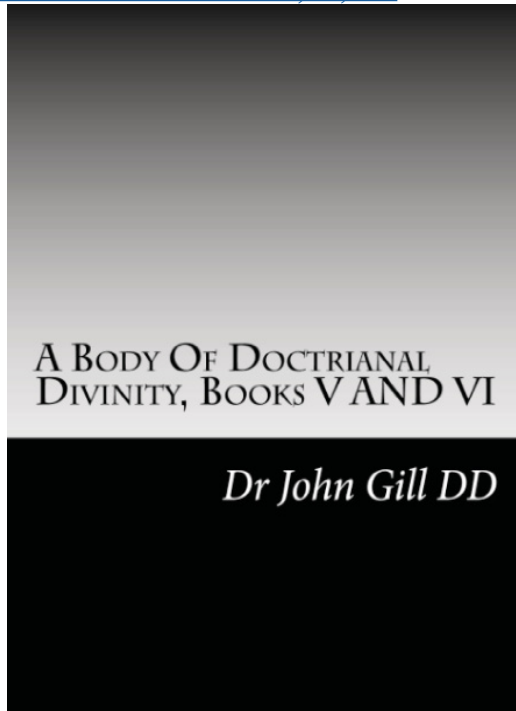
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Chapter 14 Of The Spiritual Reign Of Christ

A BODY OF DOCTRINAL DIVINITY, V, VI.

Dr. John Gill

A System OF Practical Truths

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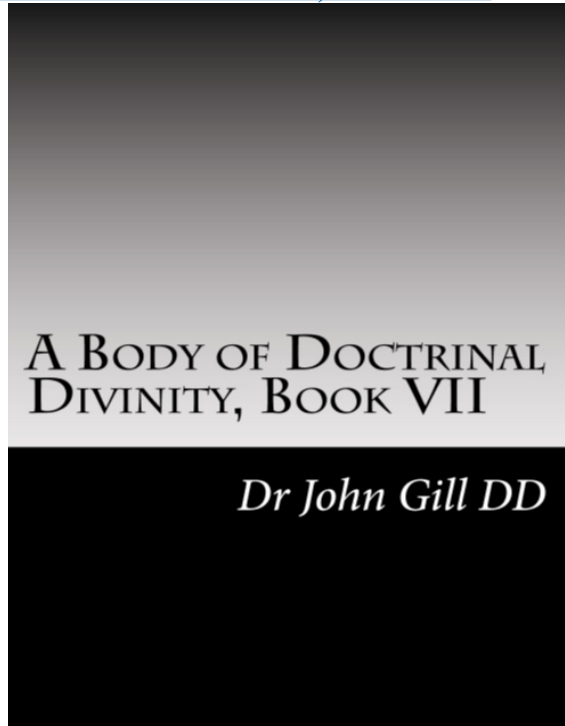
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Chapter 11 Of Regeneration

Chapter 12 Of Effectual Calling

Chapter 14 Of Sanctification

Chapter 15 of the perseverance of the saints



Dr. John Gill

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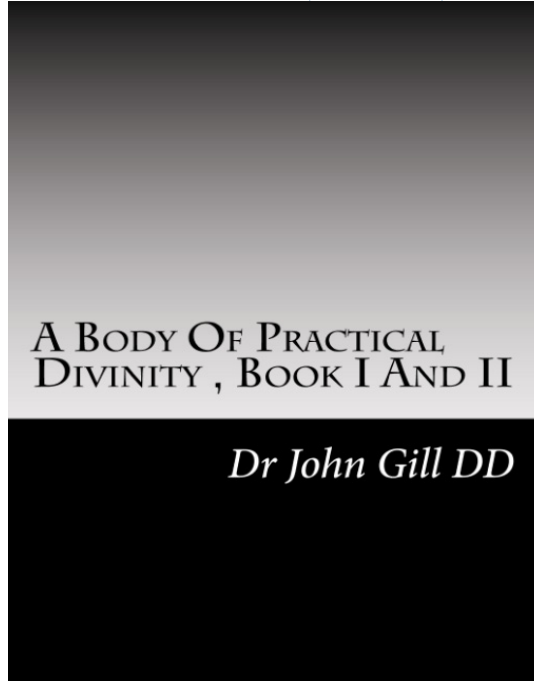
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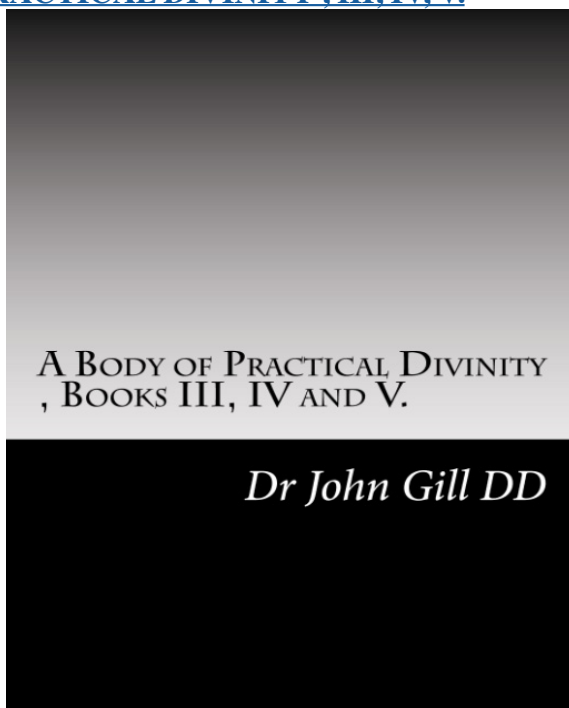
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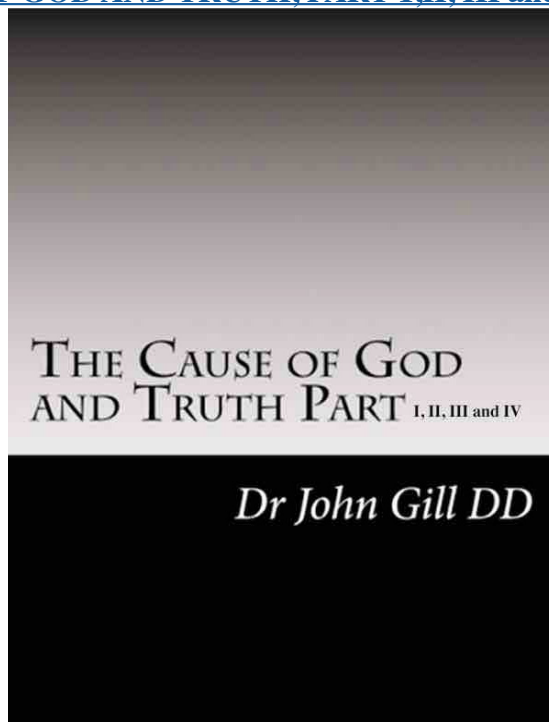
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PART I

The following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work.

In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical

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PART II

This is volume 2 of this 4 part series and it should be known that the following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734, at which time Dr. Whitby's Discourse on the Five Points was reprinting, judged to be a masterpiece on the subject, in the English tongue, and accounted an unanswerable one ; and it was almost in the mouth of every one, as an objection to the Calvinists, Why do not ye answer Dr. Whitby ? Induced hereby, I determined to give it another reading, and found myself inclined to answer it, and thought this was a very proper and seasonable time to engage in such a work. In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistical Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These,

and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture. The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

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1 Corinthians 1:8, 9.

The following work was undertaken and begun about the year 1733 or 1734,

PART IV

This is Part 4 of 4 parts, and a new edition, with some alterations and improvements, is now published by request.

This work contains:

Chapter 1 Of Predestination

Chapter 2 Of Redemption

Chapter 3 Or Original Sin

Chapter 4 Of Efficacious Grace

Chapter 5 Of Perseverance

Chapter 6 Of The Heathens

A Vindication of The Cause of God and Truth

This work contains:

Chapter 1 Of Predestination

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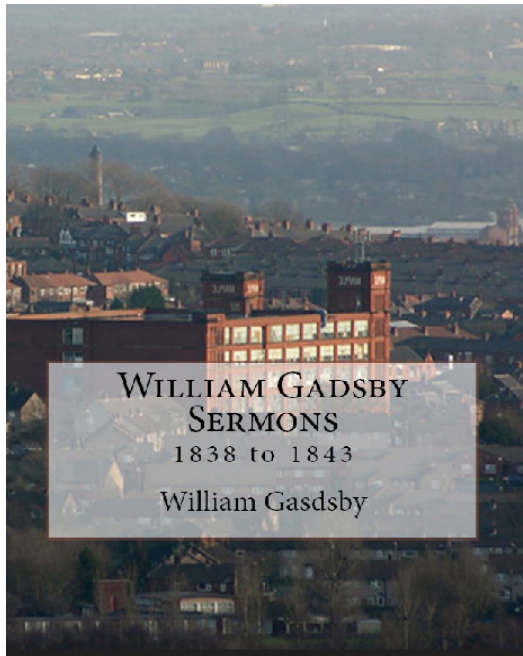
Chapter 5 Of Perseverance

Chapter 6 Of The Heathens

A Vindication of The Cause of God and Truth

WILLIAM GADSBY SERMONS

1838 to 1843



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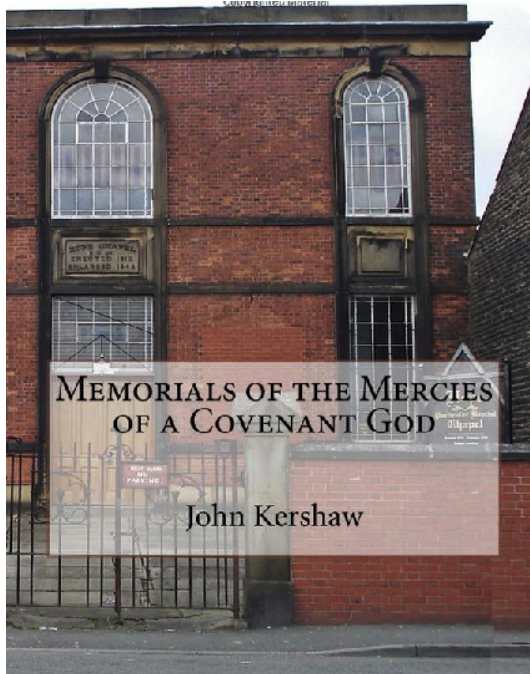
This volume contains a tribute of high esteem, given by J.C Philpot on the death of William Gadsby, in 1844 and contains series of sermons preached between September 1838 and 14th June 1843.

William Gadsby became a Particular Baptist minister in 1798 and went on to preach to many thousands of people. He later published Hymns, in a hymn books still used today by Particular Baptists.

He was born in Attleborough, Warwickshire in 1773. He had little or no education. In 1790, he went to see men hanged, and the horrid spectacle had such an effect on his mind that he was never afterward like the same youth. His memoirs tell of the lengths of folly into which he ran prior to this time and were often related by him in his ministry These memoirs were published shortly after his death.

William Gadsby preached the distinguishing doctrines of grace that gave all the glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation.

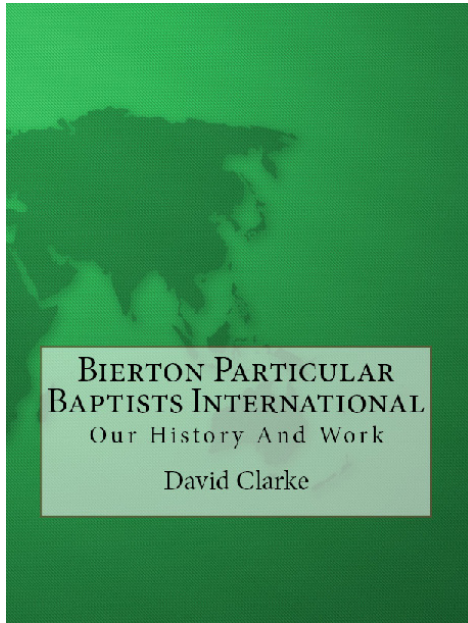
MEMORIALS OF A COVENANT GOD



John Kershaw

John Kershaw (1792-1870) was a Particular Baptists pastor for fifty-two years of Hope Chapel, Rochdale. He exercised a powerful ministry among the church, and became an influential preacher across the country. Few ministers remain faithful to a single congregation for an extended period—Kershaw committed himself to the same church he attended as a boy. This autobiography “Memorials of the Mercies of a Covenant God while Traveling through the Wilderness”, is one of the best written of its genre. He preached and taught the doctrines of grace along with his contemporaries William Gadsby, John Warburton, J.C. Philpot. These men were all Calvinists maintaining the bible to be the word of God and giving all the praise and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation.

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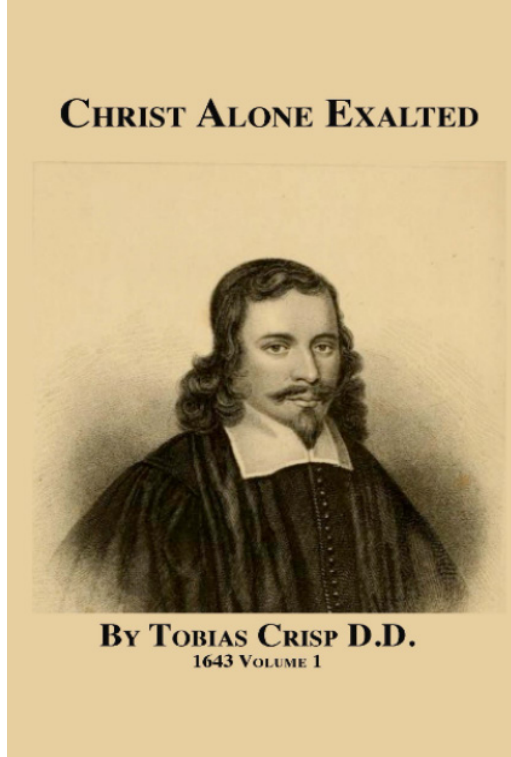
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BISAC: Religion / Christian Ministry / Evangelism

Bierton Particular Baptists were founded in England in 1831 and has now extended to Pakistan. The chapel belonging to Bierton Particular Baptists was closed for worship in December 2002 and David Clarke, the sole remaining

member of the Bierton church, commissioned and appointed Anil Anwar and Anwar Shahid John as overseers, of Bierton Particular Baptist church, in Pakistan, in 2016. This book contains the articles of religion for Bierton Particular Baptists and the Bierton Particular Baptist College. Bierton Particular Baptists were a Gospel Standard listed cause 1981.

CHRIST ALONE EXALTED



Authored by Tobias Crisp D.D.,

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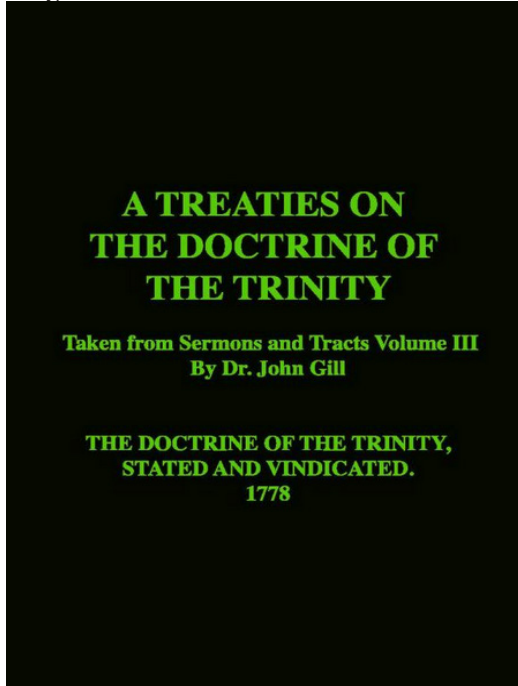
Tobias Crisp was preacher of the gospel in England. He was born in 1600 and died in 1643 at which time these 13 sermons were first published. Within 3 years further sermons were published in further volumes this is the first. He lived at the time when The First London Baptist Confession of Faith 1644 was being prepared for publishing and it is clear from these sermons he taught Calvinistic truths. He preached the doctrines of grace and was

charged with being an Antinomian and provoked opposition from various quarters. Dr John Gill in defence of Crisp republished these sermons along with his own notes showing that Tobias Crisps taught clearly the truths of the lord Jesus Christ

A TREATIES ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY:

The Doctrine Of The Trinity Stated and Vindicated

Paperback – 18 Aug. 2021



Dr. John Gill

Dr, John Gill presents this work to defend the doctrine of the Trinity and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Historically speaking, there has always been disputes and divisions as to the person of Christ; who is He? Is He the eternal, only-begotten Son of God?. Such a division also took place in the 18 and 19th century between certain Strict and Particular Baptists, in the U.K. It was then that J.C. Philpot, the editor of the Gospel Standard magazine, in 1861, published his book declaring The Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, which issued in further divisions not only among Strict and Particular Baptists but also Evangelicals and Presbyterians.

Gospel Standard baptists, holding to the Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, maintained that the gospel was to be preached to all people, declaring the complete and finished personal work of Christ, knowing that

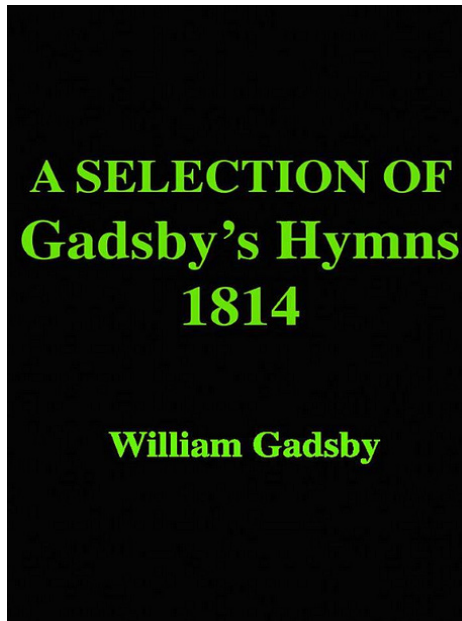
the atonement was definite and made for those chosen in Christ before the world, and not for all men. Those who believed would be saved. They denied the gospel was an offer of salvation to men. Whilst other Strict Baptists, Presbyterian and Evangelicals would offer salvation and the grace of God , to men upon the condition they believe, making little mention of the extent of atonement, leaving men to conclude the atonement was sufficient for the whole world, if the whole world would believe.

This work of Dr. John Gill will help the reader understand the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the work of The Holy Ghost in the salvation of the people of God.

Songs 2:9 My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice.

[A SELECTION OF GADSBY'S HYMNS 1814 PAPERBACK](#)

15 July 2021



The occasion of this publication is brought about by the gradual change that has taken place among Christians and them seeking to worship God in a public way. It has been noted that many have forsaken the use of a hymn book and reverted to singing, in a public way, by reading from an overhead projector. Very often the projection of the words of the hymn are out of step with the timing of the singing of the song, which is very off putting. Also

with the use of such projection only one verse at a time may be viewed and the worshippers cannot look ahead or return to a previously sung verse to reflect or anticipate the sense and meaning of the hymn.

It has also been noticed the many such songs have a copy write symbol restricting the use of such songs and very often the substance, sentiment and doctrinal content is often lacking, and in many case doctrinally unsound and so unfit for public worship.

It has often been the experience of the publisher that when any such attempt to worship publicly and any combination of some of those things just mention takes place, it become unacceptable and an internal groan is experienced and a sigh expressing, 'Why have Christians forsaken the us of well tried hymns and presented in a personal copy of an hymn book? A hymn book that can be used personally and privately at will. For this reason instead of moaning it was felt something could be done about this matter and so a small collection of well proven, doctrinally sound hymn in the form of hand held Hymn book has been produced.

Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

CONVERTED ON LSD TRIP: 3RD EDITION

(David Clarke Series) Paperback – 3 Jun. 2020

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The Bucks Herald Second Edition

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CONVERTED ON LSD TRIP

David Clarke who had a three-year career of undetected crime, experienced a "Christian conversion" whilst suffering from the effects of LSD, he told Aylesbury magistrates, on Tuesday. After wrestling with his conscience for a year, he confessed to 24 crimes, and gave information leading to the recovery of over £1000 worth of stolen property. In court

was enjoying himself. "I used to sell drugs to young people, and indulge in permissive sex" he declared.

Seeking Truth
"Religion to me was rubbish, and for silly people who could not stand on their own feet", he said.

result of taking the drug, and went on "I warn any young person who hears my testimony, "The effects of LSD are so bad, and I warn you to stay clear". While in this condition he said he, "Called on the name of Jesus" and his torment went from him.

Voice Of Christ
"Jesus Christ spoke to me as clearly as I speak here today saying, "David, I am with you", he said. "What you have been going through is nothing compared to what hell is like" Mr Murray, of Manor Crescent Wendover said he was habitually sceptical of sudden conversions, and preferred to put them to the test of time. The time, which had elapsed, since Clarke's profession of faith had convinced him that this young man would now be salt and light to society". "He is in truth, a new man, and had experienced what Christ called a second birth". Murray said Clarke now put himself out to be of assistance, read the bible intensely, always carried a New Testament, attended a wide circle of churches and would spend hours in discussion on spiritual things.



David Could these boys do any real wrong ? Michael he pleaded guilty to charges of stealing a £300 colour television set from an old peoples home, a £20 spray gun, and a hydraulic jack. He asked for 21 other charges to be taken into consideration, including stealing a builders shed, two cars, and an electric arc welder, two other TV sets, two compressors, and a road trailer. Clarke (21) of Finmere Crescent said that his reputation in the town had been that of a man who

"Within my heart I was searching for truth, and a meaning to life". He had good prospects of getting on in life he went on but "I was not satisfied with what I had, I was greedy, selfish and boastful". Clarke had been using pep pills and marijuana since he was 16 he told the court, but it was after taking LSD that he experienced what he described as, "a major thing in my life". He described the

Difficulty
Clarke's difficulty during the months spent deciding how to make amends for his past had been the problem of accusing himself, without informing on others.

Continued inside:

David Clarke

This third edition of, 'Converted on LSD Trip', is written to bring attention to the reality of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, in changing the lives of David Clarke, whilst on a bad trip on LSD, on 16th January 1970, and the life of his brother Michael Clarke, some 30 years later, when a prisoner, in the Philippines, and making them evangelist workers seeking to teach the gospel of Christ to men. It is intended to use this book as a tool for evangelism in order to encourage others in the work of preaching the gospel of Christ to men. This is also intended to draw attention to the work of Jesus Christ now in Baguio City, Philippines, by William O. Poloc a former inmate of New Bilibid Prison. It is believed and stressed that it is important to teach the traditional Christian doctrines of grace, to combat the error of modern-day Godliness, unbelief, homosexuality, feminism, Islam and of the importance of teaching the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the infallibility of the word of God

LET CHRISTIAN MEN BE MEN, 2ND EDITION:

1 Corinthians 16:13 Quit Ye Like Men



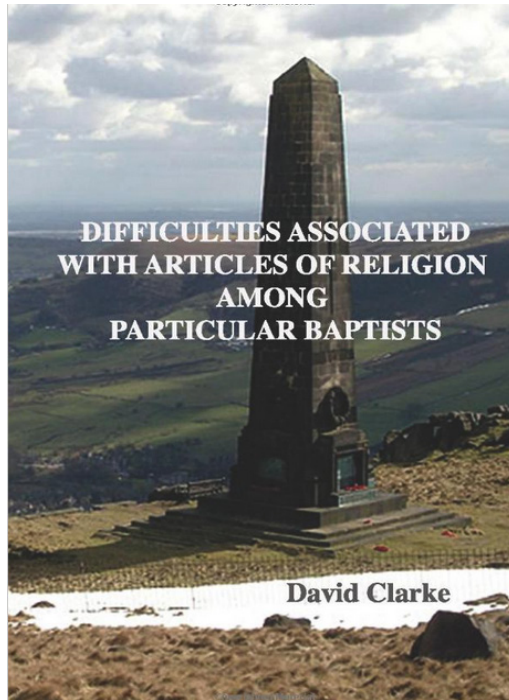
David Clarke

David Clarke tells of his Secession from the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church, in 1984 over matters of conscience. This Church was formed in 1831 and was a Calvinist Protestant dissenting society and became a Gospel Standard cause in 1981. Sadly the church fell into serious doctrinal

error teaching general redemption this was just one of the reasons for his secession. David was called by the Lord and sent by the church the gospel in 1982 When acting as the secretary he had to deal with a range of serious issues that arose within the church. This book deals with all those doctrinal and practical issues that arose and how he responded to them. He deals with the reasons for his secession and clearly spells out the distinguishing doctrines of grace treating the subjects of Particular Redemption, Gospel preaching the false notion of Duty Faith and Duty Repentance, the role of women in the church, Articles of Religion, and the relationship of the believer to the Law of Moses. He maintains the gospel is the believer's rule of life for the believer and not the law of Moses. That there are no such things holy tables and the chapel building is not the house of God. David remains the sole member of the Church after all its former members died and that the church did not terminate his membership after his secession David continues his mission work and calling published a range of Christian books and has been engaged in gospel ministry in Pakistan and the Philippines.

(David Clarke Series) Paperback – 3 Dec. 2020

DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH ARTICLES OF RELIGION
AMONG PARTICULAR BAPTISTS



David Clarke

Articles of religion or confessions of faith are used to inform others of what a person, a church, or society believes with respect to religious beliefs. Some churches restrict membership to those who will subscribe to their articles of religion. One of the problems that this brings is that there comes a time when a new believer cannot, in conscience, subscribe to a tenet of belief that they do not understand. It may be the article is badly worded or poorly written or may, in fact, be in error. In which case a new believer could not in conscience subscribe to something they do not understand. Or it may be a member of the church who begins to realize their articles of religion are in error. This book seeks to inform of the difficulties that articles of religion among Particular Baptists have experienced since the first London Baptists 1646 2nd Edition was published and offers an alternative solution to this problem. This book contains the First Particular Baptists London Confession 1646 2nd Edition, The Second London Baptists Confession 1689, Bierton Particular Baptists 1831, The Gospel Standard articles of religion 1878 and Bierton Particular Baptists, Pakistan 2016 with observations of the difficulties that have proven difficult, in the past. Contents Introduction Articles of Religion Important Authors Testimony Bierton Particular Baptist Church A Difficulty Over Articles Of Religion Written From Experience Bierton Particular Baptists History 1 First London Particular Baptists Confession 1646, 2nd Edition The Development of Articles Of Religion Act of Toleration Additions That Are Wrong 2 London Baptist Confession 1689 Notes on The London Baptists Confession 1689 3 Bierton Particular Baptists Article of Religion, 1831 Difficulties Over Articles of Religion Notes on Bierton Particular Baptists 1831 4 The Gospel Standard Articles of Religion 1878 Observations of the Gospel Standard Articles Of religion Letter to Mr. Role's of Luton Added Articles My comments Article 32 The Difficulties Of these Articles Proved Serious Doctrinal Errors Held Recommendation for Serious Minded 5 Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan 2016 6 Added Articles of the Gospel Standard 1878 Gospel Standard 31 Articles

(David Clarke Series) Paperback – 31 May 2020

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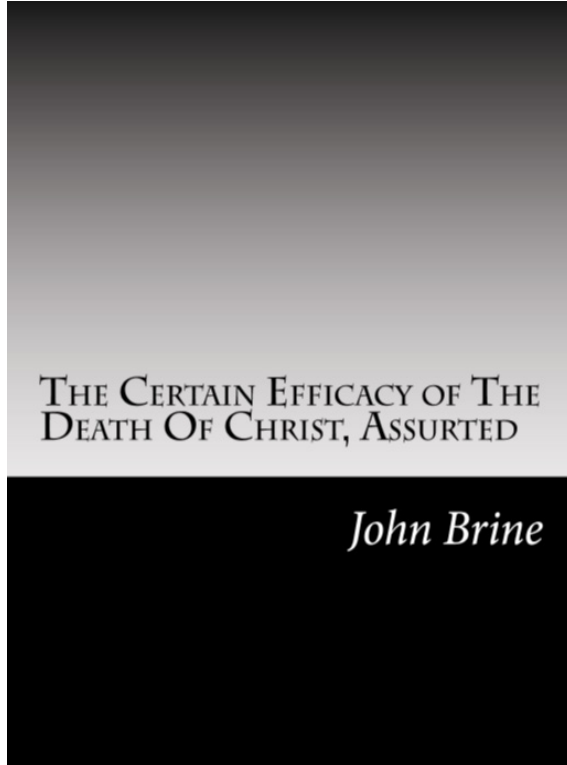
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Gospel Standard 31 Articles

**THE CERTAIN EFFICACY OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST,
ASSERTED**



Authored by John Brine

Created by David Clarke

List Price: \$7.99

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

114 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1973922254 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1973922258

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

This work declares the Glory of God in all his Perfections, the Honour of Christ, and the eternal Happiness of his People, all of which are intimately concerned in them. This is treated in four parts: In the First John Brine endeavours to prove the limited Extent of the Death of CHRIST, and the certain Salvation of all those for whom he died.

In the Second, the Objections which are usually urged by the Arminians, and others, will be answered.

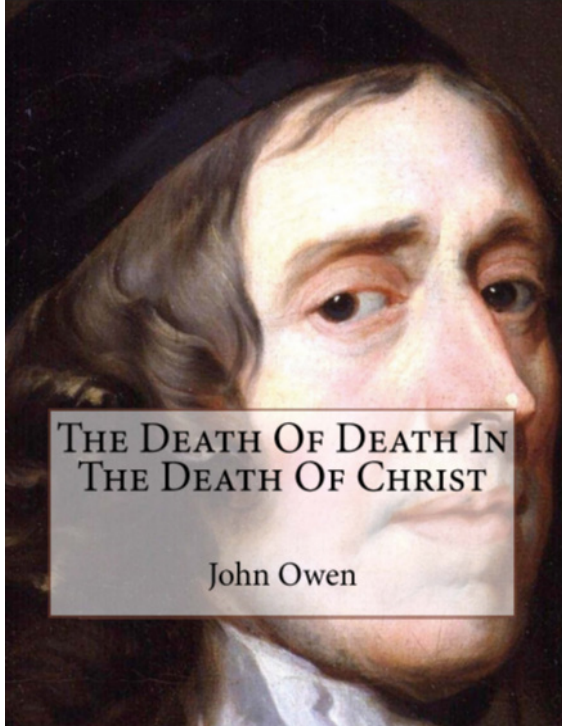
In the Third shall attempt to prove the Impossibility of the Salvation

of the Non-Elect, upon the Supposition of no other than a conditional Provision of Salvation being made for them.

In the Fourth Part shall attend to what he delivers on the Subjects of the Imputation of original Sin to Men, the Charge of Sin on CHRIST, and the Imputation of his Righteousness to his People.

This has been republished by Bierton Particular Baptists to further the cause of God and truth, it opposes Arminianism, Islam, and duty faith.

THE DEATH OF DEATH IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST



John Owen

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

170 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1544793733

ISBN-10: 1544793731

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

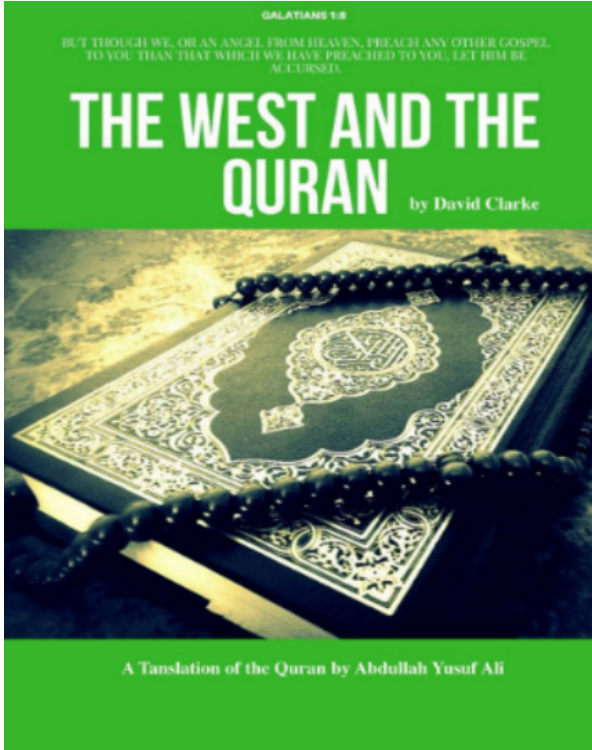
The Death of Death in the Death of Christ is a polemical work, designed to show, among other things, that the doctrine of universal redemption is unscriptural and destructive of the gospel. There are many, therefore, to whom it is not likely to be of interest. Those who see no need for doctrinal exactness and have no time for theological debates which show up divisions between so-called Evangelicals may well regret its reappearance. Some may

find the very sound of Owen's thesis so shocking that they will refuse to read his book at all; so passionate a thing is prejudice, and so proud are we of our theological shibboleths. But it is hoped that this reprint will find itself readers of a different spirit. There are signs today of a new upsurge of interest in the theology of the Bible: a new readiness to test traditions, to search the Scriptures and to think through the faith. It is to those who share this readiness that Owen's treatise is offered, in the belief that it will help us in one of the most urgent tasks facing Evangelical Christendom today—the recovery of the gospel.

This last remark may cause some raising of eyebrows, but it seems to be warranted by the facts. There is no doubt that Evangelicalism today is in a state of perplexity and unsettlement. In such matters as the practice of evangelism, the teaching of holiness, the building up of local church life, the pastor's dealing with souls and the exercise of discipline, there is evidence of widespread dissatisfaction with things as they are and of equally widespread uncertainty as to the road ahead. This is a complex phenomenon, to which many factors have contributed; but, if we go to the root of the matter, we shall find that these perplexities are all ultimately due to our having lost our grip on the biblical gospel. Without realising it, we have during the past century bartered that gospel for a substitute product which, though it looks similar enough in points of detail, is as a whole a decidedly different thing. Hence our troubles; for the substitute product does not answer the ends for which the authentic gospel has in past days proved itself so mighty. The new gospel conspicuously fails to produce deep reverence, deep repentance, deep humility, a spirit of worship, a concern for the church. Why? We would suggest that the reason lies in its own character and content. It fails to make men God-centred in their thoughts and God-fearing in their hearts because this is not primarily what it is trying to do. One way of stating the difference between it and the old gospel is to say that it is too exclusively concerned to be "helpful" to man—to bring peace, comfort, happiness, satisfaction—and too little concerned to glorify God. The old gospel was "helpful," too—more so, indeed, than is the new—but (so to speak) incidentally, for its first concern was always to give glory to God. It was always and essentially a proclamation of Divine sovereignty in mercy and judgment, a summons to bow down and worship the mighty Lord on whom man depends for all good, both in nature and in grace. Its centre of reference was unambiguously God. But in the new gospel the centre of reference is man. This is just to say that the old gospel was religious in a way that the new gospel is not. Whereas the chief aim of the old was to teach men to worship God, the concern of the new seems limited to making them feel better. The subject of the old gospel

was God and His ways with men; the subject of the new is man and the help God gives him. There is a world of difference. The whole perspective and emphasis of gospel preaching has changed.

THE WEST AND THE QURAN



Translation of The Quran

Authored by David Clarke, Authored with Abdullah Yusuf Ali

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

248 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1548914042

ISBN-10: 1548914045

BISAC: Religion / Biblical Criticism & Interpretation / General

This Publication treats the subject of the Quran and the reason for presenting this is due to a rise in Islamic terrorism which has caused great concern to many in the West. So with the current massive influx of Muslim's migrating from the various parts of the world into Europe, Great Britain and the USA, it seems reasonable to discover the roots of Islam in order to deal with the problems that have occurred. Our Politicians seem clueless on how to deal with this enemy and when they are questioned they appear

to know relatively little about Muhammad and his teaching. One of our greatest Prime-ministers in Britain William Gladstone declared the Quran an "Accursed book" and once held a copy of Muhammad's Quran up in Parliament, declaring: "So long as there is this book there will be no peace in the world".

Winston Churchill was one of the greatest leaders of the 20th Century, who served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom during World War II and again from 1951 to 1955.

As an officer of the British Army in 1897 and 1898, he fought against a Pashtun tribe in the north west frontier of British India and also at the Battle of Omdurman in Sudan. In both of those conflicts, he had eye-opening encounters with Muslims. These incidents allowed his keen powers of observation and always-fluid pen to weigh in on the subject of Islamic society.

While these words were written when he was only 25-years-old (in 1899), they serve as a prophetic warning to Western civilisation today.

"How dreadful are the curses which Mohammedanism (Islam) lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy."

Churchill apparently witnessed the same phenomenon in several places he visited. "The effects are apparent in many countries: improvident habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live."

He saw the temporal and the eternal tainted by their belief system. "A degraded sensualism deprives this life of its grace and refinement, the next of its dignity and sanctity," he wrote.

The second-class status of women also grated at the young officer. "The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property, either as a child, a wife, or a concubine, must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men," he noted.

"Individual Muslims may show splendid qualities, but the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world."

Well before the birth of modern Israel, its terror tactics and drive for world domination were felt. "Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytising faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step, and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science, the science against which it (Islam)

has vainly struggled, the civilisation of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilisation of ancient Rome.”

With the influx of Muslim people from the various parts of the continent along with their culture all of which is shaped by the teachings of Muhammad in the Quran.

Some objections and Observations are as follows:

Islam means submission

Islam does not mean peace

Multiculturalism is a failure.

Islam denies the natural rights of women

An Objection Halal Meat

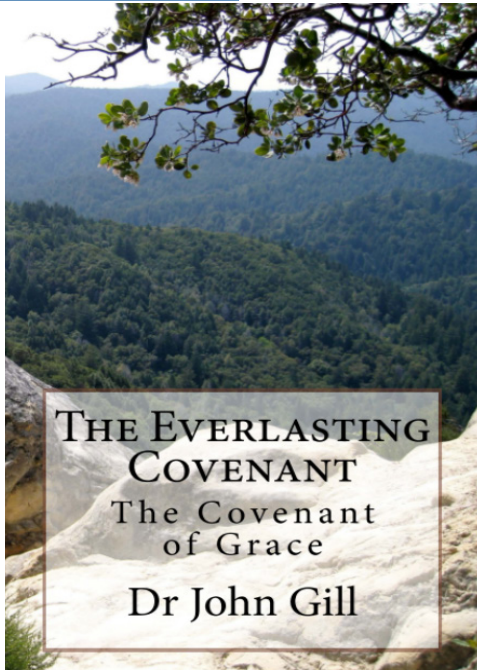
An Objection To Shari-ah Law

Objects to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

An objection to Jihad which seeks over throw Western culture through education, Social activity, political activation and Law.

For this reason, this publication is made available for education purposes. With this prayer that God may grant us all wisdom as to how we may respond to the rise and threat of Islam.

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT



The Covenant of Grace
 Authored by Dr John Gill, Created by David Clarke
 Paperback

List Price: \$9.98

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

188 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1535011020

ISBN-10: 1535011025

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

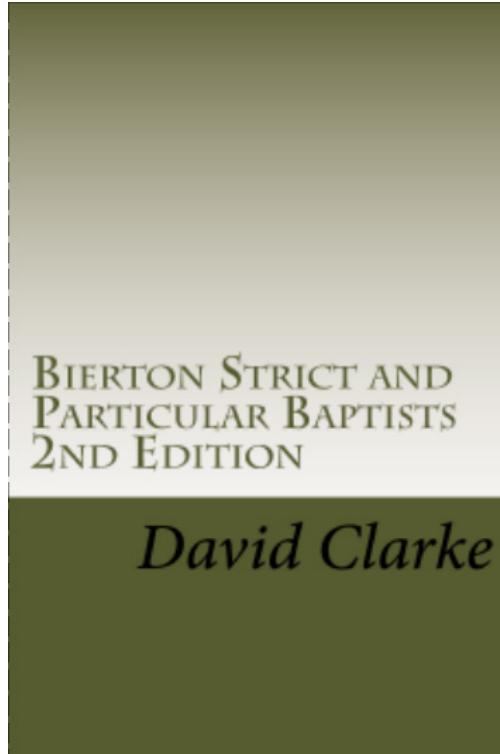
This book treats the subject of the Everlasting Covenant of grace. A covenant made between the three Persons Father, Son and Holy Ghost, before the world began. That has been gradually revealed by means of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant as declared by the Lord Jesus and His Apostles. It is by this covenant the whole Israel of God are saved.

Dr. John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life. He is the only person to write a commentary on each very of the bible and after its completion wrote his Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity from which this subject The Everlasting Covenant is an extract.

This book has be republished by Bierton Particular Baptists with a view to promote the cause of God and truth and to encourage all to read and study the scriptures for themselves. A knowledge of this subject will enable one to be free from the pitfalls of Arminianism

BIERTON STRICT AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS

2nd Edition



Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert.

List Price: \$13.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

356 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1519553287

ISBN-10: 1519553285

BISAC: Biography & Autobiography / Religious

This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60's, living in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, where they were MODs and were both sent to prison for and malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license . They were however both converted from crime to Christ and turned their lives around.

This story tells of David's conversion to Christianity in 1970 and that of Michael's conversion, 1999 some 30 years later.

It tells of their time in HMP Canterbury Prison and David's time in HMP Wormwood Scrubs and Dover Borstal. It also tells of David's criminal

activity and the crimes he committed before his miraculous conversion from crime to Christ, during a bad experience on LSD, in 1970.

It tells how he became a Christian over night and how he learned to read in order to come to a fuller knowledge of the gospel. He learned to read through reading the bible and classical Christian literature. David tells of the events that led to him making a confession to the police about 24 crimes he had committed since leaving Dover Borstal in 1968 and of the court case where he was not sentenced. It tells how David's educated himself and went on to Higher education, and graduated with a Certificate in Education and how he went on to teach Electronics, for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education.

It tells of his life as a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church, which was a Gospel Standard cause, and how he was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel. David tells of the various difficulties that he faced once he discovered the many doctrinal errors amongst the various Christian groups he met and of the opposition that he experience when he sought to correct them. David recorded his experience and finding in his book "The Bierton Crisis" 1984, written to help others.

David's tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion in 1970 and continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996.

David tells how Michael too was converted to Christianity through reading C.S. Lewis's book, "Mere Christianity", and him being convinced that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. David then tells of his mission to the Philippines, to bring help and assistance to Michael, in 2001 and of their joint venture in helping in the rehabilitation of many former convicted criminals, not only in New Bilibid Prison but other Jails in the Philippines.

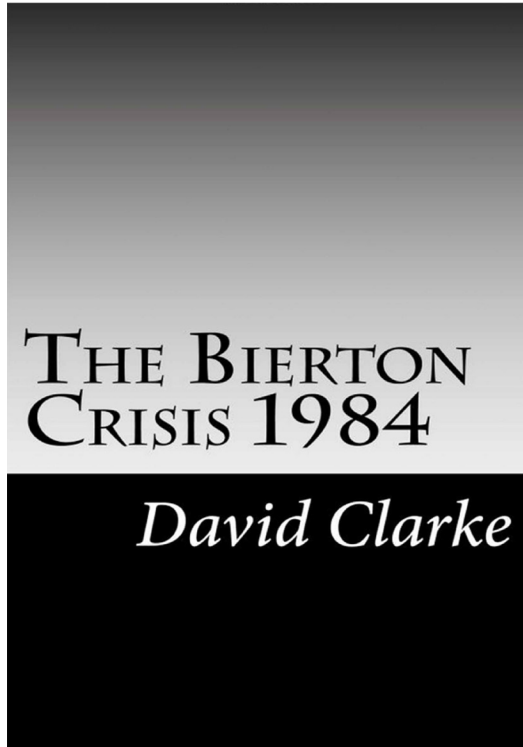
David tells how he felt compelled to write this story in his book , "Converted On LSD Trip". once he got news of his brothers arrest, in the Philippines, via ITN Television news broadcast, in 1995. This book was published when he got news of his brothers conversion from crime to Christ in 1999, which was after serving 5 years of his 16 year sentence.

This story is told in their joint book, "Trojan Warriors", that contains the testimonies of 66 notorious criminals who too had turned there lives around, from crime to Christ, 22 of which testimonies are men on Death Row.

David say he believes his story could be of great help to any one seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ but sadly Michael died in New Bilibid Prison of tuberculosis, in 2005 before their vision of bringing help to many was

realized.

THE BIERTON CRISIS



2nd Edition: A Testimony of David Clarke

Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert. Ed.

List Price: \$10.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

244 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1534701717

ISBN-10: 1534701710

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

The Bierton Crisis is the personal story of David Clarke a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church. He was also the church secretary and minister sent by the church to preach the gospel in 1982.

The Bierton Church was formed in 1831 and was a Gospel Standard cause who's rules of membership are such that only the church can terminate ones membership.

This tells of a crisis that took place in the church in 1984, which led to some members withdrawing support. David, the author, was one of the members who withdrew but the church did not terminate his membership

as they wished him return.

This story tells in detail about those errors in doctrine and practices that had crept into the Berton church and of the lengths taken to put matters right. David maintained and taught Particular Redemption and that the gospel was the rule of life for the believer and not the law of Moses as some church members maintained.

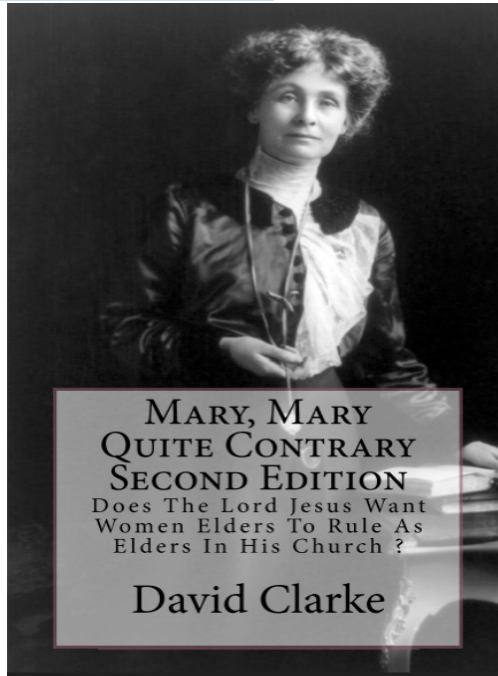
This story tells of the closure of the Berton chapel when David was on mission work in the Philippines in December 2002 and when the remaining church members died. It tells how David was encouraged by the church overseer to return to Berton and re-open the chapel.

On David's return to the UK he learned a newly unelected set of trustees had take over the responsibility for the chapel and were seeking to sell it. The story tells how he was refused permission to re open or use the chapel and they sold it as a domestic dwelling, in 2006.

These trustees held doctrinal views that opposed the Berton church and they denied David's continued membership of the church in order to lay claim too and sell the chapel, using the money from the sale of the chapel for their own purposes.

David hopes that his testimony will promote the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as set out in the doctrines of grace, especially Particular Redemption and the rule of life for the believer being the gospel of Christ, the royal law of liberty, and not the law of Moses as some reformed Calvinists teach, will be realized by the reader.

His desire is that any who are called to preach the gospel should examine their own standing and ensure that they can derive from scripture the doctrines and practices they teach and advance and that they can derived the truths they teach from scripture alone and not from the traditions of men or their opinions however well they may be thought of.

MARY, MARY QUITE CONTRARY

Second Edition: Does The Lord Jesus Want Women To Rule As Elders In His Church ? ?

Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert E

List Price: \$8.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

154 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1514206812

ISBN-10: 1514206811

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / General

When treating the subject of women elders in the church we are not dealing with the affairs of a secular society and so it has nothing to do with women's rights, equality of sex or race in the world. This matter only relates to men and women in a Christian church. It is about the rules of the house of God, which is the church of the living God and rules for those who are members of the body of Christ and members of an heavenly county.

The Suffragettes

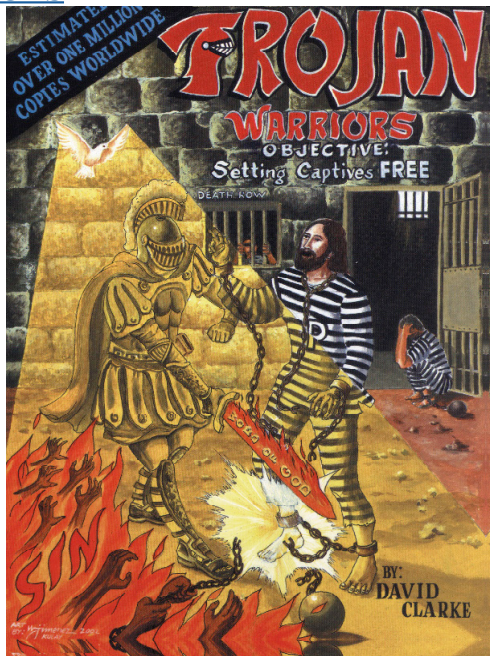
Emmeline Pankhurst 1858 -1928) was a Suffragette and worked very hard to bring equal rights for women to vote as men. In the year of her death all women over 21 gained the right to vote. The Suffragette movement brought about many changes for the better in a secular society but not so

for women seeking to follow Christian principles. One of her famous quotes was, "Trust in God She shall provide". Terms which do not reflect Christian beliefs. We know God will provide and He is not a she.

In the USA and the UK, women's political rights were brought into general political consciousness by the suffragettes and since then there have been legal rights granted to the Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups, same sex marriages, along with the development of the feminist movement and the appointment of persons from the LBGT community to responsible positions in the Church of England. All of this has caused conflict in the Christian community due to differences beliefs of right and wrong.

This book seeks to show what the bible has to say about the role of women in the church and family. Since these rules are taught by the Apostles of Christ they are the word of God to us and we should obey. The secular world may differ and turn from the narrow path taught in scripture but we should follow the word of God, this is our wisdom.

TROJAN WARRIORS



Setting Captives Free

Authored by Mr David Clarke Cert.Ed, Authored by Mr Michael J Clarke

List Price: \$15.99

5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

446 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1508574989

ISBN-10: 1508574987

BISAC: Religion / Christian Life / General

Trojan Warriors is a true story of two brothers, Michael and David Clarke, who are brought up in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England. They became criminals in the 60's and were sent to prison for malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license, in 1967.

They both turned from their lives of crimes in remarkable ways but some 25 years apart, and then they worked together helping other prison inmates, on their own roads of reformation.

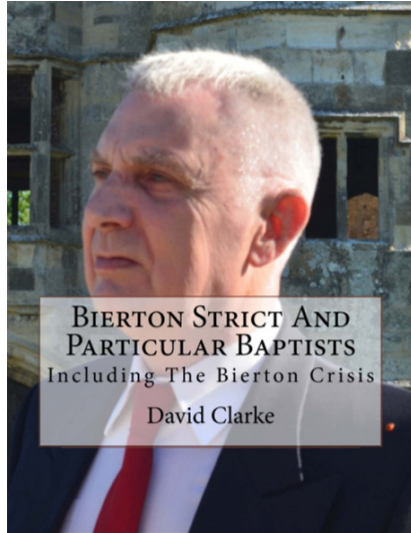
David the younger brother became a Christian, after a bad experience on LSD, in 1970, and then went on to educate himself and then on to Higher Education. He became a baptist minister and taught electronics for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education. Michael however remained untouched and continued his flamboyant life style ending up serving a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996, where he died of tuberculosis in 2005.

When David heard the news of his brothers arrest on an ITN television news bulletin he felt compelled to wrote their story. And then when he heard of his own brothers conversion from crime to Christ, after serving 5 year of his sentence, he published their story in his book, "Converted on LS Trip", and directed a mission of help to the Philippines to assist his brother. This book tells the story of this mission.

They then worked together with many former notorious criminals, who were inmates in New Bilibid Prison, who too had become Christians and turned their lives around. This help was to train them to become preachers of the gospel of Jesus Christ .

This book contains the 66 testimonies of some of these men who convicted former criminals, incarcerated in New Bilibid Prison. They are the, "Trojan Warriors", who had turned their lives around and from crime to Christ. Twenty two of these testimonies are men who are on Death Row scheduled to be executed by lethal injection.

Revelation 12 verse 11: And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives unto the death.

BIERTON STRICT AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS 2ND EDITION

David Clarke

This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60's, living in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. David was converted from crime to follow Christ on 16th January 1970 but his brother Michael was untouched till 30 year later.

This story tells how David became a Christian, over night, and how he learned to read in order to come gain a fuller knowledge of the gospel. He learned to read through reading the bible and classical Christian literature. David tells of the events that led to him making a confession to the police about 24 crimes he had committed since leaving Dover Borstal in 1968 and of the court case where he was not sentenced. It tells how David's educated himself and went on to Higher education, and graduated with a Certificate in Education and how he went on to teach Electronics, for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education.

It tells of his life as a member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church, which was a Gospel Standard cause, and how he was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel.

David tells of the various difficulties that he faced once he discovered the many doctrinal errors amongst the various Christian groups he met and of the opposition that he experience when he sought to correct them.

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David's tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion

in 1970 and continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996. David tells how Michael too was converted to Christianity through reading C.S. Lewis's book, "Mere Christianity", and him being convinced that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. David then tells of his mission to the Philippines, to bring help and assistance to Michael, in 2001 and of their joint venture in helping in the rehabilitation of many former convicted criminals, not only in New Bilibid Prison but other Jails in the Philippines.

David tells how he felt compelled to write this story once he got news of his brothers arrest, in the Philippines, via ITN Television news broadcast, in 1995. This book was published when he got news of his brothers conversion from crime to Christ in 1999, which was after serving 5 years of his 16 year sentence.

This story is told in their joint book, "Trojan Warriors", that contains the testimonies of 66 notorious criminals who too had turned there lives around, from crime to Christ, 22 of which testimonies are men on Death Row. David say he believes his story could be of great help to any one seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ but sadly Michael died in New Bilibid Prison of tuberculosis, in 2005 before their vision of bringing help to many was realized.

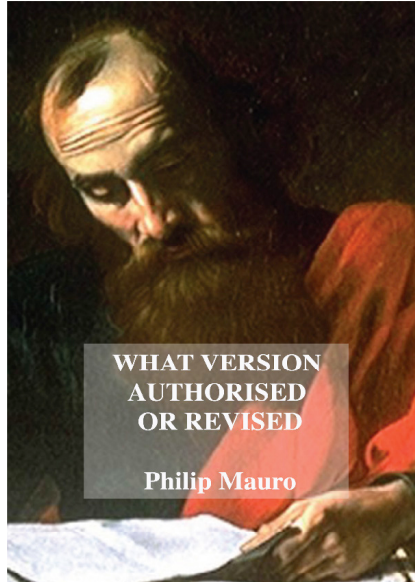
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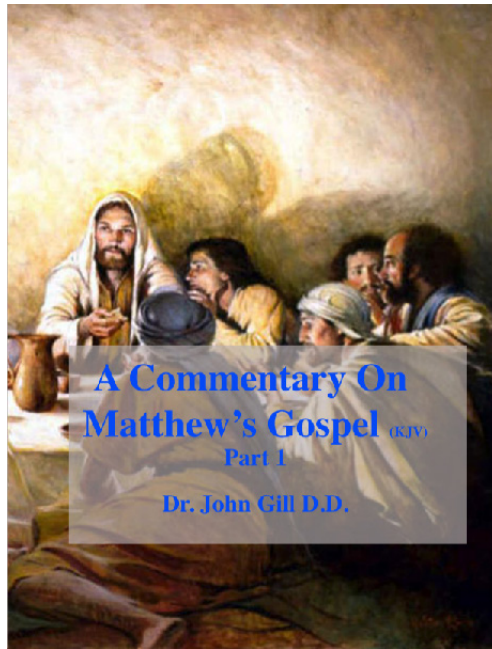
WHAT VERSION AUTHORIZED OR REVISED**Philip Mauro**

The book discusses the issues relating to the reliability of the Authorized Version of the Bible and the failings of the so-called Revised Versions. It reminds the reader the Greek printed text, produced by Erasmus in 1516, was derived from a broad set of 8 extant Greek manuscripts available to him in his day and in constant use by Christians to that day and not Latin bibles. Since 1861 there has arisen those who claim the Authorized Version is not accurate and Wescott and Hort produced a new compiled Greek Printed text manuscript, derived from, and based upon, two 4th C handwritten extant manuscripts. Codex Sinaiticus, written in Greek and Codex Vaticanus, written in Latin. They claimed that since these manuscripts were the oldest extant manuscripts in the world (400 years after the original writing of the new testament scriptures) they were far superior and more reliable than the text underlying the Authorized version of the bible. And since 1945 all Bible translations are based upon the New Greek manuscript text of Wescott and Hort published in 1861.

This is an eclectic text and not the Received Text used by the translator of the Authorized Version of the Bible and known by Christians, throughout the Christian age, as the Word of God. It has been republished by Berton Particular Baptist to educate serious minded people about the subject of Bible translations and support the Authorized version of the Bible. Philip Mauro was a lawyer in America, who practiced before the Supreme Court. He prepared briefs NOTES for the Scopes Trial WHICH was an American

legal case in July 1925 THAT had made it unlawful to teach human evolution in any state-funded school.[1] The trial publicized the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy, which set Modernists, who said evolution was not inconsistent with religion,[4] against Fundamentalists, who said the word of God as revealed in the Bible took priority over all human knowledge. The case was thus seen as both a theological contest and a trial on whether “modern science” should be taught in schools. Mauro was ALSO passenger on the British ocean liner RMS Carpathia when it rescued the passengers of the Titanic in April 1912. It is hoped that this book will rescue any that are sinking in the sea of the natural Modern man’s opinion as to the reliability of the Authorised Version the bible.

[A COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW](#)



Dr. John Gill

The Gospel According to Matthew was the first written gospel and published sometime between (AD 31-38). It was written before Mark’s (AD 38-44) and Luke’s Gospel (AD-61).

Matthew was a Jew and one of the 12 Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ and named Levi. He was a tax collector for the Romans. There are two strong traditions that Matthew made a personal copy of his gospel and gave it to Barnabas, a companion of the Apostle Paul.

Matthew tells of the birth and lineage of Jesus. The life death, resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and the final words of Jesus before his ascension into

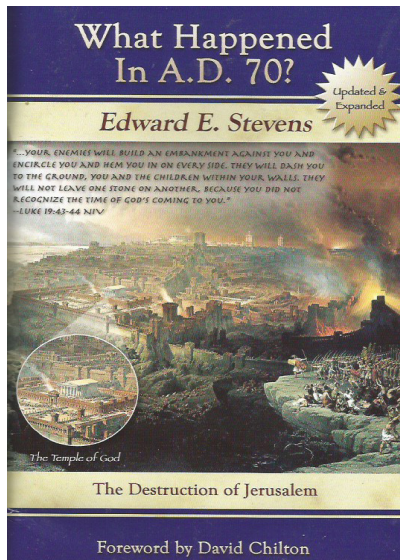
heaven.

This publication is presented knowing that Matthew penned his gospel that contains all those things the Lord Jesus wanted him to publish.

Matthew records the Olivet prophesy of Jesus concerning those fearful things that were to come to pass within the period of that generation and after his ascension.

It is the intention of the publisher that this will assist in making the gospel known to all people and is published in two parts PART 1 chapter 1 to 16. And PART 2 chapter 17 to 28.

WHAT HAPPENED IN A.D. 70



Ed. Stevens

This book introduces a view of Bible prophecy which many have found extremely helpful in their Bible study. It explains the end time riddles which have always bothered students of Bible prophecy. It is a consistent view which makes the book of Revelation much easier to understand. It establishes when the New Testament canon of scripture was completed, demolishes the liberal attack on the inspiration of the New Testament, and is more conservative on most other issues than traditional views. And there is no compromise of any essential Biblical doctrine of the Christian faith.

The key to understand any passage of scripture has always been a good grasp of the historical setting in which it was originally written {audience relevance). Two thousand years from now our history, culture, politics and language will have changed dramatically. Imagine someone then having to learn the ancient language of “American English” to read our USA

newspapers! If they saw one of our political cartoons with a donkey and elephant, what would they think? How would they go about understanding it? Not only would they have to study the language, but also our culture, history, politics and economics. The same applies to Bible study. If we are really going to understand what all the “donkeys and elephants” (beasts, harlots, dragons, etc.) Symbolize in the book of Revelation, we will have to seriously and carefully study the language, history, culture and politics of the First Century. Of course, the truths essential for salvation are couched in simple language that everyone can grasp. But there are numerous scriptures in the Bible which are “hard to understand” (cf. 2 Pet 3:16), and Bible prophecy is one of those things which must be approached with much more focus on the original historical and cultural context (audience relevance)

One of the main purposes of this book is to provide a closer look at the historical framework behind the New Testament. Many have found it helpful to lay aside (at least temporarily) the legion of speculative opinions about the book of Revelation, and look at a more historical alternative, which is that the book of Revelation was written to the first century church and had primary relevance to them. It warned of events that were about to happen in their lifetime, and prepared them for the tribulation and other events associated with the End of the Jewish Age.

Atheists, skeptics, Jew, Muslims, and liberal critics of the bible use the supposed failure of those end times events to occur in the First Century to undermine the integrity of Christ and the inspired NT writings.

Non-Christian Jews laugh at this supposed non-occurrence, and use it as evidence that Jesus is not the Messiah. Their forefathers in the flesh rejected Jesus in His first coming because He did not fulfill the Old Testament prophecies in the materialistic and nationalistic way that they were expecting, even though Jesus told them that His Kingdom was not of this world, and that it would be within them instead. Yet it seems that many futurists today are expecting that same kind of materialistic and nationalistic kingdom to arrive at a future return of Christ. Are they making the same mistake about the Second Coming that the Jews made about His first coming? Jesus repeatedly said His Kingdom is “not of this world” and that it would “not come with observation.” It is a spiritual entity, and it has arrived. We live in it. Both futurist Christians and non-Christian Jews need to realize this.

Christians are finally beginning to seek alternatives to the fatally flawed futurist interpretation. This book introduces the Preterist view.

“Preterist” simply means past in fulfillment. It means that Christ has already fulfilled His promise to return and consummate redemption in

Himself and His ongoing spiritual kingdom (the church). We should be like the noble-minded Bereans and “search the scriptures daily to see whether these things are true” You might want to have your Bible open alongside as you read.

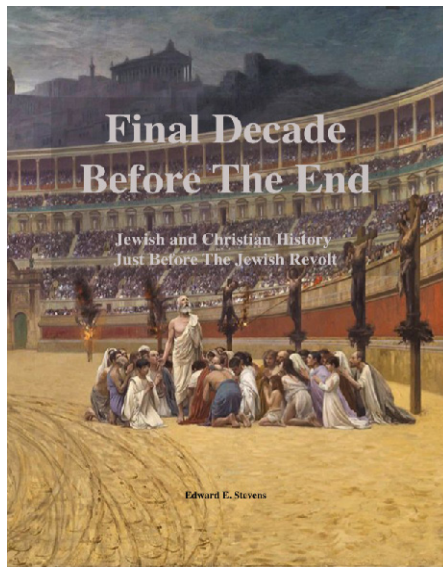
Edward E. Stevens 17, 2017

INTERNATIONAL PRETERIST ASSOCIATION

<https://www.preterist.org>

Bradford, Pennsylvania

[THE FINAL DECADE BEFORE THE END](#)



Ed. Stevens

Ever since the booklet, **What Happened In AD 70?** was published in 1980, there have been constant requests for more detailed information about the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish, Roman, and Christian history associated with it. Over the years since then I have studied Josephus, Yosippon, Hegesippus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Eusebius, the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar, Pseudepigrapha, Church Fathers, Apocrypha, Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish/Christian writings, trying to determine exactly what happened, when it happened, and the effect it had upon the Church.

Then in 2002, after I began to promote J. S. Russell’s view of a literal rapture, the demand for historical documentation of the fulfillment of all eschatological events dramatically increased. That forced me to dig much deeper. So in 2007 I put together a 21-page chronology of first century events. Two years later in 2009, we published a more substantial 73-page manuscript entitled, *First Century Events in Chronological Order*. That helped fill the

void, but it did not go far enough. It only increased the appetite for a more detailed and documented historical reconstruction of first century events.

The book of Acts does not give a lot of details about the other Roman and Jewish events that were happening while Paul was on his various missionary journeys. For those events, we have to go to the other contemporary Jewish and Roman historians such as Josephus and Tacitus. The closer we get to AD 70, the more important all of those Jewish and Roman events become. They form an important backdrop behind the Christian events, and show how all the predictions made by Jesus were literally fulfilled. Every High Priest and Zealot leader that we encounter from AD 52 onwards are directly connected with the events of the Last Days. Things are heating up, not only for the Christians, but also for the Jews and the Romans.

Paul on his missionary journeys was clearly following a plan which was providentially arranged for him by Christ: (1) to plant new churches among all nations and not just Jews, (2) appoint elders and deacons in every church (Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 4:17), (3) write inspired epistles to guide them, (4) instruct his fellow workers to “teach these things to faithful men who would be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2), and (5) establish the Gentiles in the Church and make them one united body with the Jews (Eph 4). Everywhere Paul went, he followed this pattern. We see this clearly as we study the historical narrative in Acts and Paul’s other epistles that were written during this time. These are essential patterns that the apostles evidently bound upon both Gentile and Jewish Christians, and which were intended to be the pattern for all future generations of the eternal Church (Eph 3:21; 2Tim 2:2).

We begin our study by looking at the most likely dates for Matthew (AD 31-38) and Mark (AD 38- 44), and then proceed to the first three epistles of Paul (Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians), which were written on his second missionary journey (AD 51-53). Including these five books in our study allows us to date all twenty-seven books of our New Testament, and show how the NT canon was formed and completed before the outbreak of the Jewish War in AD 66. The study of New Testament canonization in itself is a good reason for reading this work, without even looking at the historical fulfillment of all of the endtime prophecies that we document here.

After looking at the dates for those first five books, we then move on into the third missionary journey of Apostle Paul which began in AD 54. It was during this final dozen years (from AD 54 until AD 66) when the birth pangs and signs of the end started increasing in both intensity and frequency, along with a quickening pace of NT books being written. We show how 19 of our 27 NT books (70 percent) were written during those last five years just before the Neronian persecution (AD 60-64). The Great

Commission was finished, and the rest of the endtime events predicted in the Olivet Discourse were fulfilled during that time of “tribulation” upon the church and the “days of vengeance” upon the unbelieving Jews (Luke 21:22).

Edward E. Stevens

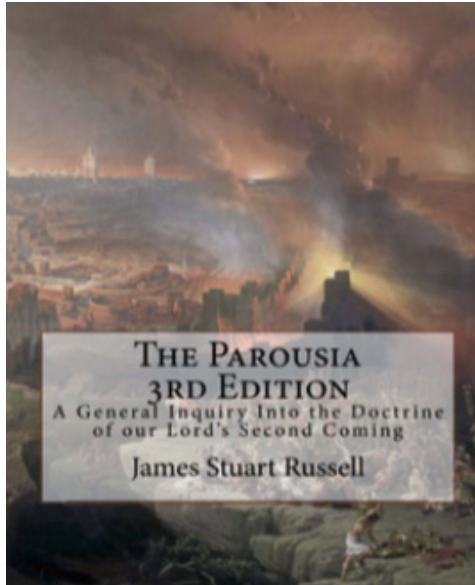
INTERNATIONAL PRETERIST ASSOCIATION

<https://www.preterist.org>

Bradford, Pennsylvania

April 17,2010

THE PAROUSIA 3RD EDITION



The Second Coming Of Christ

Authored by James Stuart Russell, Preface by Mr David Clarke, Preface by Dr Don K Preston DD

List Price: \$17.85

7" x 10" (17.78 x 25.4 cm)

Black & White on White paper

404 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1519610942

ISBN-10: 1519610947

BISAC: Religion / Theology

A reformation – indeed – a revolution of sorts is taking place in modern evangelical Christianity. And while many who are joining in and helping promote this movement are not even aware of it, the book you hold in your hand has contributed greatly to initiating this new reformation. This “new” movement is sometimes called full preterism, (Also, and preferably by this writer, Covenant Eschatology). It is the belief that all Bible prophecy is

fulfilled.

The famous evangelist Charles H. Spurgeon was deeply impressed with the scholarly, solid research in the book, although he did not accept the “final” conclusions reached by Russell. In modern times, this work has, and continues to impress those who read it. The reason is simple, the New Testament is emphatic and unambiguous in positing Christ’s coming and the end of the age for the first century generation. To say this has troubled both scholars and laymen alike is an understatement of massive proportions.

This book first appeared in 1878 (anonymously), and again in 1887 with author attribution. The book was well known in scholarly circles primarily and attracted a good bit of attention, both positive and negative. The public, however, seemed almost unaware of the stunning conclusions and the research supporting those conclusions, until or unless they read of Russell’s work in the footnotes of the commentaries.

Scholars have recognized and grappled with this imminence element, that is the stated nearness of the day of the Lord, seldom finding satisfactory answers. Scholars such as David Strauss accused Jesus of failure. Later, Bultmann said that every school boy knows that Jesus predicted his coming and the end of the world for his generation, and every school boy knows it did not happen. C.S. Lewis also could not resolve the apparent failed eschatology. Bertrand Russell rejected Christianity due to the failed eschatology - as he perceived it - of Jesus and the Bible writers. As a result of these “skeptical” authors, modern Bible scholarship has followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions.

This is where Russell’s work is of such importance. While Russell was not totally consistent with his own arguments and conclusions, nonetheless, his work is of tremendous importance and laid the groundwork for the modern revolution known as the preterist movement.

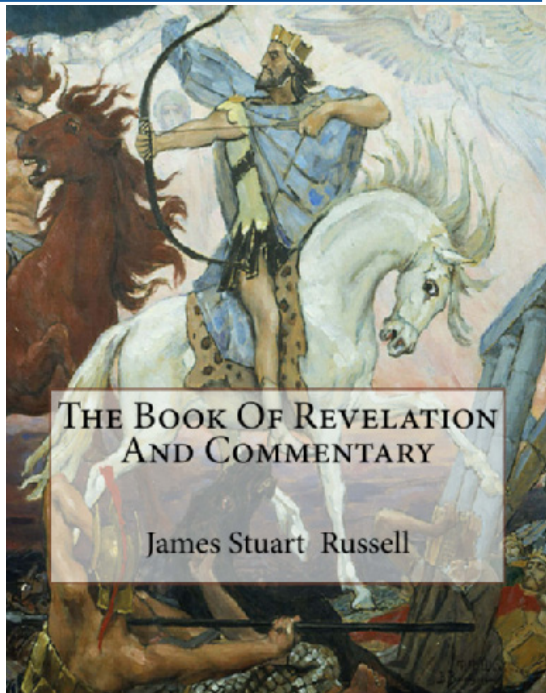
Russell systematically addressed virtually every New Testament prediction of the eschaton. With incisive clarity and logical acumen, he sweeps aside the almost trite objections to the objective nature of the Biblical language of imminence. With excellent linguistic analysis, solid hermeneutic and powerful exegetical skills, Russell shows that there is no way to deny that Jesus and his followers not only believed in a first century, end of the age parousia, but, they taught it as divine truth claiming the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as their authority.

Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of “the end,” he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that “the end” that Jesus and the N.T. writers were anticipating was

not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age.

Russell's work is a stunning rejection – and corrective -- of what the “Orthodox” historical “Creedal” church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the “divines” missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell's main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology. And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION AND COMMENTARY



Authored by James Stuart Russell, Created by David Clarke, Foreword by Don K. Preston

List Price: \$9.00

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

118 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1973780359

ISBN-10: 1973780356

BISAC: Religion / Biblical Studies / New Testament

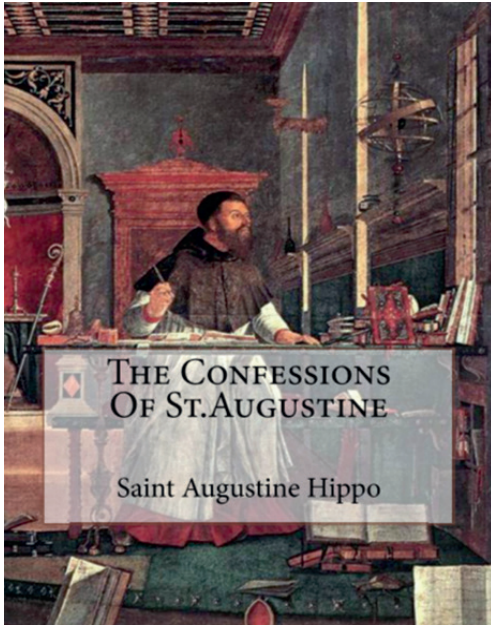
The book of Revelation has produced many idea’s in the minds of men as to what the future holds for mankind and some believe Revelation predicts the end of the world. There are a range of views held by professing Christians about the meaning of the book and some believe much of what is spoken about in the book has yet to be fulfilled.

This book reproduces the The of Revelation written as published in the King James version of the bible and includes a commentary on Revelation, by James Stuart Russell. Russell has already clearly demonstrated, in part I and part II of his book (The The Parousia), that book of Revelations is a prophecy about the end of the Jewish age and rule by Moses and that the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the promise of his return, to his disciples, at his coming in vengeance at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

We included in this book James Stuart Russell’s part III of the Parousia, which is a commentary on the book of Revelation (Apocalypse) in which it is taken as fact that the Lord Jesus came again in Judgement upon old covenant Israel, in 70 A.D. destroying Jerusalem and the Temple, bringing a fulfilling end to the rule of Law by Moses.

Both the Muslim and those Christians holding to a futurist view of the end times are invited to challenge their views.

THE CONFESSIONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE



Authored by St. Augustine Of Hippo, Created by David Clarke
List Price: \$9.99

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

182 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1983680236

ISBN-10: 1983680230

BISAC: Biography & Autobiography / Religious

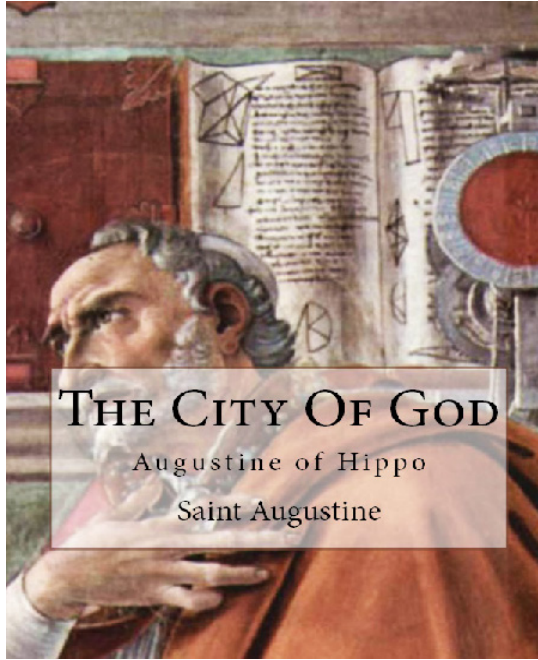
This is an autobiography, a work, consisting of 13 books, by Saint Augustine of Hippo, written in Latin between AD 397 and 400. The work outlines Saint Augustine's sinful youth and his conversion to Christianity. Its original title was *Confessions in Thirteen Books*, and it was composed to be read out loud with each book being a complete unit.

Confessions is generally considered one of Augustine's most important texts. It is widely seen as the first Western autobiography ever written, and was an influential model for Christian writers throughout the Middle Ages. Professor Henry Chadwick wrote that *Confessions* will "always rank among the great masterpieces of western literature".

Written after the legalization of Christianity, *Confessions* dated from an era where martyrdom was no longer a threat to most Christians as was the case two centuries earlier. Instead, a Christian's struggles were usually internal.

Confessions was written between AD 397–398, suggesting self-justification as a possible motivation for the work. With the words "I wish to act in truth, making my confession both in my heart before you and in this book before the many who will read it" in Book X Chapter 1 Augustine both confesses his sins and glorifies God through humility in His grace, the two meanings that define "confessions," in order to reconcile his imperfections not only to his critics but also to God.

Pelagius, a British monk, took exception to Augustines prayer "Grant what Thou commandest, and command what Thou dost desire." Pelagius recoiled in horror at the idea that a divine gift (grace) is necessary to perform what God commands. For Pelagius and his followers responsibility always implies ability. If man has the moral responsibility to obey the law of God, he must also have the moral ability to do it. Augustine took up the cause of God clearly demonstrating the the fall of man and the inability of man to do good and defended the truth of original sin.

THE CITY OF GOD:

Augustine of Hippo

Authored by Saint Augustine, Authored by David Clarke

List Price: \$10.28

8.5" x 11" (21.59 x 27.94 cm)

Black & White on White paper

272 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1547278985

ISBN-10: 1547278986

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Soteriology

The City of God, is a book of Christian philosophy written in Latin by Augustine of Hippo in the early 5th century AD. The book was in response to allegations that Christianity brought about the decline of Rome and is considered one of Augustine's most important works.

The City of God is a cornerstone of Western thought, expounding on many profound questions of theology, such as the suffering of the righteous, the existence of evil, the conflict between free will and divine omniscience, and the doctrine of original sin.

Augustine is recognized as a saint in the Catholic Church, the Eastern Christian Church, and the Anglican Communion and as a preeminent Doctor of the Church.

Many Protestants, especially Calvinists and Lutherans, consider him to

be one of the theological fathers of the Protestant Reformation due to his teachings on salvation and divine grace. Lutherans, and Martin Luther in particular, have held Augustine in preeminence (after the Bible and St. Paul). Luther himself was a member of the Order of the Augustinian Eremites (1505–1521).