

A BODY OF PRACTICAL DIVINITY

BOOKS III, IV and V.

OF THE WORSHIP OF GOD
OF EXTERNAL WORSHIP, AS PUBLIC
OF THE PUBLIC ORDINANCES OF DIVINE WORSHIP
OF PRIVATE WORSHIP, OF VARIOUS DUTIES, DOMESTIC CIVIL AND MORAL

BY DR. JOHN GILL DD

PREPARED BY David Clarke FOR PASTORS AND STUDENTS OF CHRIST CENTERED CHURCHES
PHILIPPINES

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www.BiertonParticularBaptists.co.uk**Presentation and Dedication**

This new edition of Dr. John Gills, “**Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity**”, contains 11 books, now in 5 volumes. It is presented and dedicated to the students, pastors and teachers of Christ-Centered Church Inc. Ministries, Philippines, under the care of William Ola Poloc, its founder and senior pastor (Bishop) on the, 16th January 2020, by David Clarke, founder of Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Inc.

Brief History of the Baguio Christ-Centered Churches Ministries Inc.

Pstr William O. Poloc Sr. was released from the New Bilibid prison in August 2002, where he graduated with a Degree in Theology, and started prison ministries in his hometown Baguio City, with his wife and the aid of a certain missionary from UK, by name David Clarke, the founder of Trojan Horse International. In December 2002 they were able to baptize 22 inmates in Baguio City Jail, 9 inmates in Benguet Provincial jail, along with William’s wife Beth Poloc and Josephine Ortis, along with her daughter Karen Basoon, who had all confessed their faith in the lord Jesus Christ. David Clarke returned to the UK in 2003 after his mission.

Later, God gave them a burden to open a church within the city so as to reach out to their families, relatives and the families of my co inmates who are still incarcerated at the New Bilibid Prison.

By His grace the Baguio Christ-Centered Church Inc. Stood up. As years go by God continued to bless the church by drawing more souls into it. He also bless us with a bible school to train ministers unable to study in an expensive bible schools. Graduates of our school were sent out to reach lost souls and augment Christ Centered mission churches to different places around the archipelago. As a result, by God’s grace and providence Christ Centered Churches were established to the different places in the country.



God’s work here in the Northern Philippines bloomed most especially here in the city of Baguio. The Baguio Christ-Centred Church is the mother church of all the Christ Centered Churches in the Philippines namely; The Pilot- Christ-Centred Church, The Kamog Christ-Centred Church, The Christ-Centered-Church Theological School(TULIP), The Christ-Centred Radio Ministry, The Christ-Centred Jail Ministries etc.). We’ll, we are truly blessed by these works He has entrusted to us. To God be the glory!

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Christ-Centered Ministries Philippines

Personal note from the publisher

It is noted and remarked that this date of publication is the Golden Jubilee ¹(Leviticus 25:8-13 King) of conversion of David Clarke, which took place on, 16th January 1971.

<http://www.Biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk>



David Clarke is the sole remaining member of Bierton Particular Baptists who was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel in 1982. The doctrinal foundation of Trojan Horse Mission are those of the Bierton Particular Baptists Articles of religion.

View the Wikipedia Entry for Bierton and view [None Conformist Place of Worship](#)

¹ 8 And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

Who Is Dr. John Gill

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.

Pastoral Work

His first pastoral work was as an intern assisting John Davis at Higham Ferrers in 1718 at age 21. He became pastor at the Strict Baptists church at Goat Yard Chapel, Horselydown, Southwark in 1719. His pastorate lasted 51 years. In 1757 his congregation needed larger premises and moved to a Carter Lane, St. Olave's Street, Southwark. This Baptist church was once pastored by Benjamin Keach and would later become the New Park Street Chapel and then the Metropolitan Tabernacle pastored by Charles Spurgeon.

Works

In 1748, Gill was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Aberdeen. He was a profound scholar and a prolific author. His most important works are:

- The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated London, 1731)
- The Cause of God and Truth (4 parts, 1725-8), a retort to Daniel Whitby's Five Points.
- An Exposition of the New Testament (3 vols., 1746–8), which with his Exposition of the Old Testament (6 vols., 1748–63) forms his magnum opus
- A Collection of Sermons and Tracts
- A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points, and Accents (1767)
- A Body of Doctrinal Divinity (1767)
- A Body of Practical Divinity (1770)

Gill also edited and re-published the works of **Rev. Tobias Crisp, D.D.** (1600-1643).

NOTE:

We have not included the Greek, Hebrew or Latin text in the interest of economy. Gill also edited and re-published the works of **Rev. Tobias Crisp, D.D.** (1600-1643).

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BOOK III

OF THE PUBLIC ORDINANCES OF DIVINE WORSHIP

Chapter 1

OF BAPTISM

As the first covenant, or testament, had ordinances of divine service, which are shaken, removed, and abolished; so the New Testament, or gospel dispensation, has ordinances of divine worship, which cannot be shaken, but will remain until the second coming of Christ: these, as Austin says, [125] are few; and easy to be observed, and of a very expressive signification. Among which, baptism must be reckoned one, and is proper to be treated of in the first place; for though it is not a church ordinance, it is an ordinance of God, and a part and branch of public worship. When I say it is not a church ordinance, I mean it is not an ordinance administered in the church, but out of it, and in order to admission into it, and communion with it; it is preparatory to it, and a qualification for it; it does not make a person a member of a church, or admit him into a visible church; persons must first be baptized, and then added to the church, as the three thousand converts were; a church has nothing to do with the baptism of any, but to be satisfied they are baptized before they are admitted into communion with it. Admission to baptism lies solely in the breast of the administrator, who is the only judge of qualifications for it, and has the sole power of receiving to it, and of rejecting from it; if nor satisfied, he may reject a person thought fit by a church, and admit a person to baptism not thought fit by a church; but a disagreement is not desirable nor advisable: the orderly, regular, scriptural rule of proceeding seems to be this: a person inclined to submit to baptism, and to join in communion with a church, should first apply to an administrator; and upon giving him satisfaction, be baptized by him; and then should propose to the church for communion; when he would be able to answer all proper questions: if asked, to give a reason of the hope that is in him, he is ready to do it; if a testimony of his life and conversation is required, if none present can give it, he can direct where it is to be had; and if the question is put to him, whether he is a baptized person or not, he can answer in the affirmative, and give proof of it, and so the way is clear for his admission into

church fellowship. Saul, when converted, was immediately baptized by Ananias, without any previous knowledge and consent of the church; and, it was many days after this that he proposed to join himself to the disciples, and was received (Acts 9:18, 19, 23, 26-28), and as it is water baptism which is meant, I shall,

First, prove that this is peculiar to the gospel dispensation, is a standing ordinance in it, and will be continued to the second coming of Christ. This is opposed to the sentiments of such who say baptism was in use before the times of John, of Christ and his apostles; and of such who restrain water baptism to the interval between the beginning of John's ministry and the death of Christ, when they supposed this, with other external rites, ceased; and of such, as the Socinians, [126] who think that only the first converts to Christianity in a nation are to be baptized, and their children, but not their after posterity. There were indeed various washings, bathings, or baptisms, under the legal dispensation, for the purification of persons and things unclean, by the ceremonial law; which had a doctrine in them, called the doctrine of baptists, which taught the cleansing of sin by the blood of Christ; but there was nothing similar in them to the ordinance of water baptism, but immersion only. The Jews pretend, their ancestors were received into covenant by baptism, or dipping, as well as by circumcision and sacrifice; and that proselytes from heathenism were received the same way; and this is greedily grasped at by the advocates for infant baptism; who fancy that John, Christ, and his apostles, took up this custom as they found it, and continued it; and which they imagine accounts for the silence about it in the New Testament, and why there is neither precept for it, nor example of it; but surely if it was in such common use as pretended, though no new precept had been given, there would have been precedents enough of it; but no proof is to be given of any such practice obtaining in those times, neither from the Old nor New Testament; nor from the apocryphal books written by Jews between them; nor from Josephus and Philo the Jew, who wrote a little after the times of John and Christ; nor from the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions: only from later

writings of theirs, too late for the proof of it before those times. [127] John was the first administrator of the ordinance of baptism, and therefore is called “the Baptist,” (Matthew 3:1) by way of emphasis; whereas, had it been in common use, there must have been many baptizers before him, who had a like claim to this title; and why should the people be so alarmed with it, as to come from all parts to see it administered, and to hear it preached, when, had it been in frequent use, they must have often seen it? and why should the Jewish sanhedrim send priests and Levites from Jerusalem to John, to know who he was, whether the Messiah, or his forerunner Elias, or that prophet spoken of and expected? and when he confessed, and denied that he was neither of them, they say to him, “Why baptizest thou then?” by which thing and which they expected it appears it was a new thing, and which they expected when the Messiah came, but not before; and that then it would be performed by some great personage, one or other of the before mentioned; whereas, had it been performed by an ordinary teacher, common Rabbi or doctor, priest or Levite, in ages immemorial, there could have been no room for such a question; and had this been the case, there would have been no difficulty with the Jews to answer the question of our Lord; “The baptism of John, whence was it, from heaven or of men?” they could have answered, It was a tradition of theirs, a custom in use among them time out of mind, had this been the known case; nor would they have been subject to any dilemma: but John’s baptism was not a device of men; but the “counsel of God,” according to his will and wise determination (Luke 7:30). John had a mission and commission from God, he was a man sent of God, and sent to baptize (John 1:6, 33), and his baptism was water baptism, this he affirms, and the places he made use of for that purpose show it, and none will deny it.

Now his baptism, and that of Christ and his apostles, were the same. Christ was baptized by John, and his baptism was surely Christian baptism; of this no one can doubt (Matthew 3:13-17), and his disciples also were baptized by him; for by whom else could they be baptized? not by Christ himself, for he baptized none (John 4:2). And it is observable, that the baptism of John, and the baptism of Christ and his apostles, were at the same time; they were contemporary, and did not the one succeed the other:

now it is not reasonable to suppose there should be two sorts of baptism administered at the same time; but one and the same by both (John 3:22, 23, 26, 4:1, 2).

The baptism of John, and that which was practised by the apostles of Christ, even after his death and resurrection from the dead, agreed,

1. In the subjects thereof. Those whom John baptized were sensible penitent sinners, who were convinced of their sins, and made an ingenuous confession of them; and of whom he required “fruits meet for repentance,” and which showed it to be genuine; and hence his baptism is called, “the baptism of repentance,” because he required it previous to it (Matthew 3:6-8; Mark 1:4). Song the apostles of Christ exhorted men to repent, to profess their repentance, and give evidence of it, previous to their baptism (Acts 2:38). John said to the people that came to his baptism, “That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus,” upon which they were baptized in his name (Acts 19:4, 5), and faith in Christ was made a prerequisite to baptism by Christ and his apostles (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36, 37).

2. In the way and manner of the administration of both. John’s baptism was by immersion, as the places chosen by him for it show; and the baptism of Christ by him is a proof of it (Matthew 3:6, 16; John 3:23), and in like manner was baptism performed by the apostles, as of the eunuch by Philip (Acts 8:38, 39).

3. In the form of their administration. John was sent of God to baptize; and in whose name should he baptize, but in the name of the one true God, who sent him, even in the name of God, Father, Son, and Spirit? The doctrine of the Trinity was known to John, as it was to the Jews in common; it is said of John’s hearers and disciples, that they were “baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5). The same form is used of the baptism of those baptized by the apostles of Christ (Acts 8:16, 10:48), which is only a part of the form put for the whole, and is sufficiently expressive of Christian baptism, which is to be performed “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

4. In the end and use of baptism, John’s baptism, and so the apostles was, upon repentance for the remission of sins, (Mark 1:4; Acts 8:38) not that

either repentance or baptism procure the pardon of sin; that is only obtained by the blood of Christ; but baptism is a means of leading to the blood of Christ; and repentance gives encouragement to hope for it, through it. Now since there is such an agreement between the baptism of John, as administered before the death of Christ; and between the baptism of the apostles, after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ; it is a plain case, it was not limited to the interval of time from the beginning of John’s ministry to the death of Christ; but was afterwards continued; which further appears from the commission of Christ (Matthew 28:19), “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them;” and though water is not expressed, it is always implied, when the act of baptizing is ascribed to men; for it is peculiar to Christ to baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5), nor did he give to his apostles, nor to any man, or set of men, a commission and power to baptize with the Spirit: besides, an increase of the graces of the Spirit, and a large donation of his gifts, are promised to persons after baptism, and as distinct from it (Acts 2:38). The apostles, doubtless, understood the commission of their Lord and Master to baptize in water, since they practised it upon it; such was the baptism administered by Philip, who, having taught the eunuch the doctrine of it, when they came to a “certain water,” he said to him, “See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?” that is, in water; and when Philip had observed unto him the grand requisite of it, even faith in Christ, which he at once professed; and the chariot in which they rode being ordered to stand, they went down both into the water, and he baptized him; this was most certainly water baptism; and so was that which Peter ordered to be administered to Cornelius and his friends, upon their receiving of the Holy Ghost, and so a baptism different from that; “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?” (Acts 8:36, 38, 39, 10:47, 48). And this was designed to be continued unto the end of the world, to the second coming of Christ; as the ordinance of the supper is to be kept to that time, the ordinance of water baptism is to be continued as long; hence says Christ, to encourage his ministers to preach his gospel, and to baptize in his name; “Lo, I am with you always,” in the ministry of the word, and in the administration of baptism, “even

unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Secondly, I shall next consider the author of it; and show, that it is not a device of men, but an ordinance of God; it is a solemn part of divine worship, being performed in the name of the Three divine Persons in Deity, Father, Son, and Spirit, and by their authority; in which the name of God is invoked, faith in him expressed, and a man gives up himself to God, obliges himself to yield obedience to him, expecting all good things from him. Now for an act of religious worship there must be a command of God. God is a jealous God, and will not suffer anything to be admitted into the worship of him, but what is according to his word and will; if not commanded by him, he may justly say, “Who hath required this at your hands?” and will resent it: a command from men is not sufficient; no man on earth is to be called master; one is our Master in heaven, and him only we are to obey: if the commandments of men are taught for doctrines, in vain is the Lord worshipped; what is done according to them is superstition and will worship. Indeed, as it is now commonly practised, it is a mere invention of men, the whole of it corrupted and changed; instead of rational spiritual men the subjects of it, infants, who have neither the use of reason, nor the exercise of grace, are admitted to it; and instead of immersion in water, and emersion out of it, a very expressive emblem of the sufferings of Christ, his death, burial, and resurrection from the dead; sprinkling a few drops of water on the face is introduced; with a number of foolish rites and ceremonies used by the papists, and some of their usages are retained by some Protestants; as sponsors, or sureties for infants, and the signing them with the sign of the cross. In short, the face of the ordinance is so altered, that if the apostles were to rise from the dead, and see it as now performed, they would neither know nor own it to be the ordinance commanded them by Christ, and practised by them. But as it is administered according to the pattern, and as first delivered, it appears to be of an heavenly original; the “counsel of God,” a wise appointment of his, and in which all the Three Persons have a concern; they all appeared at the baptism of Christ, and gave a sanction to the ordinance by their presence; the Father by a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!” as in his person, so in this act of his, in submitting to the ordinance of

baptism; the Son in human nature, yielding obedience to it; and the Spirit descending on him as a dove; and it is ordered to be administered in the name of all three, Father, Son, and Spirit. Which, among other things, is expressive of divine authority, under which it is performed. Christ received from God the Father honour and glory, as at his transfiguration, so at his baptism, by the voice from heaven, owning his relation to him, as his Son, and expressing his well pleasedness in him, as obedient to his will; the Son of God, in human nature, not only left an example of it, that we should tread in his steps; though he himself baptized none, yet he countenanced it in his disciples, and gave them orders to do it; which orders were repeated, and a fresh commission given for the same after his resurrection from the dead: and the Spirit of God showed his approbation of it, by his descent on Christ at his baptism; and his authority for it is to be seen in the administration of it in his name, as in the name of the other Two Persons; so that it is to be regarded, not as an institution of men, but as an ordinance of God; as a part of righteousness to be fulfilled, a branch of the righteous will of God, to be observed in obedience to it.

Thirdly, the subjects of baptism are next to be inquired into; or who they are to whom it is to be administered, and according to the scripture instances and examples, they are such who,

1. Are enlightened by the Spirit of God to see their lost state by nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and Christ as the only Saviour of sinners; who look to him and are saved; and such only can see to the end of the ordinance, which is to represent the sufferings and death, burial and resurrection of Christ; hence baptism was by the ancients; called photismos, "illumination;" and baptized persons photizomenoi, "enlightened" ones; and the Syriac and Ethiopic, versions of Hebrews 6:4 translate the word "enlightened" by baptized; an emblem of this was the falling off from the eyes of Saul, as it had been scales; signifying his former blindness, and ignorance, and unbelief, now removed; upon which he arose and was baptized (Acts 9:18).

2. Penitent persons; such who having seen the evil nature of sin, repent of it, and acknowledge it; such were the first who were baptized by John that we read of; they were "baptized of him in Jordan,

confessing their sins," (Matthew 3:6) being made sensible of them, they ingenuously confessed them; and such were the first who were baptized after Christ had renewed the commission to his disciples, upon his resurrection, to teach and: baptize; such as were pricked to the heart, were exhorted to profess repentance and give evidence of it, and then be baptized, as they were (Acts 2:37, 38, 41), and it is pity that these first examples of baptism were not strictly followed.

3. Faith in Christ is a prerequisite to baptism (Mark 16:16), this is clear from the case of the eunuch, desiring baptism, to whom Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest;" by which it seems, that if he did not believe, he had no right to the ordinance; but if he did, he had; upon which he professed his faith in Christ; and upon that profession was baptized (Acts 8:36), and the various instances of baptism recorded in scripture, confirm the same; as of the inhabitants of Samaria, who, upon believing in Christ, "were baptized, both men and women;" so the Corinthians, "hearing" the word preached by the apostle Paul, "believed" in Christ, whom he preached, "and were baptized," upon their faith in him (Acts 8:12; 18:8), and without faith it is impossible to please God in any ordinance or part of worship; and what is not of faith is sin; and without it no one can see to the end of the ordinance of baptism, as before observed.

4. Such who are taught and made disciples by teaching, are the proper subjects of baptism, agreeable both to the practice of Christ and his commission; it is said, "that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," (John 4:1) he first made them disciples, and then baptized them, that is, ordered his apostles to baptize them; and so runs his commission to them, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them," that is, those that are taught, and so made disciples; and they are the disciples of Christ, who have learnt to know him, and are taught to deny sinful, righteous, and civil self, for his sake, and to take up the cross and follow him.

5. Such who have received the Spirit of God, as a Spirit of illumination and conviction, of sanctification and faith, as the persons before described may well be thought to have, should be admitted to baptism (Acts 10:47; see Gal. 3:2), from all which it appears, that such who are ignorant of divine things, impenitent,

unbelievers, not disciples and followers of Christ, and who are destitute of the Spirit, are not proper subjects of baptism, let their pretences to birthright be what they may; and so not the infants of any, be they born of whom they may; and to whom the above characters, descriptive of the subjects of baptism, do by no means belong: with respect to their first birth, though born of believing parents, they are carnal and corrupt, and children of wrath, as others; "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" and they must be born again, or they cannot see, possess, and enjoy the kingdom of God, or have a right to be admitted into the church of God now, nor will they enter into the kingdom of God, into heaven hereafter, unless born again; their first and carnal birth neither entitles them to the kingdom of God on earth, nor to the kingdom of God in heaven, be it taken in either sense; for the baptism of such there is neither precept nor precedent in the word of God.

Ist, there is no precept for it; not the words of Christ in Matthew 19:14 "But Jesus said, Suffer little children," &c. For,

1. Let the words be said to or of whom they may, they are not in the form of a precept, but of a permission or grant, and signify not what was enjoined as necessary, but what was allowed of, or which might be; "Suffer little children," &c.

2. These children do not appear to be newborn babes. The words used by the evangelists, neither paidia nor brephe, do not always signify such; but are sometimes used of such who are capable of going alone, and of being instructed, and of understanding the scriptures, and even of one of twelve years of age (Matthew 18:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; Mark 5:39, 42). Nor is it probable that children just born should be had abroad; besides, these were such as Christ called unto him (Luke 18:16) and were capable of coming to him of themselves, as is supposed in the words themselves; nor is their being brought unto him, nor his taking them in his arms, any objection to this, since the same are said of such who could walk of themselves (Matthew 12:22, 17:16; Mark 9:36).

3. It cannot be said whose children these were; whether they belonged to those who brought them, or to others; and whether the children of believers, and of baptized persons, or not; and if of unbelievers, and of unbaptized persons, the Paedobaptists themselves

will not allow such children to be baptized.

4. It is certain they were not brought to Christ to be baptized by him, but for other purposes; the evangelist Matthew, Matthew 19:13, 15 says, they were brought to him that he "should put his hands upon them, and pray," as he did, that is, for a blessing on them; as it was usual with the Jews to do (Gen. 48:14, 15). The evangelists Mark and Luke say, they were brought to him, "that he would touch them," as he did when he healed persons of diseases; and probably these children were diseased, and were brought to him to be cured; however, they were not brought to be baptized by Christ; for Christ baptized none at all, adult or infants; had they that brought them this in view, they would have brought them to the disciples of Christ, and not to Christ, whom they might have seen administering the ordinance of baptism, but not Christ: however, it is certain they were not baptized by Christ, since he never baptized any.

5. This passage rather concludes against Paedobaptism than for it, and shows that this practice had not obtained among the Jews, and had not been used by John, by Christ, and his disciples; for then the apostles would scarcely have forbid the bringing of these children, since they might readily suppose they were brought to be baptized; but knowing of no such usage in the nation, whether of them that did or did not believe in Christ, they forbid them; and Christ's silence about this matter, when he had such an opportunity of speaking of it to his disciples, and enjoining it, had it been his will, does not look very favourably upon this practice.

6. The reason given for suffering little children to come to Christ, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven," is to be understood in a figurative and metaphorical sense; of such who are comparable to children for modesty, meekness, and humility, and for freedom from rancour, malice, ambition, and pride (see Matthew 18:2), and which sense is given into by Origen, [128] among the ancients, and by Calvin and Bruggensis, among the moderns.

Nor does the commission in Matthew 28:19 contain in it any precept for infant baptism; "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. For,

1. The baptism of all nations is not here commanded; but the baptism only of such who are taught; for the antecedent to the relative "them,"

cannot be “all nations;” since the words *panta ta ethne*, “all nations,” are of the neuter gender; whereas *autous*, “them,” is of the masculine; but *matheutas*, disciples, is supposed and understood in the word *matheteusate*, “teach,” or “make disciples;” now the command is, that such who are first taught or made disciples by teaching under the ministry of the word, by the Spirit of God succeeding it, should be baptized.

2. If infants, as a part of all nations, and because they are such, are to be baptized, then the infants of Heathens, Turks, and Jews, ought to be baptized, since they are a part, and a large part, of all nations; as well as the children of Christians, or believers, which are but a small part; yea, every individual person in the world ought to be baptized, all adult persons, heathens as well as Christians; even the most profligate and abandoned of mankind, since they are a part of all nations.

3. Disciples of Christ, and such who have learned to know Christ, and the way of salvation by him, and to know themselves, and their need of him, are characters that cannot agree with infants; and if disciples and learners are the same, as is said, they must be learners or they cannot be disciples; and they cannot be learners of Christ unless they have learnt something of him; and according to this notion of disciples and learners, they ought to learn something of him before they are baptized in his name; but what can an infant be taught to learn of Christ? to prove infants disciples that text is usually brought (Acts 15:10), which falls greatly short of proving it; for infants are not designed in that place, nor included in the character; for though the Judaizing teachers would have had the Gentiles, and their infants too, circumcised; yet it was not circumcision, the thing itself, which is meant by the intolerable yoke; for that was what the Jewish fathers, and their children, were able to bear, and had bore in ages past; but it was the doctrine of the necessity of that, and other rites of Moses, to salvation; and obliged to the keeping of the whole law, and was in tolerable; and which doctrine could not be imposed upon infants, but upon adult persons only.

4. These two acts, teaching, or making disciples, and baptizing, are not to be confounded, but are two distinct acts, and the one is previous and absolutely necessary to the other: Men must first be made

disciples, and then baptized; so Jerom [129] long ago understood the commission; on which he observes, First they teach all nations, then dip those that are taught in water; for it cannot be that the body should receive the sacrament of baptism, unless the soul has before received the truth of faith.” And so says Athanasius, [130] “Wherefore the Saviour does not simply command to baptize; but first says, teach, and then baptize thus, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;” that faith might come of teaching, and baptism be perfected.”

2dly. There is no precedent for the baptism of infants in the word of God. Among the vast numbers who flocked to John’s baptism from all parts, we read of no infants that were brought with them for that purpose, or that were baptized by him. And though more were baptized by Christ than by John, that is, the apostles of Christ, at his order, yet no mention of any infant baptized by them; and though three thousand persons were baptized at once, yet not an infant among them: and in all the accounts of baptism in the Acts of the Apostles in different parts of the world, not a single instance of infant baptism is given. There is, indeed, mention made of households, or families, baptized; and which the “*paedobaptists*” endeavour to avail themselves of; but they ought to be sure there were infants in these families, and that they were baptized, or else they must baptize them on a very precarious foundation; since there are families who have no infants in them, and how can they be sure there were any in these the scriptures speak of? and it lies upon them to prove there were infants in them, and that these infants were baptized; or the allegation of these instances is to no purpose. We are able to prove there are many things in the account of these families, which are inconsistent with infants, and which make it at least probable there were none in them, and which also make it certain that those who were baptized were adult persons and believers in Christ. There are but three families, if so many, who are usually instanced in: the first is that of Lydia and her household (Acts 16:14, 15), but in what state of life she was is not certain, whether single or married, whether maid widow or wife; and if married, whether she then had any children, or ever had any; and if she had, and they living, whether they were infants or adult; and if infants, it does not seem probable that

she should bring them along with her from her native place, Thyatira to Philippi, where she seems to have been upon business, and so had hired a house during her stay there; wherefore her household seems to have consisted of menial servants she brought along with her, to assist her in her business: and certain it is, that those the apostles found in her house, when they entered into it, after they came out of prison, were such as are called “brethren,” and were capable of being “comforted” by them; which supposes them to have been in some distress and trouble, and needed comfort. The second instance is of the jailor and his household, which consisted of adult persons, and of such only; for the apostles spoke the word of the Lord to “all” that were in his house, which they were capable of hearing, and it seems of understanding; for not only he “rejoiced” at the good news of salvation by Christ, but “all” in his house hearing it, rejoiced likewise; which joy of theirs was the joy of faith; for he and they were believers in God, Father, Son, and Spirit; for it is expressly said, that he “rejoiced, believing in God with all his house;” so that they were not only hearers of the word, but rejoiced at it, and believed in it, and in God the Saviour, revealed in it to them (Acts 16:32-34), all which shows them to be adult persons, and not infants. The third instance, if distinct from the household of the jailor, which some take to be the same, is that of Stephanus; but be it a different one, it is certain it consisted of adult persons, believers in Christ, and very useful in the service of religion; they were the first fruits of Achaia, the first converts in those parts, and who “addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,” (1 Cor. 16:15) which, whether understood of the ministry of the word to the saints, which they gave themselves up unto; or of the ministration of their substance to the poor, which they cheerfully communicated, they must be adult persons, and not infants. There being then neither precept nor precedent in the word of God for infant baptism, it may be justly condemned as unscriptural and unwarrantable.

3dly. nor is infant baptism to be concluded from any things or passages recorded either in the Old or in the New Testament. Baptism being an ordinance peculiar to the New Testament, it cannot be expected there should be any directions about the observance of it in the Old Testament; and whatever may be

gathered relative to it, from typical and figurative baptisms, under the former dispensation, there is nothing from thence in favour of infant baptism, and to countenance that; and yet we are often referred thereunto for the original and foundation of it, but to no purpose.

1. It is not fact, as has been asserted, [131] that the “infants of believers” have, with their parents, been taken into covenant with God in the former ages of the church, if by it is meant the covenant of grace; the first covenant made with man, was that of works, made with Adam, and which indeed included all his posterity, to whom he stood as a federal head, as no one ever since did to his natural offspring; in whom they all sinned, were condemned, and died; which surely cannot be pleaded in favour of the infants of believers! after the fall, the covenant of grace, and the way of life and salvation by Christ, were revealed to Adam and Eve, personally, as interested therein; but not to their natural seed and posterity, and as interested therein; for then all mankind must be taken into the covenant of grace, and so nothing peculiar to the infants of believers; of which not the least syllable is mentioned throughout the whole age of the church, reaching from Adam to Noah. The next covenant we read of, is that made with Noah, which was not made with him and his immediate offspring only; nor were any taken into it as infants of believers, nor had they any sacrament or rite as a token of it, and of God being their God in a peculiar relation. Surely this will not be said of Ham, one of the immediate sons of Noah. That covenant was made with Noah, and with all mankind to the end of the world, and even with every living creature, the beasts of the field, promising security from an universal deluge, as long as the world should stand; and so had nothing in it peculiar to the infants of believers. The next covenant is that made with Abraham and his seed, on which great stress is laid (Gen. 17:10-14), and this is said [132] to be “the grand turning point on which the issue of the controversy very much depends; and that if Abraham’s covenant, which included his infant children, and gave them a right to circumcision, was not the covenant of grace; then it is confessed, that the “main ground” is taken away, on which “the right of infants to baptism” is asserted; and consequently the principal arguments in support of the doctrine are

overturned.” Now that this covenant was not the pure covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works, but rather a covenant of works, will soon be proved; and if so, then the main ground of infant’s baptism is taken away, and its principal arguments in support of it overturned: and that it is not the covenant of grace is clear,

1. From its being never so called, nor by any name which shows it to be such; but “the covenant of circumcision” (Acts 7:8). Now nothing is more opposite to one another than circumcision and grace; circumcision is a work of the law, which they that sought to be justified by fell from grace (Gal. 5:2-4). Nor can this covenant be the same we are now under, which is a new covenant, or a new administration of the covenant of grace, since it is abolished, and no more in being and force.

2. It appears to be a covenant of works, and not of grace; since it was to be kept by men, under a severe penalty. Abraham was to keep it, and his seed after him; something was to be done by them, their flesh to be circumcised, and a penalty was annexed, in case of disobedience or neglect; such a soul was to be cut off from his people: all which shows it to be, not a covenant of grace, but of works.

3. It is plain, it was a covenant that might be broken; of the uncircumcised it is said, “He hath broken my covenant,” (Gen. 17:14) whereas the covenant of grace cannot be broken; God will not break it, and men cannot; it is ordered in all things, and sure, and is more immovable than hills and mountains (Ps. 89:34).

4. It is certain it had things in it of a civil and temporal nature; as a multiplication of Abraham’s natural seed, and a race of kings from him; a promise of his being the Father of many nations, and a possession of the land of Canaan by his seed: things that can have no place in the pure covenant of grace and have nothing to do with that, any more than the change of his name from Abram to Abraham.

5. There were some persons included in it, who cannot be thought to belong to the covenant of grace; as Ishmael, not in the same covenant with Isaac, and a profane Esau: and on the other hand, there were some who were living when this covenant of circumcision was made, and yet were left out of it; who nevertheless, undoubtedly, were in the covenant

of grace; as Shem, Arphaxad, Melchizedek, Lot, and others; wherefore this can never be the pure covenant of grace.

6. Nor is this covenant the same with what is referred to in Galatians 3:17 said to be “confirmed of God in Christ,” which could not be disannulled by the law four hundred and thirty years after; the distance of time between them does not agree, but falls short of the apostle’s date twenty four years; and therefore must not refer to the covenant of circumcision, but to some other covenant and time of making it; even to an exhibition and manifestation of the covenant of grace to Abraham, about the time of his call out of Chaldea (Gen. 12:3).

7. The covenant of grace was made with Christ, as the federal head of the elect in him, and that from everlasting, and who is the only head of that covenant, and of the covenant ones: if the covenant of grace was made with Abraham, as the head of his natural and spiritual seed, Jews and Gentiles; there must be two heads of the covenant of grace, contrary to the nature of such a covenant, and the whole current of scripture; yea, the covenant of grace, as it concerns the spiritual seed of Abraham, and spiritual blessings for them; it, and the promises of it, were made to Christ (Gal. 3:16). No mere man is capable of covenanting with God; the covenant of grace is not made with any single man; and much less with him on the behalf of others: whenever we read of it as made with a particular person or persons, it is always to be understood of the manifestation and application of it, and of its blessings and promises to them.

8. Allowing Abraham’s covenant to be a peculiar one, and of a mixed kind, containing promises of temporal things to him, and his natural seed, and of spiritual things to his spiritual seed; or rather, that there was at the same time when the covenant of circumcision was given to Abraham and his natural seed, a fresh manifestation of the covenant of grace made with him and his spiritual seed in Christ. That the temporal blessings of it belonged to his natural seed, is no question; but that the spiritual blessings belong to all Abraham’s seed, after the flesh, and to all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, must be denied: if the covenant of grace was made with all Abraham’s seed according to the flesh, then it was made with his more immediate offspring, with a

mocking, persecuting Ishmael, and with a profane Esau, and with all his remote posterity; with them who believed not, and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; with the ten tribes who revolted from the pure worship of God; with the Jews in Isaiah’s time, a seed of evildoers, whose rulers are called the rulers of Sodom, and the people the people of Gomorrah; with the scribes and Pharisees, that wicked and adulterous generation in the times of Christ: but what serious, thoughtful man, who knows anything of the covenant of grace, can admit of this? (see Rom. 9:6, 7). It is only a remnant, according to the election of grace, who are in this covenant; and if all the natural seed of Abraham are not in this covenant, it can scarcely be thought that all the natural seed of believing Gentiles are; it is only some of the one and some of the other, who are in the covenant of grace; and this cannot be known until they believe, when they appear to be Abraham’s spiritual seed; and it must be right to put off their claim to any supposed privilege arising from covenant interest, until it is plain they have one; if all the natural seed of Abraham, as such, and all the natural seed of believing Gentiles, as such, are in the covenant of grace; since all they that are in it, and none but they are in it, who are the chosen of God, the redeemed of the Lamb, and will be called by grace, and sanctified, and persevere in faith and holiness, and be eternally glorified; then the natural seed of Abraham, and of believing Gentiles, must be all chosen to grace and glory, and be redeemed by the blood of Christ from sin, law, hell, and death; they must all have new hearts and spirits given them, and the fear of God put into their hearts; must be effectually called, their sins forgiven them, their persons justified by the righteousness of Christ, and they persevere in grace to the end, and be for ever glorified (see Jer. 31:33, 34, 32:40; Ezek. 36:25-27; Rom. 8:30). But who will venture to assert all this of the one, or of the other? And after all,

9. If their covenant interest could be ascertained, that gives no right to an ordinance, without a positive order and direction from God. It gave no right to circumcision formerly; for on the one hand there were persons living when that ordinance was appointed, who had an undoubted interest in the covenant of grace; as Shem, Arphaxad, Lot, and others, on whom circumcision was not enjoined, and they had no right

to use it: on the other hand, there have been many of whom it cannot be said they were in the covenant of grace, and yet were obliged to it. And so covenant interest gives no right to baptism; could it be proved, as it cannot, that all the infant seed of believers, as such, are in the covenant of grace, it would give them no right to baptism, without a command for it; the reason is, because a person may be in covenant, and as yet not have the prerequisite to an ordinance, even faith in Christ, and a profession of it, which are necessary both to baptism and the Lord’s Supper; and if covenant interest gives a right to the one, it would to the other.

9. Notwithstanding all this attention made about Abraham’s covenant (Gen. 17:1-14), it was not made with him and his infant seed; but with him and his adult offspring; it was they in all after ages to the coming of Christ, whether believers or unbelievers, who were enjoined to circumcise their infant seed, and not all of them, only their males: it was not made with Abraham’s infant seed, who could not circumcise themselves, but their parents were by this covenant obliged to circumcise them; yea, others, who were not Abraham’s natural seed, were obliged to it; “He that is eight days old shalt be circumcised among you, which is NOT OF THY SEED” (Gen. 17:12). Which leads on to observe,

2. That nothing can be concluded from the circumcision of Jewish infants, to the baptism of the infants of believing Gentiles: had there been a like command for the baptism of the infants of believing Gentiles, under the New Testament, as there was for the circumcision of Jewish infants under the Old, the thing would not have admitted of any dispute; but nothing of this kind appears. For,

1. It is not clear that even Jewish infants were admitted into covenant by the rite of circumcision; from whence it is pleaded, that the infants of believers are admitted into it by baptism; for Abraham’s female seed were taken into the covenant made with him, as well as his male seed, but not by any “visible rite” or ceremony; nor were his male seed admitted by any such rite; not by circumcision, for they were not to be circumcised until the eighth day; to have circumcised them sooner would have been criminal; and that they were in covenant from their birth, I presume, will not be denied; as it was a national covenant, so early they

were in it; the Israelites, with their infants at Horeb, had not been circumcised; nor were they when they entered into covenant with the Lord their God (Deut. 29:10-15).

2. Circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace under the former dispensation; nor is baptism a seal of it under the present: had circumcision been a seal of it, the covenant of grace must have been without one from Adam to Abraham: it is called a sign or token, but not a seal; it was a sign or mark in the flesh of Abraham's natural seed, a typical sign of the pollution of human nature, and of the inward circumcision of the heart; but no seal, confirming any spiritual blessing of the covenant of grace to those who had this mark or sign; it is indeed called, "a seal of the righteousness of faith," (Rom. 4:11) but not a seal to Abraham's natural seed of their interest in that righteousness, but only to Abraham himself; it was a seal to him, a confirming sign, assuring him, that the righteousness of faith, which he had before he was circumcised, should come upon the uncircumcised believing Gentiles; and therefore it was continued on his natural offspring, until that righteousness was preached unto, received by, and imputed to believing Gentiles.

3. Nor did baptism succeed circumcision; there is no agreement between the one and the other; not in the subjects, to whom they were administered; the use of the one and the other is not the same; and the manner of administering them different; baptism being administered to Jews and Gentiles, to male and female, and to adult persons only: not so circumcision; the use of circumcision was to distinguish the natural seed of Abraham from others; baptism is the badge of the spiritual seed of Christ, and the answer of a good conscience towards God; and represents the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; the one is by blood, the other by water; and ordinances so much differing in their subjects, use, and administration; the one can never be thought to come in the room and place of the other. Besides, baptism was in use and force before circumcision was abolished, which was not until the death of Christ; whereas, the doctrine of baptism was preached, and the ordinance itself administered, some years before that; now that which was in force before another is out of date, can never with any propriety be said to succeed, or come in the room of that other.

Besides, if this was the case, as circumcision gave a right to the passover, so would baptism to the Lord's Supper; which yet is not admitted. Now as there is nothing to be gathered out of the Old Testament to countenance infant baptism, so neither are there any passages in the New, which can be supported in favour of it.

1. Not the text in Acts 2:39, "The promise is unto you and to your children," &c. It is pretended, that this refers to the covenant made with Abraham, and to a covenant promise made to him, giving his infant children a right to the ordinance of circumcision; and is urged as a reason with the Jews, why they and their children ought to be baptized; and with the Gentiles, why they and theirs should be also, when called into a church state. But,

1. There is not the least mention made in the text of Abraham's covenant, or of any promise made to him, giving his infant seed a right to circumcision, and still less to baptism; nor is there the least syllable of infant baptism, nor any hint of it, from whence it can be concluded; nor by "children" are infants designed, but the posterity of the Jews, who are frequently so called in scripture, though grown up; and unless it be so understood in many places, strange interpretations must be given of them; wherefore the argument from hence for "paedobaptism" is given up by some learned men, as Dr. Hammond and others, as inconclusive.

2. The promise here, be it what it may, is not observed as giving a right or claim to any ordinance; but as an encouraging motive to persons in distress, under a sense of sin, to repent of it, and declare their repentance, and yield a voluntary subjection to the ordinance of baptism; when they might hope that remission of sins would be applied to them, and they should receive a larger measure of the grace of the Spirit; wherefore repentance and baptism are urged in order to the enjoyment of the promise; and consequently must be understood of adult persons, who only are capable of repentance, and of a voluntary subjection to baptism.

3. The promise is no other than the promise of life and salvation by Christ, and of remission of sins by his blood, and of an increase of grace from his Spirit; and whereas the persons addressed had imprecated the guilt of the blood of Christ, they had shed upon their posterity, as well as on themselves,

which distressed them; they are told, for their relief, that the same promise would be made good to their posterity also, provided they did as they were directed to do; and even to all the Jews afar off, in distant countries and future ages, who should look on Christ and mourn, repent and believe, and be baptized: and seeing the Gentiles are sometimes described as those "afar off," the promise may be thought to reach to them who should be called by grace, repent, believe, and be baptized also; but no mention is made of their children; and had they been mentioned, the limiting clause, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call," plainly points at and describes the persons intended, whether Jews or Gentiles, effectually called by grace, who are encouraged by the motive in the promise to profess repentance, and submit to baptism; which can only be understood of adult persons, and not of infants.

2. Nor Romans 11:16, &c. "If the first fruits be holy," &c. For,

1. By the first fruits, and lump, and by the root and branches, are not meant Abraham and his posterity, or natural seed, as such; but the first among the Jews who believed in Christ, and laid the first foundation of a gospel church state, and were first incorporated into it; Who being holy, were a pledge of the future conversion and holiness of that people in the latter day.

2. Nor by the good olive tree, after mentioned, is meant the Jewish church state; which was abolished by Christ, with all the peculiar ordinances of it; and the believing Gentiles were never ingrafted into it; the axe has been laid to the root of that old Jewish stock, and it is entirely cut down, and no engrafture is made upon it. But,

3. By it is meant the gospel church state, in its first foundation, consisting of Jews that believed, out of which were left the Jews who believed not in Christ, and who are the branches broken off; into which church state the Gentiles were received and engrafted; which engrafture, or coalition, was first made at Antioch, when and hereafter the Gentiles partook of the root and fatness of the olive tree, enjoyed the same privileges, communicated in the same ordinances, and were satisfied with the goodness and fatness of the house of God; and this gospel church may be truly called, by the converted Jews in the latter day, their

"own olive tree," into which they will be engrafted; since the first gospel church was set up at Jerusalem, and gathered out of the Jews; and so in other places, the first gospel churches consisted of Jews, the first fruits of those converted ones. From the whole it appears, that there is not the least syllable about baptism, much less of infant baptism, in the passage; nor can anything be concluded from hence in favour of it.

3. Nor from 1 Corinthians 7:14 "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy;" which is by some understood of a federal holiness, giving a claim to covenant privileges, and so to baptism. But,

1. It should be told what these covenant privileges are; since, as we have seen, covenant interest gives no right to any ordinance, without divine direction; nor is baptism a seal of the covenant: it should be told what this covenant holiness is, whether imaginary or real; by some it is called "reputed," and is distinguished from internal holiness, which is rejected from being the sense of the text; but such holiness can never qualify persons for a New Testament ordinance; nor as the covenant of grace any such holiness belonging to it; that provides, by way of promise, real holiness, signified by putting the laws of God in the heart, by giving new hearts and new spirits, and by cleansing from all impurity, and designs real, internal holiness, shown in an holy conversation; and such who appear to have that, have an undoubted right to the ordinance of baptism, since they have received the Spirit as a Spirit of sanctification (Acts 10:47). But this cannot be meant in the text, seeing,

2. It is such a holiness as heathens may have; unbelieving husbands and wives are said to have it, in virtue of their relation to believing wives and husbands, and which is prior to the holiness of their children, and on which theirs depends; but surely such will not be allowed to have federal holiness, and yet it must be of the same kind with their children; if the holiness of the children is a federal holiness, that of the unbelieving parent must be so too, from whence is the holiness of the children.

3. If children, by virtue of this holiness, have claim to baptism, then much more their unbelieving parents, since they are sanctified before them, by their

believing yoke fellows, and are as near to them as their children; and if the holiness of the one gives a right to baptism, why not the holiness of the other? and yet the one are baptized, and the other not, though sanctified, and whose holiness is the more near; for the holiness spoken of, be it what it may, is derived from both parents, believing and unbelieving; yea, the holiness of the children depends upon the sanctification of the unbelieving parent; for if the unbeliever is not sanctified, the children are unclean, and not holy. But,

4. These words are to be understood of matrimonial holiness, even of the very act of marriage, which, in the language of the Jews, is frequently expressed by being sanctified; the word *qds* to “sanctify,” is used in innumerable places in the Jewish writings, [133] to “espouse;” and in the same sense the apostle uses the word *agiazō* here, and the words may be rendered, “the unbelieving husband is espoused,” or married, “to the wife;” or rather, “has been espoused,” for it relates to the act of marriage past, as valid; “and the unbelieving wife has been espoused to the husband;” the preposition *en*, translated “by,” should be rendered “to,” as it is in the very next verse; “God hath called us *en eirene*, to peace;” the apostle’s inference from it is, “else were your children unclean,” illegitimate, if their parents were not lawfully espoused and married to each other; “but now are they holy,” a holy and legitimate seed, as in *Ezra 9:2* (see *Mal. 2:15*) and no other sense can be put upon the words, than of a legitimate marriage and offspring; nothing else will suit with the case proposed to the apostle, and with his answer to it, and reasoning about it; and which sense has been allowed by many learned interpreters, ancient and modern; as Jerome, Ambrose, Erasmus, Camerarius, Musculus, and others.

There are some objections made to the practice of adult baptism, which are of little force, and to which an answer may easily be returned.

1. That though it may be allowed that adult persons, such as repent and believe, are the subjects of baptism, yet it is nowhere said, that they are the only ones: but if no others can be named as baptized, and the descriptive characters given in scripture of baptized persons are such as can “only” agree with adult, and not with infants; then it may be reasonably concluded, that the former “only” are the proper subjects of baptism.

2. It is objected to our practice of baptizing the adult offspring of Christians, that no scriptural instance of such a practice can be given; and it is demanded of us to give an instance agreeable to our practice; since the first persons baptized were such as were converted either from Judaism or from heathenism, and about the baptism of such adult, they say, there is no controversy. But our practice is not at all concerned with the parents of the persons baptized by us, whether they be Christians, Jews, Turks, or Pagans; but with the persons themselves, whether they are believers in Christ or not; if they are the adult offspring of Christians, yet unbaptized, it is no objection to us: and if they are not, it is no bar in the way of admitting them to baptism, if they themselves are believers; many, and it may be the greater part of such baptized by us are the adult offspring of those who, without breach of charity, cannot be considered as Christians. As for the first persons that were baptized, they were neither proselytes from Judaism nor from Heathenism; but the offspring of Christians, of such that believed in the Messiah; the saints before the coming of Christ, and at his coming, were as good Christians as any that have lived since; so that those good men who lived before Abraham, as far back as to the first man, and those that lived after him, even to the coming of Christ, Eusebius [134] observes, that if any should affirm them to be Christians, though not in name, yet in reality, he would not say amiss. Judaism, at the time of Christ’s coming, was the same with Christianity, and not in opposition to it; so that there was no such thing as conversion from Judaism to Christianity. Zachariah and Elizabeth, whose offspring John the first baptizer was, and Mary, the mother of our Lord, who was baptized by John, when adult, were as good Christians, and as strong believers in Jesus, as the Messiah, as soon as born, and even when in the womb of the Virgin, as have been since; and these surely must be allowed to be the adult offspring of Christians; such were the apostles of Christ, and the first followers of him, who were the adult offspring of such who believed in the Messiah, and embraced him upon the first notice of him, and cannot be said to be converted from Judaism to Christianity; Judaism not existing until the opposition to Jesus being the Messiah became general and national; after that, indeed, those of the Jewish nation

who believed in Christ, may be said to be proselytes from Judaism to Christianity, as the apostle Paul and others: and so converts made by the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles, were proselytes from heathenism to Christianity; but then it is unreasonable to demand of us instances of the adult offspring of such being baptized, and added to the churches; since the scripture history of the first churches contained in the Acts of the Apostles, only gives an account of the first planting of these churches, and of the baptism of those of which they first consisted; but not of the additions of members to them in later times; wherefore to give instances of those who were born of them, and brought up by them, as baptized in adult years, cannot reasonably be required of us: but on the other hand, if infant children were admitted to baptism in these times, upon the faith and baptism of their parents, and their becoming Christians; it is strange, exceeding strange, that among the many thousands baptized in Jerusalem, Samaria, Corinth, and other places, that there should be no one instance of any of them bringing their children with them to be baptized, and claiming the privilege of baptism for them upon their own faith; nor of their doing this in any short time after. This is a case that required no length of time, and yet not a single instance can be produced.

3. It is objected, that no time can be assigned when infants were cast out of covenant, or cut off from the seal of it. If by the covenant is meant the covenant of grace, it should be first proved that they are in it, as the natural seed of believers, which cannot be done; and when that is, it is time enough to talk of their being cast out, when and how. If by it is meant Abraham’s covenant, the covenant of circumcision, the answer is the cutting off was when circumcision ceased to be an ordinance of God, which was at the death of Christ: if by it is meant the national covenant of the Jews, the ejection of Jewish parents, with their children, was when God wrote a “Loammi” upon that people, as a body politic and ecclesiastic; when he broke his covenant with them, signified by breaking his two staves, beauty and bands.

4. A clamorous outcry is made against us, as abridging the privileges of infants, by denying baptism to them; making them to be lesser under the gospel dispensation than under the law, and the gospel dispensation less glorious. But as to the gospel

dispensation, it is the more glorious for infants being left out of its church state; that is, for its being not national and carnal, as before; but congregational and spiritual; consisting not of infants, without understanding, but of rational and spiritual men, believers in Christ; and these not of a single country, as Judea, but in all parts of the world: and as for infants, their privileges now are many and better, who are eased from the painful rite of circumcision; it is a rich mercy, and a glorious privilege of the gospel, that the believing Jews and their children are delivered from it; and that the Gentiles and theirs are not obliged to it; which would have bound them over to fulfill the whole law: to which may be added, that being born of Christian parents, and having a Christian education, and of having opportunities of hearing the gospel, as they grow up; and that not in one country only, but in many; are greater privileges than the Jewish children had under the former dispensation.

5. It is objected, that there are no more express commands in scripture for keeping the first day of the week as a sabbath; nor for womens partaking of the Lord’s Supper, and other things, than for the baptism of infants. As for the first, though there is no express precept for the observance of it, yet there are precedents of its being observed for religious services (*Acts 20:7*; *1 Cor. 16:1, 2*), and though we have no example of infant baptism, yet if there were scriptural precedents of it, we should think ourselves obliged to follow them. As for womens’ right to partake of the Lord’s Supper, we have sufficient proof of it; since these were baptized as well as men; and having a right to one ordinance, had to another, and were members of the first church, communicated with it, and women, as well as men, were added to it (*Acts 8:12, 1:14, 5:1, 14*) we have a precept for it: “Let a man,” *anthropos*, a word of the common gender, and signifies both man and woman, “examine him or herself, and so let him or her eat,” (*1 Cor. 11:29*; see *Gal. 3:28*); and we have also examples of it in Mary the mother of our Lord, and other women, who, with the disciples, constituted the gospel church at Jerusalem; and as they continued with one accord in the apostles’ doctrine and in prayer, so in fellowship and in breaking of bread; let the same proof be given of the baptism of infants, and it will be admitted.

6. Antiquity is urged in favour of infant baptism;

it is pretended that this is a tradition of the church received from the apostles; though of this no other proof is given, but the testimony of Origen, none before that; and this is taken, not from any of his genuine Greek writings, only from some Latin translations, confessedly interpolated, and so corrupted, that it is owned, one is at a loss to find Origen in Origen. No mention is made of this practice in the first two centuries, no instance given of it until the third, when Tertullian is the first who spoke of it, and at the same time spoke against it. [135] And could it be carried up higher, it would be of no force, unless it could be proved from the sacred scriptures, to which only we appeal, and by which the thing in debate is to be judged and determined. We know that innovations and corruptions very early obtained, and even in the times of the apostles; and what is pretended to be near those times, is the more to be suspected as the traditions of the false apostles; [136] the antiquity of a custom is no proof of the truth and genuineness of it; [137] “The customs the people are vain,” (Jer. 10:3). I proceed to consider,

Fourthly, the way and manner of baptizing; and to prove, that it is by immersion, plunging the body in water, and covering it with it. Custom, and the common use of writing in this controversy, have so far prevailed, that for the most part immersion is usually called the “mode” of baptism; whereas it is properly baptism itself; to say that immersion or dipping is the mode of baptism, is the same thing as to say, that dipping is the mode of dipping; for as Sir John Floyer [138] observes “Immersion is no circumstance, but “the very act of baptism,” used by our Saviour and his disciples, in the institution of baptism.” And Calvin [139] expressly says, “The word “baptizing” signifies to plunge; and it is certain, that the rite of plunging was used by the ancient churches.” And as for sprinkling, that cannot, with any propriety, be called a mode of baptism; it would be just such, good sense as to say, sprinkling is the mode of dipping, since baptism and dipping are the same; hence the learned Selden, [140] who in the former part of his life, might have seen infants dipped in fonts, but lived to see immersion much disused, had reason to say, “In England, of late years, I ever thought the parson “baptized his own fingers” rather than the child,” because he dipped the one, and sprinkled the other.

That baptism is immersion, or the dipping of a person in water, and covering him with it is to be proved,

1. From the proper and primary signification of the word baptizo, “baptize,” which in its first and primary sense, signifies to “dip or plunge into;” and so it is rendered by our best lexicographers, “mergo,” “immergo,” “dip or plunge into.” And in a secondary and consequential sense, “abluo, lavo,” “wash,” because what is dipped is washed, there being no proper washing but by dipping; but never “perfuncto or aspergo,” “pour or sprinkle;” so the lexicon published by Constantine, Budaeus, &c. and those of Hadrian Junius, Plantinus, Scapula, Stephens, Schrevelius, Stockius, and others; besides a great number of critics; as Beza, Casanbon, Witsius, &c. which might be produced. By whose united testimonies the thing is out of question. Had our translators, instead of adopting the Greek word baptize in all places where the ordinance of baptism is made mention of, truly translated it, and not have left it untranslated, as they have, the controversy about the manner of baptizing would have been at an end, or rather have been prevented; had they used the word dip, instead of baptize, as they should have done, there would have been no room for a question about it.

2. That baptism was performed by immersion, appears by the places chosen for the administration of it; as the river Jordan by John, where he baptized many, and where our Lord himself was baptized by him (Matthew 3:6, 13, 16), but why should he choose the river to baptize in, and baptize in it, if he did not administer the ordinance by immersion? had it been done any other way, there was no occasion for any confluence of water, much less a river; [141] a bason of water would have sufficed. John also, it is said, “was baptizing in Aenon, near Salim, because there was much water,” (John 3:23) which was convenient for baptism, for which this reason is given; and not for convenience for drink for men and their cattle, which is not expressed nor implied; from whence we may gather, as Calvin on the text does, “That baptism was performed by John and Christ, by plunging the whole body under water;” and so Piscator, Aretius, Grotius, and others on the same passage.

3. That this was the way in which it was anciently administered, is clear from various instances of baptism recorded in scripture, and the circumstances

attending them; as that of our Lord, of whom it is said, “That when he was baptized he went up straightway out of the water,” which supposes he had been in it; and so Piscator infers from his going up out of it, that therefore he went down into it, and was baptized in the river itself; of which going down there would have been no need, had the ordinance been administered to him in another way, as by sprinkling or pouring a little water on his head, he and John standing in the midst of the river, as the painter and engraver ridiculously describe it: and certain it is, he was then baptized in Jordan; the evangelist Mark says “into Jordan,” (Mark 1:9) not at the banks of Jordan, but into the waters of it; for which reason he went into it, and when baptized, “came up out” of it, not “from” it, but “out” of it; apo and ex, signifying the same, as in Luke 4:35, 41. Song the preposition is used in the Septuagint version of Psalm 40:2 ex and apo are “aequipollent,” as several lexicographers from Xenophon observe. The baptism of the eunuch is another instance of baptism by immersion; when he and Philip were “come unto a certain water,” to the water side, which destroys a little piece of criticism, as if their going into the water, after expressed, was no other than going to the brink of the water, to the water side, whereas they were come to that before; and baptism being agreed upon, “they went down both into the water,” both Philip and the eunuch, “and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water,” &c. Now we do not reason merely from the circumstances of “going down into, and coming up out of the water;” we know that persons may go down into water, and come up out of it, and never be immersed in it; but when it is expressly said, upon these persons going down into the water, that Philip baptized, or dipped, the eunuch; and when this was done, that both came up out of it, these circumstances strongly corroborate, without the explanation of the word “baptized,” that it was performed by immersion; for these circumstances cannot agree with any other way of administering it but that; for a man can hardly be thought to be in his senses who can imagine that Philip went down with the eunuch into the water to sprinkle or pour a little water on him, and then gravely come out of it; hence, as the above learned commentator, Calvin, on the text says, “Here we plainly see what was the manner of baptizing with

the ancients, for they plunged the whole body into the water; now custom obtaining, that the minister only sprinkles the body or the head.” Song Barnabas, [142] an apostolic writer of the first century, and who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as a companion of the apostle Paul, describes baptism by going down into and by coming up out of the water; “We descend,” says he, “into the water full of sin and filth; and we ascend, bringing forth fruit in the heart, having fear and hope in Jesus, through the Spirit.”

4. The end of baptism, which is to represent the burial of Christ, cannot be answered in any other way than by immersion, or covering the body in water; that baptism is an emblem of the burial of Christ, is clear from Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12. It would be endless to quote the great number, even of “paedobaptist” writers, who ingenuously acknowledge that the allusion in these passages, is to the ancient rite of by immersion: as none but such who are dead are buried, so none but such who are dead to sin, and to the law by the body of Christ, or who profess to be so, are to be buried in and by baptism, or to be baptized; and as none can be properly said to be buried, unless under ground, and covered with earth; so none can be said to be baptized, but such who are put under water, and covered with it; and nothing short of this can be a representation of the burial of Christ, and of ours with him; not sprinkling, or pouring a little water on the face; for a corpse cannot be said to be buried when only a little earth or dust is sprinkled or poured on it.

5. This may be concluded from the various figurative and typical baptisms spoken of in scripture. As,

(1). From the waters of the flood, which Tertullian calls [143] the baptism of the world, and of which the apostle Peter makes baptism the antitype (1 Peter 3:20, 21). The ark in which Noah and his family were saved by water, was God’s ordinance; it was made according to the pattern he gave to Noah, as baptism is; and as that was the object of the scorn of men, so is the ordinance of baptism, rightly administered; and as it represented a burial, when Noah and his family were shut up in it, so baptism; and when the fountains of the great deep were broken up below, and the windows of heaven were opened above, the ark, with those in it, were as it were covered with and immersed in water; and so was a figure of baptism by immersion: and as

there were none but adult persons in the ark, who were saved by water in it, so none but adult persons are the proper subjects of water baptism; and though there were few who were in the ark, it was attended with a salutary effect to them, they were saved by water; so such who truly believe in Christ, and are baptized, shall be saved, and that “by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” which was typified by the coming of Noah and his family out of the ark; to which baptism, as the antitype, corresponds, being an emblem of the same (Rom. 6:4, 5; Col. 2:12).

(2). From the passage of the Israelites under the cloud and through the sea, when “they were said to be baptized unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor. 10:1, 2). There are various things in this account which agree with baptism; this was following Moses, who directed them into the sea, and went before them; so baptism is a following Christ, who has set an example to tread in his steps; and as the Israelites were baptized into Moses, so believers are baptized into Christ, and put him on; and this passage of theirs was after their coming out of Egypt, and at the beginning of their journey through the wilderness to Canaan; so baptism is administered to believers, at their first coming out of darkness and bondage worse than Egyptian, and when they first enter on their Christian pilgrimage; and as joy followed upon the former, “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel,” &c. so it often follows upon the latter; the eunuch, after baptism, went on his way rejoicing: but chiefly this passage was a figure of baptism by immersion; as the Israelites were “under the cloud,” and so under water, and covered with it, as persons baptized by immersion are; “and passed through the sea,” that standing up as a wall on both sides them, with the cloud over them; thus surrounded they were as persons immersed in water, and so said to be baptized; and thus Grotius remarks upon the passage.

(3). From the various washings, bathings, or baptisms of the Jews; called “various,” because of the different persons and things washed or dipped, as the same Grotius observes; and not because of different sorts of washing, for there is but one way of washing, and that is by dipping; what has a little water only sprinkled or poured on it, cannot be said to be washed; the Jews had their sprinklings, which were distinct from washings or bathings, which were

always performed by immersion; it is a rule, with them, that “wherever in the law washing of the flesh, or of the clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than *tylt kl hgvphg* “the dipping of the whole body” in a laver--for if any man dips himself all over except the tip of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness,” [144] according to them.

(4). From the sufferings of Christ being called a baptism; “I have a baptism to be baptized with,” &c. (Luke 12:50) not water baptism, nor the baptism of the Spirit, with both which he had been baptized; but the baptism of his sufferings, yet to come, he was desirous of; these are called so in allusion to baptism, as it is an immersion; and is expressive of the abundance of them, sometimes signified by deep waters, and floods of waters; and Christ is represented as plunged into them, covered and overwhelmed with them (Ps. 62:7, 69:1, 2).

(5). From the extraordinary donation of the Holy Spirit, and his gifts unto, and his descent upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, which is called “baptizing,” (Acts 1:5, 2:1, 2) expressive of the very great abundance of them, in allusion to baptism or dipping, in a proper sense, as the learned Casaubon [145] observes; “Regard is had in this place to the proper signification of the word baptizein, to immerse or dip; and in this sense the apostles are truly said to be baptized, for the house in which this was done, was filled with the Holy Ghost; so that the apostles seemed to be plunged into it, as into some pool.” All which typical and figurative baptisms, serve to strengthen the proper sense of the word, as it signifies an immersion and dipping the body into, and covering it in water, which only can support the figure used. Nor is this sense of the word to be set aside or weakened by the use of it in Mark 7:4; Luke 11:38, in the former, it is said, “Except they wash, baptizantai, baptize, or dip themselves, they eat not;” and in it mention is made of baptism, “washings or dippings” of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables or beds; and in the latter, the Pharisee is said to marvel at Christ, that he had not first ebaptisthe, “washed, or dipped, before dinner;” all which agrees with the superstitious traditions of the elders, here referred to, which enjoined dipping in all the cases and instances spoken of, and so serve but the more to confirm the sense of the word contended for; for the Pharisees, upon

touching the common people or their clothes, as they returned from market, or from any court of judicature, were obliged to immerse themselves in water before they eat; and so the Samaritan Jews: [146] “If the Pharisees, says Maimonides, [147] touched but the garments of the common people, they were defiled all one as if they had touched a profluvius person, and needed immersion,” or were obliged to it: and Scaliger, [148] from the Jews observes, “That the more superstitious part of them, everyday, before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body; hence the Pharisees admiration at Christ” (Luke 11:38). And not only cups and pots, and brazen vessels were washed by dipping, or putting them into water, in which way unclean vessels were washed according to the law (Lev. 11:32), but even beds, pillows, and bolsters, unclean in a ceremonial sense, were washed in this way, according to the traditions of the elders referred to; for they say, [149] “A bed that is wholly defiled, if a man “dips” it part by part, it is pure.” Again, [150] “If he “dips the bed” in it (a pool of water) though its feet are plunged into the thick clay (at the bottom of the pool) it is clean.” And as for pillows and bolsters, thus they say, [151] “A pillow or a bolster of skin, when a man lifts up the mouth of them out of the water, the water which is in them will be drawn; what must be done? He must “dip” them, and lift them up by their fringes.” Thus, according to these traditions, the various things mentioned were washed by immersion; and instead of weakening, strengthen the sense of the word pleaded for. The objections against baptism, as immersion, taken from some instances of baptism recorded in scripture, are of no force; as that of the three thousand, in Acts 2, not with respect to their number; it may be observed, that though these were added to the church in one and the same day, it does not follow, that they were baptized in one day; but be it that they were, there were twelve apostles to administer the ordinance, and it was but two hundred and fifty persons apiece; and besides, there were seventy disciples, administrators of it; and supposing them employed, it will reduce the number to six or seven and thirty persons each: and the difference between dipping and sprinkling is very inconsiderable, since the same form of words is used in the one way as in the other; and therefore it might be done in one day, and in a small part of it too. [152]

Nor with respect to convenience for the administration of it; as water and places of it sufficient to baptize in: here can be no objection, when it is observed, what number of private baths were in Jerusalem for ceremonial uncleanness; the many pools in the city, and the various apartments and things in the temple fit for such a use; as the dipping room for the high priest, the molten sea for the common priests, and the ten brazen lavers, each of which held forty baths of water sufficient for the immersion of the whole body; all which they might be allowed the use of, as they were of the temple; they “having favour with all the people”: not with respect to clothes, and change of garments; it was only everyone’s providing and bringing change of raiment for himself. Another instance objected to is, that of the baptism of Saul (Acts 9:18), supposed to be done in the house where he was: but that does not necessarily follow, but rather the contrary; since he “arose” from the place where he was, in order to be baptized; and admitting it was done in the house, it is highly probable there was a bath in the house, in which it might be performed; since it was the house of a Jew, with whom it was usual to have baths to wash their whole bodies in on certain occasions; and had it been performed by sprinkling or pouring a little water on him, he needed not to have rose for that purpose. Besides, he was not only bid to arise and be baptized, which would sound very oddly if rendered, “be sprinkled” or “poured,” (Acts 22:16) but he himself says, that he, with others, were “buried by” or “in baptism” (Rom. 6:4). Another instance is that of the jailer and his household (Acts 16:33), in which account there is nothing that makes it improbable that it was done by immersion; for it seems to be a clear case, that the jailer, upon his conversion, took the apostles out of prison into his own house, where they preached to him and his family (Acts 16:32), and after this they went out of his house, and he and his were baptized, very probably in the river without the city, where the oratory was (Acts 16:13), for it is certain, that after the baptism of him and his family, he brought the apostles into his house again, and set meat before them (Acts 16:33, 34). Upon the whole, these instances produced, fail of showing the improbability of baptism by immersion; which must appear clear and manifest to every attentive reader of his Bible, notwithstanding all that has been opposed unto it. The

next thing to be considered is,

Fifthly, the form in which this ordinance is to be administered; which is “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” (Matthew 28:19) which contains in it a proof of a Trinity of Persons in the unity of the divine essence, of the Deity of each Person, and of their equality to, and distinction from each other; and shows, that this ordinance is performed under the authority of all Three; in which a person submitting to it, expresses his faith in them, and invocation of them, and gives up himself to them; obliging himself to yield obedience to what they require of him, as well as putting himself under their care and protection. This form is sometimes a little varied and otherwise expressed; as sometimes only “in the name of the Lord Jesus,” (Acts 8:16) which is a part of the form for the whole; and includes in it the substance of it, and of Christian baptism; and everything relating to the person and offices of Christ, and his relation to and connection with the other Two persons. Cornelius and his family were ordered to be baptized, “in the name of the Lord,” (Acts 10:48) that is, in the name of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit; for kurios, Lord, in the New Testament, answers to Jehovah in the Old. The form of baptism in Matthew 28:19 is in the name of “the Father,” &c. which single name denotes the one Deity, power, and substance of Father, Son, and Spirit; the equal dignity, co-eternal kingdom, and government in the Three perfect Persons; as it is expressed in the synodical epistle of the general council at Constantinople. [153]

Sixthly, the ends and uses for which baptism is appointed, and which are answered by it.

1. One end of it, and a principal one, as has been frequently hinted, is, to represent the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; which is plainly and fully suggested in Romans 6:4, 5; Colossians 2:12, his sufferings are represented by going into the water, and being overwhelmed in it, his burial by a short continuance under it, and being covered with it, and his resurrection by an emersion out of it.

2. It was practised both by John and by the apostles of Christ, for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38) not that that is the procuring and meritorious cause of it, which only is the blood of Christ; but they who submit unto it, may, by means of it, be led, directed, and encouraged to expect it from Christ.

And so,

3. In like manner it is for the washing away of sin, and cleansing from it; “Arise, and be baptized, and wash thy sins,” (Acts 22:16) this only is really done the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; baptism neither washes away original nor actual sin, it has no such virtue in it; [154] but it is a means of directing to Christ the Lamb of God, who, by his atoning blood and sacrifice, has purged and continues to take away the sins of men.

4. A salutary or saving use and effect is ascribed unto it; “The like figure whereunto, baptism, doth also now save us;” should it be asked how, and by what means? the answer follows, “By the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” (1 Peter 3:21) that is, by leading the faith of the person baptized to Christ, as delivered for his offences, and as risen again for his justification.

5. In the same passage it is said to be of this use, and to serve this purpose, “The answer of a good conscience towards God;” a man who believes baptism to be an ordinance of God, and submits to it as such, discharges a good conscience, the consequence of which is joy and peace; for though “for” keeping the commands of God there is no reward, yet there is “in” keeping them; and this is their reward, the testimony of a good conscience: for great peace have they which love God and keep his commandments.

6. Yielding obedience to this ordinance of Christ, is an evidence of love to God and Christ (1 John 5:3), and such who from a principle of love to Christ keep his commandments, may expect, according to his promise, to have fresh manifestations of his and his Father’s love, and to have communion with Father, Son, and Spirit (John 14:15, 21, 23). This is an end to be had in view, in obedience to it, and a very encouraging one.

[125] Deut. Doctrina Christiana, l. 3, c. 9.

[126] Vid. Socin. Disp. de Baptismo, c. 15, 16, 17.

[127] See the Dissertation concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes, at the end of this work. See on topic 1300.

[128] Comment. on Matt. p. 372, 375.

[129] Comment. on Matt. xxviii. 19.

[130] Contr. Arian. orat. 3. p. 209.

[131] Baptism of infants a reasonable service, p. 14, 15.

[132] Bostwick’s Fair and Rational Vindication of Infant-baptism, p. 19.

[133] See, my Exposition of 1 Cor. vii. 14. See Gill on 1 Cor. 7:14.

[134] Eccles. Hist. l. 1. c. 4.

[135] See my Treatises, “The Argument from apostolic Tradition, in Favour of Infant Baptism, considered; “and “Antipaedo-Baptism, or Infant Baptism, an Innovation, “with others.

[136] “Quod longinquitas temporis objicitur, eo major suspicio, inesse debet, emanasse illas traditiones a Pseudo apostolis; qui mirandum in modum conturbaverunt sanctos apostolos; quo magis cavendum est, viri Christiani”. Aonii Palearii Testimonium, c. 2. p. 238.

[137] “Consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est,” Cyprian. epist. 74. p. 195.

[138] Essay to Restore the Dipping of Infants in Baptism, p. 44.

[139] Institut. l. 4. c. 15. s. 19.

[140] Opera, vol. 6. col. 2008.

[141] Some represent the river Jordan, from Sandys’s account of it, as if it was a shallow river, and insufficient for immersion; but what Sandys says of it, is only that it was not navigably deep, not above eight fathoms broad, nor, except, by accident, heady. Travels, b. iii. p. 110. ed. 5. But Mark. Maundrel says, for its breadth, it might be about twenty yards over, and in depth it far exceeded his height. Journey from Aleppo, &c. p. 83. ed. 7. vid. Reland. de Palestina, l. 1. p. 278. and Adamnan. in ib. And therefore must be sufficient for immersion. And Strabo speaks of ships of burden sailing through Jordan, Geograph. l. 16. p. 519. And that it was a river to swim in, and navigable, according to the Jewish writers, see Gill on “Matthew 3:5”.

[142] Ep. c. 9. p. 235. ed. Voss.

[143] Deut. Baptismo, c. 8.

[144] Maimon. Hilchot Mikvaot, c. 1. s. 2.

[145] In Act. i. 5.

[146] Epiph. contra Haeres. l. 1. Haeres. 9.

[147] In Misn. Chagigah, c. 2. s. 7.

[148] Deut. Emend. Temp. l. 6. p. 771.

[149] Maimon. Hilchot Celim. c. 26. s. 14.

[150] Misn. Mikvaot, c. 7. s. 7.

[151] Ibid. s. 6.

[152] Ten thousand were baptized in one day by

Austin the monk, in the river Swale, if our historians are to be credited. Fox’s Acts and Monuments, vol. i. p. 154. Ranulph. Polychron. l. 5. c. 10. The twelve sons of Wolodomir, Grand Prince of Russia, with twenty thousand Russians, in cent. 10. were baptized in one day, by a missionary of Photius the patriarch; and the ancient Russians would allow no person to be a Christian, unless he had been dipped quite under water. Strahlenberg. Histor. Geograph. Descript. of the Northern and Eastern Parts of Europe and Asia, ch. 8. p. 283, 286. Vid. Fabricii Lux Evangel. p. 475. No doubt assistance was had in both instances; but these show what numbers may be baptized in a day.

[153] Apud. Theodorit. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 9. This form was first changed and corrupted by Mark the heretic, and his followers, in the second century; who baptized into the name of the unknown Father of all; into truth the mother of all; into him who descended on Jesus; into union and redemption, and communion of powers: the same also first changed and corrupted the mode; taking a mixture of oil and water, poured it on the head, and then anointed with balsam. Vid. Irenaeum adv. Haeres. l. 1. c. 18.

[154] “Non enim aqua lavat animam, sed ipsa prius lavatur a Spiritu,” Aonii Palearii Testimonium, c. 2. p. 24.

Chapter 2

OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

After the ordinance of baptism follows the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper; the one is preparatory to the other; and he that has a right to the one has a right to the other; and none but such who have submitted to the former, ought to be admitted to the latter. Baptism is to be administered but once, when we first make a profession of Christ, and of faith in him; but the ordinance of the supper is to be frequently administered, and continued throughout the stage of life, it being our spiritual food, for the support and maintenance of our spiritual life. It goes by various names in scripture; it is called, “the body and blood of Christ,” from the subject matter of it; and that by Christ himself, “This is my body, and this is my blood,” (Matthew 26:26, 28) which in this ordinance are symbolically represented to the faith of the Lord’s

people: and sometimes it is called, "The communion of the body and blood of Christ," (1 Cor. 10:16) because the saints have in it communion with Christ, he sups with them and they with him; and particularly enjoy the fellowship of his sufferings, or partake of the blessings of grace which flow from the sufferings of Christ, from the offering up of his body, and the shedding of his blood. Sometimes it is called, "This bread, and this cup of the Lord," (1 Cor. 11:27) because the bread represents Christ himself, the bread of life, and the cup signifies the New Testament in his blood. Sometimes it is expressed by "breaking of bread," (Acts 2:42, 20:7) a part for the whole, so denominated from a particular action used in the administration of it. And it is called, "The Lord's table," (1 Cor. 10:21) by a metonymy, for the food and entertainment upon it; a table which the Lord has prepared and furnished, at which he himself sits and welcomes his guests: and with great propriety may it be called a feast, because of the richness and plenty of the provision in it; as it seems to be in 1 Corinthians 5:8, "Let us keep the feast;" not the feast of the passover, now abolished, but the feast of the Lord's Supper, which exhibits Christ, the true passover, sacrificed for us. But its most significant and expressive name, and which is commonly in use, is "The Lord's Supper," (1 Cor. 11:20) a "supper," being instituted after the passover, which was killed between the two evenings, and eaten in the night; and was first performed by Christ the evening in which he was betrayed; nor does this detract from the grandeur of the entertainment, since not only with the Romans their principal meal was a supper, but with the Jews also, especially their nuptial feasts were kept in the evening. And it is called the Lord's Supper because it is by his appointment; it is made by him and for him; he is the sum and substance of it, and when rightly performed, it is according to his will; he is the maker and master of the feast, and is the feast itself. There are various other names which are given to this ordinance by the ancients; to recite which is to little purpose; the chief and principal, and the most ancient is, that of the "eucharist," by which name it was called in the times of Justin Martyr, [155] and by Ignatius, [156] and Irenaeus [157] before him, from a part of it, "thanksgiving," and because the whole of it gives just occasion for thanksgiving, for the many blessings of grace it exhibits to the view of

faith. In treating of it I shall consider,

First, the author of it, and show it to be an ordinance of Christ peculiar to the gospel dispensation, a standing ordinance in it, and which is to continue until the second coming of Christ.

1st, it was instituted by Christ himself; who not only has given an example to do as he has done, which has great force and authority in it; he not only practised and celebrated it himself, which was giving a sufficient sanction to it; but he has, by precept, enjoined it on his apostles and disciples, and all succeeding ministers, and on all his followers, to the end of the world; which is contained in these preceptive words of his used by him at the first institution of the ordinance; "Take, eat, this is my body; drink ye all of this, for this is my blood; this do in remembrance of me," (Matthew 26:26, 27; Luke 22:19) and particularly the apostle Paul expressly declares, that what he delivered concerning this ordinance, he "received from the Lord," (1 Cor. 11:23) so that it is not a device, and an invention of his, nor did he receive it of men, nor was taught it, but he had it by the revelation of Christ; and this being instituted by Christ, and celebrated by him, "the same night in which he was betrayed," shows the very great love of Christ to his church and people, and his affectionate concern for them, and care of them; that at a time his sufferings were coming upon him to an amazing degree, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, when he that was to betray him was at hand, when he was just about to be delivered into the hands of sinful men, who would put him to death, and when he was just ready to suffer and die for his people; that he should then, amidst all his sorrows, and in the near approach of his most dreadful sufferings, think of his people, and provide for them a divine repast, spiritual food for their entertainment to the end of the world.

2dly, this ordinance is peculiar to the gospel dispensation. It was indeed typified by what Melchizedek did, who was himself a type of Christ, as king of righteousness and of peace, and as the priest of the most high God, who brought forth "bread and wine" to refresh Abraham and his weary troops, returning from the slaughter of the kings; so saints, who are in a warfare state, and are good soldiers of Christ, and are engaged in a war with potent and spiritual enemies, are regaled by Christ with bread and

wine, and with what is signified by them; and what is better than these. This ordinance was also pointed at in prophecy, respecting gospel times, as what should be in use when those times came. So in Proverbs 9:1-18, there is a prophetic representation of the church of Christ in gospel times, and of the provisions in it, and of guests invited to partake of them by the ministers of the gospel, who in Christ's name are bid to say, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled". And in Isaiah 25:6 this feast is hinted at, which is a prophecy respecting gospel times; which, among other things, may include and have respect unto the ordinance of the supper; but that itself was not instituted nor practised till the night in which Christ was betrayed. And,

3dly, this is a standing ordinance in the church of Christ. It was not only kept the first night it was instituted and observed; but in after times, after the death and resurrection of Christ; it was observed by the first church at Jerusalem, the members of which are commended for continuing in fellowship, and in "breaking of bread," meaning, the ordinance of the supper; the disciples at Troas met together on the first day of the week "to break bread," that is, to celebrate this ordinance of Christ; and though there were disorders in the church at Corinth, in the celebration of it, yet the thing itself was not denied nor neglected by them, though they were disorderly in their attendance on it. Justin Martyr gives us a very particular account of the celebration of it in his time, which was in the second century, and so it has been continued in the churches of Christ ever since to this day (Acts 2:42, 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20, 21).

4thly, it is to continue to the end of the world; it is one of those ordinances that cannot be shaken and removed, but will remain; it is among those "all things," and a principal one of them, Christ ordered his apostles, and succeeding ministers, to teach his followers to observe; promising to be with them, so doing, "to the end of the world," (Matthew 28:20) and this is plainly suggested by the apostle Paul, when he says, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," (1 Cor. 11:26) which cannot be understood of his coming by the effusion of his Spirit, as on the day of Pentecost; for in this sense he was come when this instruction was given; nor is it an objection of any force, that

types, figures, shadows, and ceremonies are now ceased; for though the shadows of the ceremonial law, which were figures of good things to come, are ceased, Christ, the body and substance, being come; yet there may be and are figures and representations of him as come, and commemorative of him, and of the good things come by him; baptism is said to be a "figure," that is, of the burial and resurrection of Christ (1 Peter 3:21), and so the Lord's Supper is a "figure" of his broken body and bloodshed, as will be seen hereafter. I proceed to consider,

Secondly, The matter of the ordinance, or the outward elements of it, the bread and wine, which are the symbols of the body and blood of Christ.

1st, bread; whether the bread was leavened or unleavened bread, has been a matter of warm dispute between the Greek and Latin churches; the latter insisting on the use of unleavened bread, since that was what was used by our Lord at the first institution of this ordinance, it being at the time of the passover, the feast of unleavened bread, when no other was to be had; and the apostle directs to keep the feast, not with the "leaven" of malice, but with the "unleavened" bread of sincerity and truth: that the bread of Christ used in this ordinance was unleavened bread, is not to be doubted; but that it was designed as a rule in after administrations, is a question; since Christ seems to have taken it without respect to its being leavened or unleavened, but as being at hand, and at that time in common use; nor does it seem so agreeable to retain and continue a Jewish ceremony at the passover, in a gospel ordinance; and though the apostle, in the exhortation referred to, alludes to the bread of the passover, yet by this figurative expression, he cannot be thought to design the use of unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper; but that every ordinance of God, and so this, should be observed with a sincere affection to Christ and one another. It seems to be quite an indifferent thing what bread is used in the ordinance, be it what it may, which is used in any country for common food; such was the bread the disciples used at Troas, when they met to break bread, which was several days after the Jewish feast of unleavened bread was over, and so that sort of bread was not then in use (Acts 20:6, 7). However, the round wafers of the papists cannot be allowed of, they being not properly bread, nor so made as to be

broken and distributed in pieces, nor palatable, nor fit for nourishment; and so improper emblems of what is spiritually nutritive.

Now the bread in the ordinance of the supper is a symbol of the body and flesh of Christ; "The bread," says Christ, "that I will give, is my flesh," (John 6:51, 55) which words, though not spoken of the Lord's Supper, which was not then instituted, yet might be said with respect to it, by way of anticipation, and, however, serve to illustrate and explain what our Lord said in it; "This is my body," that is, a symbol and sign of it, when he took the bread, blessed it, and brake it; and so says the apostle; "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16) not his mystical body, the church, but his natural body, which was formed in the womb of the Virgin by the Holy Spirit, and which Christ took into union with his divine Person, and which he offered up upon the cross. And the bread in the supper is a symbol of this body, not as living either on earth or in heaven, but as dead, the life of it being laid down by Christ, and given for the life of his people; though now raised and alive, and lives for evermore: nor as glorified, the form of which was marred by his sufferings and death, but raised, has a glory given it, and is become a glorious body; but as such the bread broken in the ordinance is not a symbol of it; but as crucified, suffering, slain, and dead; for in it Christ is "evidently set forth" before the eye of faith, as crucified; and to him as such believers are directed to look, whom they have pierced, and mourn; and as he is to be beheld in the midst of the throne, so particularly in this ordinance; "A Lamb as it had been slain!" Christ's body broken by sufferings and death, is signified by the bread broken in it; for these words, "This is my body,"

1. Are not to be understood in a proper sense, as if the bread was transubstantiated into the real body of Christ; this is contradicted by the testimony of the senses, of seeing, tasting, and smelling; [158] by all which the bread appears to be the same after its separation to the use of the ordinance it was before: it is contrary to reason, that accidents should be without a subject; that the qualities and properties of bread should remain, and not the bread itself; that a body should be in more places at one and the same time, and Christ have as many bodies as there are consecrated

wafers; which is most absurd: it is contrary to the nature of Christ's body, which was like ours when on earth, and at the time of the institution; and after his resurrection was visible and palpable, and consisting of flesh and blood; and is now ascended to heaven, where it will be retained until the time of the restitution of all things; and is not everywhere, as it must be, if its real presence is in the ordinance in all places, and at all times, where and when it is administered: it is contrary to scripture, which declares the bread to be bread when blessed and broken; "The bread which we break;" and "this bread that ye eat;" and "this cup that ye drink;" and as the bread is still called bread, so the wine in the cup, "the fruit of the vine;" no real change is made in the one nor in the other: it is contrary to the very nature and design of the ordinance; it confounds the sign and the thing signified: if the bread is no more bread, it ceases to be a sign, and the body of Christ cannot be signified by it; the analogy between both is taken away; to say no more, it is impious and blasphemous for a priest to take upon him, by muttering over a few words, to make the body and blood of Christ, and then eat them! The folly, or rather madness of such, is reproved by Cicero the heathen, who thought no man could be so mad to believe what he eat to be a God. [159]

2. The phrase, "This is my body," is to be understood in a figurative sense; the bread is a figure, symbol, and representation of the body of Christ; many scriptural phrases are so to be understood; as when Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The seven good kine are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years;" so seven kine and ears signified, or were symbols of seven years of plenty; and the lean kine and thin ears, so many years of famine (Gen. 41:26, 27). Again, in the parable of the sower, the seed and tares, signified such and such persons, and were emblems of them. Also, "That rock was Christ," (1 Cor. 10:4) that is, was a figure and representation of him; so the bread is the body of Christ, a figure, [160] sign, and symbol of it. Christ compares himself to a kernal of wheat falling into the ground and dying, and reviving and bringing forth fruit, expressive of his sufferings and death, and of the blessed consequences thereof (John 12:24). Breadcorn is a figure of Christ, as prepared for food, which is beaten out, winnowed, ground, kneaded, and baked, ere it becomes proper food for men; so

Christ, by his various sufferings, being bruised, broken, crucified, and sacrificed for us, becomes proper food for faith; and as such is he represented, viewed, and received in the ordinance of the supper. Bread is the main sustenance of men, and is called the staff of bread, being the staff of life; which is of a very strengthening and nourishing nature, and is the principal means of maintaining and preserving life; of all which use is a crucified Christ, as he is held forth to faith, both in the preaching of the gospel and in the administration of this ordinance.

2dly, the wine is another part of this ordinance, and of the matter of it, and one of the outward elements of it, a symbol of the blood of Christ. It is a question, whether the wine used at the first institution of the ordinance was red or white; at the passover that which was the best, whether red or white, was ordered to be used; the red was generally so accounted (see Prov. 23:31; Isa. 27:2); it is reckoned by some a matter of indifference; and therefore some, to show their sense of it as such, and to assert their Christian liberty, have sometimes used the one, and sometimes the other: though it may not be essentially necessary, I cannot but be of opinion, that the red, called the blood of the grape, is most expressive of, and bears a greater resemblance to the blood of Christ, it is a symbol of Genesis 49:11; Isaiah 63:2. It is also a question, whether the wine used was mixed or pure; since it was usual with the Jews, whose wines were generous, to mix them (Prov. 9:2), but there is no need to dilute them in our climates; and as the quantity is so small drunk at the ordinance, there is no danger of intoxication in those who are least used to it; though it is certain, mixing wine and water very early obtained, even in Justin's time; but that there should be a mystery in it, signifying, the blood and water which sprung from the side of Christ when pierced, and the union of the two natures in him, seems too fanciful. However,

1. The wine is a symbol of the blood of Christ; for Christ says of it, "This is my blood," that is, a figure and representation of it; not that it was really changed into the blood of Christ for it is called, "the fruit of the vine," as before observed; after it was poured into the cup and blessed (Matthew 26:28, 29), and the apostle Paul says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. 4:6) and it is a symbol of it, not as in his veins, but as

shed from the various parts of his body, particularly his hands, feet, and side, when pierced; and as wine is squeezed out of the grape in the winepress, so the blood of Christ was pressed from him, when it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and when he trod the winepress of divine wrath; and as wine cheers the heart of man, so the blood of Christ, applied by the Spirit, speaks peace and pardon to guilty minds, and puts joy and gladness into broken hearts and wounded spirits. The wine in the supper is called, "The blood of the New Testament;" and the cup, "The New Testament in Christ's blood;" by which is meant, the covenant of grace, sometimes called a testament or will, which became of force by the death of Christ, the testator, and which was ratified, its blessings and promises, by the blood of Christ; which is therefore called, "The blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20).

2. The wine in the supper is a symbol of the love of Christ, shown in the shedding of his blood to obtain the remission of the sins of his people; which "love is better than wine," than the most ancient, the most generous, the most pure and refined; and therefore the church determines to remember it more than that; "We will remember thy love more than wine," and which is particularly done in the ordinance of the supper (Song 1:2, 4).

Now the bread and the wine being two separate articles, may denote and show forth the death of Christ; the body or flesh being separated from the blood, and the blood from that, in which the life is, death follows; and these being distinctly attended to, is expressive of that separation; and yet both together make a feast, and afford nourishment, refreshment, and delight: with food there must be drink, and when with bread wine, both make a banquet; Christ's church is a banqueting house, and the banquet in it, like Esther's, is a banquet of wine; such is the ordinance of the supper, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined.

Thirdly, the next to be considered are the significant and expressive actions used by the administrator and the receiver; both with respect to the bread and the wine.

1st, with respect to the bread.

1. By the administrator; Christ, in his own person, at the first institution of the ordinance and by his ministers, under his direction, and by his orders and

example, in all succeeding ones.

1. Christ "took" the bread, an emblem of his body, which he took, being actually formed; and consisting of flesh and blood, he partook of it in the fulness at time; he took upon him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; he took the human nature, consisting of soul and body, into union with his divine person; and he took this body which he assumed, and offered it without spot to God, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour; and of this body, his taking the bread in the supper was an emblem, and of his voluntary oblation of it.

2. He "blessed" it; or as another evangelist has it, he "gave thanks," (Matthew 26:26; Luke 22:19) such an action was sometimes used by him at other meals (Matthew 14:19, 15:36). This designs a separation of the bread from a common to a sacred use, as everything is sanctified by the word and prayer; by this action the bread was set apart from common use, and appropriated to this solemnity. This is what is sometimes called the consecration of it; but is no other than its destination to this peculiar service. Blessing it, was asking a blessing on it, as spiritual food, that it might be nourishing and refreshing to those who partook of it; and giving thanks, is expressing thankfulness for what is signified by it, for Christ, the true bread the Father gives; for him, the unspeakable gift of his love, and for all the blessings of grace that come by him.

3. He "broke" it. From this action the whole ordinance is denominated, "breaking of bread," (Acts 2:42, 20:7) and it was not only used by Christ at first, as an example to be followed; but by ministers in the churches, in all succeeding ages; in the first church at Jerusalem, and by the disciples at Troas, as the passages referred to show; and was practised by the apostle at Corinth, and in other places, "the bread which we break," &c. (1 Cor. 10:16). Song Clemens of Alexandria, [161] in the second century, says, "As some divide the eucharist, they suffer everyone of the people to take a part:" And Irenaeus, [162] before him, calls it, "the broken bread": and even Ignatius [163] speaks of the bishop and presbytery "breaking the one bread". And nothing is more common with the ancients than to speak of the parts and broken pieces in the supper; yea, to call the supper itself by these names: and this is a very expressive and significant

action, and by no means to be omitted; and was used by Christ, not purely for the sake of dividing and distributing the bread; but for the sake of representing his death; it is an emblem of his sufferings, how his "body was broken" for us (1 Cor. 11:24), how it was torn by the scourges and lashes of the Roman soldiers, at the order of Pilate; how his head and temples were torn by the crown of thorns platted about them; how his hands and feet were pierced with nails, and his side with a spear; and how body and soul by death were torn and parted asunder; and he was brought to the dust of death, and liable to be crumbled into innumerable particles; but that his body was preserved from seeing corruption. Moreover, it is an emblem of the communion of the many partakers of the one bread and of the one body of Christ; "For we, being many, are one bread, for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. 10:17).

4. He gave it to the disciples (Matthew 26:26). Song the minister now gives the bread to the deacons, and they distribute it to the people; and thus they did in the times of Justin Martyr: [164] that everyone may have his part and portion. Song at the extraordinary and miraculous meals of the loaves and fishes, Christ, after looking up to heaven, and having "blessed and broke, he gave the loaves (broken) to his disciples and the disciples to the multitude; and they did all eat and were filled" (Matthew 14:19, 20, 15:36).

2. There are other significant and expressive actions respecting the bread used by the receiver, or communicant; as to "take and eat".

(1). He is to "take" the bread, or receive it, according to our Lord's direction to his disciples, "take": at the Jewish passover everyone had a piece of the bread broken set before him, by him that broke it, and he "took" it in his hand [165]; and, as before observed from Clemens, it was the usage of the church at Alexandria, for everyone of the people to "take" his part of the eucharist when divided; and so Dionysius, [166] bishop of the same place, speaks of one at the Lord's table, "stretching out his hand to receive" the sacred food; and Cyril of Jerusalem [167] says, it was received in the hollow of the right hand, the left hand being underneath it; for as yet it was not put into the mouth by the administrator, as now the wafer is, by a popish priest. This action of taking the bread, is an emblem of the saints receiving Christ by the hand of

faith, and all the blessings of grace with him (John 1:12; Col. 2:6).

(2). The receiver is to eat the bread, being taken; not as common bread, and as at a common meal; but in an ordinance way, being separated from common to holy use, and as a symbol of the body of Christ; and he eats it in such a way worthily, when he discerns the Lord's body in it, as represented by it, and can distinguish that from it, and by faith feed on it; for this is not to be understood of an oral manducation, or a corporal eating of the flesh and body of Christ, which the Capernaite Jews stumbled at, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" but of a spiritual eating it by faith; Socinus [168] says, that nothing but bread and wine are received in the Lord's Supper, either by believers or unbelievers, neither corporally nor spiritually. It is by faith believers eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ; it is by faith Christ dwells in their hearts; and it is by faith they live upon him, and by him; "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me," (John 6:57) it denotes a participation of Christ, and of the blessings of grace by him: to eat of this bread spiritually, is no other than "the communion of the body of Christ," or an having fellowship with him, while feeding on it, and an appropriation and enjoyment of spiritual blessings in him: as bread taken into the mouth and chewed, is received into the stomach, and digested there, and becomes incorporated into the very substance of a man, and by which he is nourished and refreshed; so Christ being received and fed upon by faith, believers are one body and spirit with him, have union to him and communion with him; there is a mutual indwelling of Christ and them, they are one bread. And having spiritual appetites, hungering and thirsting after Christ, they feed upon him, and grow up in him: the encouragement to eat this bread, as a symbol of Christ's body; and the argument enforcing it is, "This is my body which is given for you," (Luke 22:19) a token of the body of Christ, given for them: as their daily bread is the gift of God, and prayed for as such, so Christ, the true bread from heaven, is the gift of his Father, a free grace gift, and may be freely fed upon; and his body, which is signified by the bread, is given by himself an offering and a sacrifice to God "for," in the room and stead of, his people; the phrase denotes the voluntary substitution of Christ in their stead, to make atonement for their sins, being

delivered for their offences into the hands of justice and death, on account of them; and therefore they may be encouraged to lay hold upon him by faith, and take him to themselves, as their Saviour and Redeemer; it is thus expressed by the apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 11:24, "This is my body which is broken for you;" a sign of Christ's broken body, and so fit food faith to feed upon; and by it is signified, that the sufferings Christ endured in his body, were in the room and stead of his people, to make satisfaction to divine Justice for their sins; and since he, the passover Lamb, is "sacrificed for them," they have great encouragement to keep the feast, to eat the broken bread, and to "do this," as they are directed, "in remembrance" of Christ's body being given a sacrifice for them; and of its being broken, by the hand of divine Justice, in their room and stead (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24).

2ndly, there are also very significant and expressive actions to be performed, both by the administrator and receiver, with respect to the wine.

1. By the administrator; after the example of Christ, "who took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them," the disciples (Matthew 26:27). He "took the cup," wine being first poured into it, which, though not expressed, is implied, and the thing signified by it, is the shedding or pouring out of the blood of Christ, after mentioned (Matthew 26:28), or the pouring out his soul unto death. Christ's taking it, shows his readiness and willingness to drink of it himself (John 18:11), and then he "gave thanks," for the blessings of grace, which came through his blood, of which this was the symbol; such as justification by his blood, remission of sins, for which it was shed, redemption through it, and peace by the blood of his cross: and having given thanks, "he gave it to them," his disciples, to drink of it; his immediate disciples drank of the cup of sufferings, as well as partook of the blessings of his grace; here not the former, but the latter is meant.

2. Other actions were to be performed by the receiver; particularly one, everyone was to drink of the cup; "Drink ye all of it": this shows that the ordinance was to be administered under both species; as the bread was to be eaten, the wine was to be drank; which is confirmed by the apostle's account of it (1 Cor. 11:25-29), and all were to drink of it; the cup is not to be denied to the common people,

and restrained to the minister, as by the papists; both clergy and laity partook of it, from the earliest ages, as appears by innumerable instances in the writings of the ancients, quite down to the council of Constance, in the fifteenth century, when it was ordered not to be given to the common people; "hoc non obstante," the institution of Christ, and the practice of the primitive church, as the edict of the council expresses it. [169] But according to the first institution of the ordinance, and the explanation of it by the apostle Paul, any and every man who examined himself aright, might drink of the cup, as well as eat of the bread: which drinking is to be understood in a spiritual sense, as eating before; and both are done by close meditation on the sufferings of Christ, and by a special application and appropriation of the blessings of grace by faith; the wine is not to be drunk as common wine, but as a symbol of the blood of Christ; and the encouraging motive is, "This is my blood of the New Testament," a token of it, by which the New Testament, or the dispensation of the covenant of grace, under the gospel, is ratified and confirmed; "which is shed" freely and abundantly; as it was in the garden, in the hall, and especially on the cross; "for many," for as many as are ordained to eternal life; for as many as Christ has given himself a ransom for; for as many as are made righteous by Christ's obedience; and for the many sons the great Captain of salvation will bring to glory: and this is shed for them; it was shed for "the remission of sins;" by which it is procured in a way consistent with the holiness and justice of God; and in this ordinance the faith of the Lord's people is directed to the blood of Christ to look for it.

Fourthly, the subjects of this ordinance, or who are the proper persons to be admitted to it, as communicants.

1. Not infants: in a literal and natural sense, bread and wine are not food for them, but milk; and in a spiritual sense, they are not capable of eating the body and drinking the blood of Christ by faith; nor of examining themselves, previous to such eating and drinking; nor of recollecting, remembering, and showing forth the death of Christ. In the third century infant communion was admitted of, on a mistaken sense of John 6:53. Indeed, infants have as good a right to this, as to the ordinance of baptism, which they were admitted to in the same century, on a like

mistaken sense of John 3:5 and which practice of infant communion continued in the Latin church six hundred years after, and still does in the Greek church.

2. Adult persons, who have the use of reason, and know what they do, are the proper subjects of this ordinance; yet only regenerate persons, who are quickened by the Spirit of God; for such only have spiritual life in them, and are only capable of receiving spiritual food, for the maintenance of it; such only can discern spiritual things, and so the Lord's body, which they that discern not, eat unworthily; such only have their taste changed, and can relish divine things; such only hunger and thirst after Christ, and can be satisfied with feeding on him by faith, and be nourished thereby: to others it must be a dry breast, and of no use.

3. Ignorant persons are unfit for this ordinance. Such who partake of it, ought to know themselves, the sinfulness of their state by nature, and the guilt of sin; that they may see their need of, and be affected with the grace of God in the remission of their sins, through the sufferings, death, and bloodshed of Christ: they ought to have knowledge of Christ, of his person and offices, and especially of him as crucified, and as being the propitiatory sacrifice for sin: they ought to have knowledge of God as their covenant God, whose covenant, testament, and will, is ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ: and they ought to be acquainted with the various doctrines of the gospel, which this ordinance has a connection with; as justification, pardon of sin, reconciliation, atonement, &c. so Justin, in his time says, [170] It is not lawful for any other to partake, but he that believes that what things are taught to them are true.

4. Persons scandalous in their lives and conversations, are by no means to be allowed subjects of this ordinance; "with such" we ought "not to eat," described 1 Corinthians 5:11 that is, at the Lord's table.

5. None but penitent sinners, and true believers, and those baptized, upon a profession of their repentance and faith, are to be allowed communicants at this ordinance; for such only can look to Christ whom they have pierced, and mourn, and exercise godly sorrow and evangelical repentance; such only can eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense by faith; to such only Christ's flesh is

meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; such only can by faith discern the Lord's body, and please him in this ordinance; for without faith it is impossible to please God; wherefore a man, before he eats, should examine himself, whether he has true repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; whether he is truly sensible of sin, and humbled for it, and believes in Christ for the remission of it (1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5).

Fifthly, the ends of this ordinance; which are to be answered by it.

1. To show forth the death of Christ; to declare his death, that he did die for the sins of his people; to set forth the manner of his death, by crucifixion, by his being pierced, wounded, bruised, and broken; and to express the blessings and benefits of his death, and the faith of his people in them, and thankfulness for them; for in this ordinance Christ is evidently set forth as crucified and slain.

2. To commemorate the sacrifice of Christ; Christ was once offered, and needs not to be offered up again; he has by one offering made perfect atonement for sin; but because Christ the passover is sacrificed for us, we should keep this feast as a memorial of his sacrifice, and through it look to Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of men.

3. To remember the love of Christ in dying for us, and in becoming a sacrifice for sin; hence he directed his disciples both to eat the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of him, of his body being broken and of his blood being shed for them; that is, to remember his love to them, which he expressed thereby (1 Cor. 11:24, 25).

4. To show our love to Christ, and thankfulness to him, for the blessings of his grace, by an attendance on this ordinance; we should call upon our souls, and all within us, to bless his name, and not forget his benefits, especially the great benefit of the redemption of our lives from destruction, by his blood, sufferings, and death.

5. Another end of it is to maintain love and unity with each other; for by joining together in holy fellowship in this ordinance, we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. But by no means is this ordinance to be used to qualify persons to bear any office under any government, and in any city or corporation. This is a vile and scandalous prostitution

of it, which is only intended for sacred uses.

Sixthly, the adjuncts of this ordinance, the circumstances attending it, and the concomitants and consequences of it.

1. The time of administering it is to be considered; not the time of day, morning, noon, or evening, which latter was the time of the first celebration of it, and is most suitable to a supper; but what day of the week or year, which in ancient times was variously observed; some were for keeping it every day in the week, and considered it as daily food; others were for observing it four times in the week; and others every Lord's day, which Dr. Goodwin [171] thinks is the stated fixed time for it in scripture; and so others. The disciples at Troas met together on the first day to break bread; but whether they did so for that purpose every first day is not clear and certain. Some kept it once a month, as many churches do now; at length it came to be observed only three times in the year, at the three grand festivals; and even to once a year. But though the precise time seems not to be ascertained in scripture, yet it is plain that it ought to be often practised; as may be concluded from the apostle's words, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup," &c. And from the nature of the ordinance, it being in memory of Christ, which ought to be frequent; and a spiritual repast for souls, which ought to be often repeated.

2. The gesture of the body to be used at it, whether kneeling, standing, or sitting; the former of these looks too much like the adoration of the host, the Papists plead for; standing is more eligible, being the gesture of servants, ready to do the will of their masters; but sitting is to be preferred, being a table gesture, and conformable to the practice of Christ and his disciples, at the first institution of the ordinance.

3. The place where celebrated; not in private houses, unless when the churches were obliged to meet there in time of persecution; but in the public place of worship, where and when the church convened; so the disciples at Troas "came together" to break bread; and the church at Corinth came together in one place to eat the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:18, 20, 33), for this being a church ordinance, is not to be administered privately to single persons; but to the church in a body, assembled for that purpose.

4. When the supper was ended, an hymn was sung

by Christ and his apostles (Matthew 26:30), which fulfilled what was prophetically spoken of Christ, and by him (Ps. 22:22), and to this Pliny may be thought to have respect when he says, that Christians at their meetings sung an hymn together to Christ, as to a God; and by a sacrament, bound themselves not to commit such and such sins [172].

5. A collection was made for the poor, and distributed to them; which, perhaps, the apostle may have some respect unto (1 Cor. 16:1, 2), and so Justin says [173], When prayer and thanksgiving were finished, the richer sort, and as many as would, freely contributed what they thought fit; and what was collected was deposited with the president, out of which were relieved the fatherless and widows, the sick, and those in bonds, and strangers; and a very fit season this to make a collection for the poor, when the hearts of believers are regaled with the love of Christ, and enlarged by it.

6. The continuance of this ordinance is to the second coming of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26), and so, as it shows forth the end of his first coming to die for his people, it assures them of his second coming; and it is not to be made a question of, that this ordinance, and all other public ordinances of the present dispensation, and the ministers of them, will continue to the end of the world, to the second coming of Christ, and then all will cease (Matthew 28:20; Rev. 21:23, 21:5).

[155] Apolog. 2 p. 97.

[156] Epist. ad Smyrn. p. 6. ad Philadelph. p. 40. ed. Voss.

[157] Adv. Haeres. 1. 5. c. 2.

[158] "Exterius quidem panis, quod ante fuerat, forma praedentitur, color ostenditur, sapor accinitur—quid enim aliud in superficie quam substantia vini conspicitur? Gusta, vinum sapit: odora vinum redolet; inspice, vini color intuetur." Bertram. de Corp. Sang. Domini, in principio.

[159] "Ecquam tam amentem esse putas, qui illum quo vescatur, deum credat esse?" Cicero de Natura Deorum, 1. 3. c. 19.

[160] "Acceptum panem et distributum discipulis, corpus illum suum fecit, hoc est corpus meum dicendo, id est, figura corporis mei," Tertull. adv. Marcion. 1. 4. c. 40.

[161] Stromat, 1. 1. p. 271.

[162] Adv. Haeres. 1. 5. c. 2.

[163] Epist. ad Ephes. p. 29.

[164] Apolog. 2. p. 97.

[165] See my Exposition of Matt. 26:26. See Gill on "Matthew 26:26".

[166] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 1. 7. c. 9. Vid. Theodorit. Hist. Eccl. 1. 5. c. 18.

[167] Catech. Mystagog. 1. 5. s. 18.

[168] Deut. Coena Domini Tract. Brev. p. 754. inter opera ejus. Tom. 1.

[169] "Quae haec est in ve bis Pharisaeicis audacia? quae uno edicto antichristi impietas et truculentia?" Aonii Palearii Testimonium, c. 14. p. 344.

[170] Apolog. 2. p. 97, 98.

[171] Government of Churches, b. 7. ch. 5. p. 328, &c.

[172] Epist. 1. 10. ep. 97.

[173] Ut Supra.

Chapter 3

OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Next to the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, is the Public Ministration of the Word; which is an ordinance of Christ under the gospel dispensation, to be continued in the church unto the end of the world: Christ, as the ascended Lord and King, having received gifts for men, gives them to men, qualifying them for the work of the ministry; which work is to be exercised by them until all the elect of God are gathered in, the members of Christ's body, the church, completed, and the number of the saints perfected, and all brought to a state of maturity in grace, and to everlasting glory and happiness; all which and more may be observed in Ephesians 4:11-13.

1. The public ministry of the word is an ordinance of Christ in the New Testament, and to be continued till his second coming; it is not, indeed, confined to the New Testament, nor peculiar to it, though most eminent in it.

First, there was something similar to it from the beginning, during the Old Testament dispensation.

1. In the patriarchal state; the gospel was first preached by the Son of God to Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden; the great salvation first began to be

spoken by him, who revealed himself as the "Seed of the woman," that should bruise the "head" of the serpent (Gen. 3:15), which was the grand text the patriarchs preached from; the truths and doctrines contained in which, as handed down to them, they opened and explained to their posterity, according to the revelation of the mind and will of God made to them. In the times of Enos, the grandson of Adam, social worship was set up, and men began to perform the public exercises of religion (Gen. 4:26). Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied or preached of the second coming of Christ to judge the world; and no doubt, as he prophesied or preached of that, so of the first coming of Christ, to save men. Noah was the "eighth preacher of righteousness;" for so the words in 2 Peter 2:5 may be rendered; [174] though they will admit of another sense, "Even a preacher of the righteousness of faith," of which he was an heir (Heb. 11:7), and Christ, by his Spirit in him, preached to a disobedient multitude with much longsuffering and patience (1 Peter 3:19, 20). Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was one; who the other six preachers were is not said. The first Adam, no doubt, was one, whom God, as a learned divine [175] says, "made for this end, that he might be a witness, a "preacher," and a praiser of his virtues and works, and, as the common master of mankind, might admonish and instruct his children and grandchildren what they might hope for, or fear, in this life and after it." And righteous Abel was another, who not only preached while alive, "but being dead, yet speaketh": and perhaps it may not be very difficult to find out the other four. The distinction of the sons of God, professors of religion, and the sons of men, profane persons, obtained in the times of Noah, and before (Gen. 6:2). Maimonides [176] observes, that their wise men say of the prophets that went before them of the house of the judgment of Eber, and the school of Methuselah, that they were all prophets, and taught men as preachers, doctors, and preceptors do. As Abraham had the gospel preached to him, so he preached it to others, as he had opportunity; the "three hundred and eighteen servants born" in his house, were "trained" up, or "instructed" [177] by him in religious things, as the word used signifies (Gen. 14:14), and a testimony of this is bore of him by the Lord himself (Gen. 18:19). In the times of Job, who seems to have lived before the giving of the law,

the sons of God, professors of religion, met together on a certain stated day, to present themselves, soul and body, to the Lord, in the performance of religious duties, which was but their reasonable service; and though then they had no written word to read or explain, yet they had a revelation of the mind and will of God to them, by one means or another; as in visions, by dreams, &c. which they kept not from, but made known to one another (Job 6:10; see Job 4:12-19).

2. Under the Mosaic dispensation there was a tabernacle pitched, called, the "tabernacle of the congregation;" and by Onkelos, "the tabernacle of the house of doctrine;" where the people resorted and sought doctrine. Priests and Levites were appointed, among other things, to instruct the people of Israel; they were interpreters and expounders of the law of Moses to them; the tribe of Levi in general (Deut. 33:10), and the priests, the sons of Aaron particularly (Lev. 10:11), hence we read of "a teaching priest," and that "the priest's lips should keep knowledge," and publish it (2 Chron. 15:3; Mal. 2:7). And the Levites also, who were dispersed among the tribes, were employed in this way; in the times of Jehoshaphat they taught the people the law of the Lord throughout all the cities of Judah; and in the times of Josiah they are described as those who "taught all Israel what was holy to the Lord," (2 Chron. 17:9, 35:3) and in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah they "read in the book of the law distinctly," in the hearing of all the people; "and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (Neh. 8:8).

3. Under the first and second temples were prophets, who also were interpreters and expounders of the law and instructors of the people; some of which were trained up for that purpose; hence we read of companies, colleges or schools of the prophets, and of the sons or disciples of the prophets, at Naioth, Bethel, and Jericho: some were more immediately raised up and inspired by God. And these prophets had certain places and stated times, weekly and monthly, where and when the people resorted to them for counsel, direction, and instruction; as appears from 2 King 4:23 the note of Gersom on the place is; "It seems, that in those days, they used to come before great men, to hear their words; and they taught them in the way in which they should walk, and the

work they should do” (see 2 King 4:38, 6:32). The prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others, were delivered as the word of the Lord, and published separately and singly, as sermons and discourses to the people; and particularly it is observed of Ezekiel, that the people came in a body and sat before him, and heard him, and seemingly with great attention, and with much pleasure and delight; but it is complained of them, that they only heard his words, but did them not (Ezek. 33:31, 32).

4. Some time after the Babylonish captivity, synagogues were erected, and synagogue worship set up; one part of which lay in public reading and preaching the law in them every Sabbath day; and this was a practice which had obtained “of old time,” long before the times of Christ and his apostles; as appears from Acts 15:21. In these synagogues our Lord himself taught, and it was a custom with him so to do, and which he was allowed; and we read of his going into the synagogue at Nazareth on a sabbath day, where he stood up to read, and had the book of the prophet Isaiah delivered to him, which he opened, and out of it read his text, and then explained and applied it (Luke 4:15-21). And so the apostles of Christ preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews; and which they were not only allowed, but were called upon by the rulers of the synagogue at a certain place, to give a word of exhortation to the people, if they had any; by which it appears, that it was not only usual to read the law, but to preach or deliver out a discourse to the people; and accordingly, we have an account of a sermon the apostle Paul preached in the synagogue, at their invitation (Acts 13:5, 15, 16; &c) and this custom of the synagogue is confirmed by Philo the Jew [178] who says, that when “they came to the holy places, called synagogues, according to their age in order, the young men sit under the elders (at their feet), and with a decent composure attend to hearing; when one taking the book, reads; and another one of the most skilful, explains what is not known,” or is more obscure.

Secondly, the public ministry of the word more clearly and generally obtained under the New Testament, or gospel dispensation, according to the prophecy of it (Isa. 2:3). The first public preacher of this kind, and under this dispensation, was John the Baptist; “The law and the prophets were until

John,” (Luke 16:16) he came first preaching in the wilderness of Judea, in a very loud and clamorous way; he was “the voice of one crying, boontos, of one bellowing like an ox,” as the word signifies. The doctrine he preached was the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; which, though rejected by the Scribes and Pharisees, was received by publicans and harlots; and this was called, “his course,” the course of his ministry, which he fulfilled in a very public manner, to all the people of Israel (Acts 13:24, 25). Our Lord Jesus Christ, whose forerunner John was, was “the minister of the circumcision,” the minister of the word to the circumcised Jews; he was sent of God to preach the gospel to them, and was anointed with the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, without measure, for that purpose; at whose doctrine his audience was astonished; he spoke such words of grace and wisdom as never man spoke, to the amazement of those that heard him; and this he did in the most public manner, in the synagogues and in the temple. The apostles of Christ were called and sent forth by him to be public ministers of the word; they were called by him from their nets to be fishers of men; they were sent forth by him at first to preach the gospel to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but after his resurrection he enlarged their commission, and sent them into all the world, to teach all nations, and preach the gospel to every creature; and since there has been a succession of ordinary ministers of the word, more or less, in all ages, whom Christ, by bestowing gifts upon them, has made pastors and teachers, able ministers of the New Testament, and faithful dispensers of the mysteries of grace. For,

Thirdly, the public ministry of the word is an ordinance of Christ; there are private teachings, which are not only commendable, but are obligatory on men; as on the heads of families, parents, and masters; parents are to teach their children, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and masters are to instruct their servants, and command their household to keep the way of the Lord; and even women, particularly aged women, are to be “teachers of good things;” and every man who has received a gift, though only for private use, should minister it one to another in private conference and conversation; but it is the public ministry of the word which is the special ordinance of Christ for public good and for general

usefulness. This is not a device of men for sinister ends, and with selfish and lucrative views; but is by the appointment of Christ, who ordered his disciples, that what they heard in the ear they should “preach upon the house tops;” that is, in the most public manner; and therefore sent them into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; and accordingly the apostle Paul, that eminent minister of the word, preached it publicly, as well as from house to house, and even from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum. It is Christ that appears to men, and calls them, and makes them able and faithful ministers of the New Testament; hence such are called “ministers of God,” of his making, and not man’s; and “good ministers of Jesus Christ;” educated, not at schools and academies, but “nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine”. The gifts qualifying them for such service are from Christ; the apostle Paul himself was made a minister of the gospel, “according to the gift of the grace of God given unto him;” and it is he who gives gifts to ordinary ministers of the word, and makes them pastors and teachers in his churches; the apostles had their mission and commission from him (John 20:21), and so all ministers of the word in successive ages; for “how shall they preach, except they be sent?” (Rom. 10:15) and they have their doctrines from him, which they are to preach; the words of the wise are from “one Shepherd,” who is Christ; and it is with words and doctrines from him they, as under shepherds, are to feed the flock, even the doctrines of the gospel; which are not of man, nor taught by man, but are by the revelation of Christ; particularly such as pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his sacrifice; which he has ordered to be published in his name, to all nations, and which accordingly has been (Luke 24:47; Acts 13:38, 39).

Fourthly, the public ministry of the word is a standing ordinance, to be continued to the second coming of Christ; there will be ministers, and so a ministry unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:20, 24:3, 14), and this will not be until all the elect of God are gathered in; the world, and the continuance of it, is for their sakes: the reason why the coming of Christ to destroy the world is seemingly deferred, is, because God is not willing that any of his beloved ones should perish, but that all should come to repentance; and

when they are all brought in, he will then come and burn the world: hence the work of the ministry, Christ has given gifts to men to qualify them for, will be continued,

1. Until all the elect of God “come to the unity of the faith,” until all and everyone of them believe in Christ; for as many as are ordained unto eternal life, do and shall believe in him; and as faith comes by hearing the word, the ministration of it will be continued until they all believe.

2. Until they all and everyone come to “the knowledge of the Son of God,” whom to know is life eternal; and this knowledge is by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, and which Christ himself gives, and that by means of the word, called, the word of knowledge; which must be continued till all know him from the least to the greatest; and their knowledge, which is now in part, is perfect.

3. Until they come “to a perfect man;” that is, until the church of Christ, which like a man consists of various members, is complete, and all the members joined into one body, and set in their proper place, and become as one man; and till every individual is perfect; not only as to parts, but as to degrees, and that in faith, in knowledge, in holiness, and in every grace. And,

4. Until they come “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;” that is, the mystical body of Christ, his church, which is his fulness, and will appear so; when all the elect are gathered in, and are filled with the graces of the Spirit, and these at their full growth, and they have arrived to their just proportion in the body, and to the measure of their stature in it they are appointed to; and till all this is accomplished, the gospel ministry will continue (see Eph. 4:12, 13). I proceed to show,

II. That the ministry of the word is a work; it is called “the work of the ministry,” (Eph. 4:13) it is a ministering work, a service, and not a dominion; such who are employed in it have not the dominion, neither over the faith nor over the practice of men, no further than enjoined by the word of God: the ministry is a service, as the word imports, and not a “sinecure;” there is business to be done, and a great deal of it; enough to employ all the time and talents of ministers, and no room nor leisure to indulge to sleepiness, to laziness, and slothfulness: and it is a

laborious work; the ministers of the gospel are not to be loiterers, but labourers in Christ's vineyard; they labour in the word and doctrine, which requires much reading of the scriptures, frequent prayer, and constant meditation and "study," in preparing for their work, which is a great "weariness to the flesh;" and much "zeal," fervour, and affection in the performance of it, which is attended with much fatigue, and an expense of the physical spirits; to which the apostle may have some respect (2 Cor. 12:15), and the ministers of the gospel are not only fellow labourers with one another, but with the Lord himself in his church; the manuring, cultivation, planting, and watering his vineyard, and the building up of his people in a church state, are laborious services; so that if the Lord did not go forth working with them, it would be to no purpose; "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth," which are both parts of the gospel ministry, but "God that giveth the increase," success to their ministrations; "And except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it," (1 Cor. 3:7, 9; Ps. 127:1) but the presence of the Lord with them, and the operation of his hands seen in their ministry, are an encouragement to them: and besides, their work is a good work (1 Tim. 3:1). A work pleasantly, profitably, and honourably good; pleasant to a minister, whose heart is in it; profitable, to them that sit under it, when attended with a divine blessing; and honourable in itself; what more so than to be the servants of the most high God, and to be employed in such service, as to show unto men the way of salvation? than to be the ambassadors of Christ, and to stand in his stead? than to be stewards of the mysteries of Christ, and of the manifold grace of God? than to be the lights of the world, stars in Christ's right hand, the messengers or angels of the churches, and the glory of Christ? And it is a work worthy of honour from men; such who labour in it, are "worthy of double honour;" of an honourable maintenance, and of an honourable respect; they are to be received with gladness, to be had in reputation, to be known, owned, and acknowledged by those over whom they are, as their fathers, guides, and governors; and to be highly esteemed for their work's sake: and it is the "work of the Lord and of Christ," (1 Cor. 16:10; Phil. 2:30) to which they are called by Christ, qualified for it by him, and assisted in it; of which he is the sum and substance, and when rightly done, makes for his

glory: and in this they should be constant, steadfast, and immoveable, always abounding in it, since their labour is not in vain in the Lord; though no man is sufficient for it of himself; his ability is of God, and his dependence must be upon him both for assistance and success. I go on to inquire,

III. Who are fit and proper persons to be employed in this work.

1. They must be of a good moral character; an immoral man is not fit to be a member of a church, much less a minister of the word: among the qualifications of a bishop, overseer, or pastor of a church, several moral characters are observed; as, that such must be blameless, of good behaviour, and have a good report of them that are without; inoffensive in life and conversation, lest the ministry should be blamed, and lie under reproach: but then he must be more than a moral man, both in theory and practice; a mere moralist is not capable of doing the work of an evangelist, or of a gospel preacher.

2. They must be such who are partakers of the grace of God in truth, or otherwise they will not be able to speak of divine things feelingly and experimentally; of which they cannot say they have heard and seen, and felt them, and therefore cannot speak of them; in some cases they must be dumb, and not able to speak to them; nor can they have a fellow feeling with souls tempted and deserted; nor have compassion on the ignorant; nor speak a word in season to weary souls: but then, they must have more grace, have more than in common other Christians have; or else, as Moses wished, all the Lord's people would be fit to be prophets and ministers of the word.

3. They must be endowed by Christ with ministerial gifts, such as Christ received for men, and gives unto them, whereby they are made and fitted by him to be pastors and teachers; it is not grace, nor human learning, nor natural parts, which qualify for the ministry of themselves, though they are all meet and useful; but a gift from Christ; the apostle Paul had all the above things, but he ascribes his being a minister of the gospel to neither of them, but to a "gift" he had received, fitting and qualifying him for this important work (Eph. 3:7, 8), and this gift is in some greater, in others less; but in all where it is, it more or less qualifies for the work of the ministry (Rom. 12:6).

4. They must be studious in the scriptures, and

have a competent knowledge of things contained in them; whereby "the man of God," the minister of Christ, "may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," and particularly unto the work of the ministry (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). They should make the Bible their chief study, and attend to the diligent and constant reading of it, and meditate upon the things in it; and give themselves up wholly to them, that their profiting in the knowledge of the mystery of Christ might be manifest; for as they are to feed the churches "with knowledge and understanding," it is necessary they themselves should have a good share of such knowledge; and such who are like Apollos, mighty in the scriptures, are as scribes, well "instructed unto the kingdom of God" (Matthew 13:52).

5. They must have a call both from God and men to this work; "No man takes this honour to himself, but he that is called of God;" which is the inward call, and is known by the kind of gifts bestowed upon a man, fitting for such service; and by the providence of God, inclining and directing the church to separate him to the work to which he has called him; and the outward call is by the church itself, upon trial of his gifts. And,

6. They must be sent forth, they must have a mission from Christ, and that by the church (Rom. 10:15), the apostles of Christ were sent forth by him, as he was by his Father (John 20:21), there were some in Jeremiah's time who ran, and were not sent; prophesied, though not spoken to; but these were not true prophets and ministers of God.

7. They must be such who are counted faithful, and "put into the ministry" by the Lord himself; as the apostle Paul was (1 Tim. 1:12), not who thrust themselves, who intrude into this office, and take it to themselves, without the leave of God or men.

8. They are only the proper persons to exercise this ministry, to whom it is given, and who have received it of the Lord, and have given themselves up to it: the apostle speaks of the ministry of the word as what he had "received of the Lord Jesus;" as a gift bestowed on him, a trust committed to him, and therefore was concerned to fulfil it; and directs to it as an argument to be used with Archippus, "to fulfil it," (Acts 20:24; Col. 4:17) and therefore such should give themselves up wholly to it, and employ their time and talents in it; addict themselves to the ministration of the saints,

as the house of Stephanas did; and as little as possible entangle themselves with the affairs of life, but give themselves to the ministry of the word and prayer, as the apostles chose (Acts 6:4).

9. They should be both "able" and "apt" to teach, have abilities from Christ for this work, who only makes men "able ministers of the New Testament;" and also have utterance of speech, a gift of elocution, so as to be able to clothe their ideas with proper words, conveying in an easy manner the sense of them to the understanding of others; and should seek to find out acceptable and suitable words, as the royal preacher is said to do (Eccl. 12:10), giving pleasure and profit to those that hear them (2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 3:2).

10. They must be such who "study to show themselves workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;" giving the true sense of it, searching into the deep things in it, and imparting to everyone their portion, agreeable to their age, of children, young men, and fathers; to children, the sincere milk of the word; to those more grown, strong meat: also should distinguish between saints and sinners, the precious and the vile, giving the children their bread, and not holy things to dogs.

IV. The subject matter of the work of the ministry, is next to be inquired into. This, in the whole compass of it, takes in the ministration of the word, the administration of ordinances, the exercise of church discipline, and the whole care of the flock; but that branch of it under consideration is, the ministration of the gospel; and what that is may be learnt,

1st. From the names by which it is called.

1. The "ministry of the word," in general, the apostles proposed to give themselves up to (Acts 6:4), which is not the word of men, but of God; and which is spoken by the ministers of it as such, and received by the hearers of it, in whom it works effectually (Heb. 13:7; 1 Thess. 2:13), and is called the word of faith, the word of truth, the word of reconciliation, and the word of life and of salvation (Rom. 10:8; Eph. 1:13; 2 Cor. 5:19; Phil. 2:16; Acts 13:26).

2. The ministration of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:8), so called, because it is to be spoken in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth; and it makes known the things of the Spirit of God, spiritual truths and doctrines, which the natural man receiveth not; and by means of it the Spirit of God, and his grace are communicated and

received; hence a minister of the gospel is described as one that ministers the Spirit to men; that is, is the instrument of their receiving the grace and gifts of the Spirit (Gal. 3:2, 5).

3. The ministration of righteousness (2 Cor. 3:9), which is the “word of righteousness;” so called, because therein is “revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith;” (Heb. 5:13; Rom. 1:17) the grand and principal doctrine of it, is justification by the righteousness of Christ (Acts 13:39).

4. The ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18), called, the “word of reconciliation,” (2 Cor. 5:19) which is no other than the gospel of peace; the word preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all (Eph. 6:15; Acts 10:36), which does not propose to men to make their peace with God; but declares that peace is made by the blood of Christ, and that reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction for sin, are made by the sufferings, death, and sacrifice of Christ.

2ndly, what this ministry is may be learnt from what the ministers of Christ are directed to preach, and which they make the subject of their ministrations. As,

1. The gospel: of the gospel they are ministers; their commission is to preach the gospel; it is the gospel of the blessed God, which is committed to their trust; and there is a woe upon them if they preach not the gospel. Which is called,

(1). The gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24), it being a declaration of the grace and favour of God in Christ; that salvation is entirely of grace, and not of works, from first to last; that the first step to it, election, is the “election of grace;” that justification is, “freely by the grace of God;” that forgiveness of sins, is “according to the riches of grace;” that adoption is owing to the amazing love of God; and that eternal life is the “gift,” the free grace gift of God through Christ: all which are the subjects of the gospel ministry.

(2). It is often called the gospel of Christ, the word of Christ, and the doctrine of Christ; which treats of his person, as the Son of God; of his offices, as Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King; and of the grace that is in him; and of the blessings of grace that come by him: and whoever brings not this doctrine, is not to be received and encouraged (2 John 5:9, 10).

(3). The gospel of salvation, the word of salvation, and salvation itself; it is a publication of salvation

by Christ; it is the faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners; it declares, that there is salvation in him, and in no other; and that whoever believes in him shall be saved: this is the gospel every faithful minister preaches, and every sensible sinner desires to hear.

2. Christ and him crucified is the subject matter, the sum and substance of the gospel ministry; “We preach Christ crucified;” this is the preaching or the doctrine of the cross; the doctrine of salvation by a crucified Christ; of peace by the blood of his cross; of the reconciliation of God’s elect in one body, by the cross; of the atonement and expiation of their sins by his sufferings and death upon it; this the apostle Paul determined to make the subject, and the alone subject, of his ministrations (1 Cor. 1:23, 2:2).

3rdly, the ministry of the word takes in everything respecting doctrine; and in general it is required, that it be sound; the words of faith and sound doctrine, the form of sound words, sound speech, which cannot be condemned; and things which become sound doctrine, which are healthful and salutary, the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus; and which are opposed to unsound, unhealthful doctrines, false doctrines, which eat as do a canker: and sound doctrine is such as is according to the scriptures, which are “profitable for doctrine;” from whence every doctrine is to be fetched, and thereby proved and confirmed, according to which every minister of the word is to preach (Isa. 8:20), and it is by this rule every hearer is to judge of the soundness or unsoundness of it, as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11), the doctrine delivered in the ministry of the word should be the same that was preached by Christ and his apostles; the first Christians continued steadfastly “in the apostles’ doctrine;” and, indeed, if any other doctrine is preached, it is not to be received (Gal. 1:8, 9), and this is the doctrine which is “according to godliness;” which teaches it, encourages, promotes, and enforces it; such as the doctrines of election, of free justification by Christ’s righteousness, of full pardon of sin by his blood, and of the final perseverance of the saints; which are no licentious doctrines, though slanderously so charged; but constrain men to live to Christ, who died for them and rose again; and to which every minister of the gospel should take heed; this is the apostle’s advice to

Timothy, “Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine,” (1 Tim. 4:16) that it be pure and incorrupt, agreeable to the scriptures, the same with the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and which promotes holiness of life and conversation.

4thly the ministry of the word takes in the several duties of religion, which are to be insisted on in their course; and saints are to be exhorted to the exercise of them upon evangelical principles and motives; they are to be taught to observe whatsoever Christ has commanded, every ordinance of his, and every duty both with respect to God and men; they are to be put in mind to be ready to every good work, and to be careful to maintain them for necessary uses; every duty, public and private, personal, relative, and domestic, as well as every doctrine, are to be inculcated throughout the course of the gospel ministry.

V. The manner in which the work of the ministry is to be performed may be next observed. And,

1. It should be done diligently and constantly, with great sedulity and perseverance, “in season and out season,” (2 Tim. 4:2) and the apostle having mentioned several important doctrines of the gospel, thus charges Titus: “These things I will, that thou affirm constantly,” publicly and privately, and from house to house, as he did (Titus 3:8; Acts 20:20).

2. With great plainness and perspicuity (2 Cor. 3:12, 4:2), delivering out truth in a clear and open manner, without disguise; not using ambiguous expressions, phrases of a doubtful or double meaning, and an unintelligible jargon of words; but language plain and easy to be understood by those of the meanest capacity; yet not base and sordid, but above contempt; should speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but in the words of the Holy Ghost, in scripture language, or what is agreeable to it.

3. Fully and completely; which is done when every truth is preached, and none concealed, and no duty omitted; when nothing that is profitable is kept back, and the whole counsel of God is declared; and when it is preached “fully,” as it was by the apostle Paul; and “full proof of the ministry” is made, which he directs to; and the ministry received of the Lord Jesus is fulfilled in each of the parts and branches of it (Rom. 15:19; 2 Tim. 4:5; Col. 4:17).

4. Faithfully (Jer. 23:28), ministers are stewards of the mysteries of God, and of his grace; and “it is

required of stewards, that a man be found faithful,” as well as wise (1 Cor. 4:1, 2; Luke 12:42) more honourable character cannot well be had, than what is given of Tychicus, that he was a “beloved brother, and faithful minister in the Lord;” and noticing can be more desirable, or confer a greater degree of honour, than at last to hear from Christ, “Well done, good and faithful servant!” (Eph. 6:21; Matthew 25:21, 23).

5. Sincerely; delivering out “the sincere milk of the word;” not corrupting it; not using any artful methods to colour things, and put a false gloss upon them; but exposing truth to public view in its native simplicity, without any sinister ends and selfish views; without any strife and contention, but of good will, to the glory of Christ, and the welfare of immortal souls (2 Cor. 2:17, 4:2; Phil. 1:15, 16).

6. Fervently; it is said of Apollos, that “being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord;” (Acts 18:25) and the apostle Paul served God “with his Spirit in the gospel of his Son;” that is, his whole heart and soul were engaged in the ministration of it (Rom. 1:9).

7. The gospel, and the truths of it, should be ministered with certainty, and not with doubtfulness; there is such a thing as “the full assurance of understanding” in private Christians (Col. 2:2), and much more should be in ministers of the word; who should not be afraid of being reckoned dogmatical; they should be so; that is, they ought to be at a point about, and be assured of the truths they deliver to others; “We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God,” said the apostles of Christ; and so with respect to every other truth; “We believe, and therefore speak,” with certainty and confidence (2 Tim. 3:4; John 6:69; 2 Cor. 4:13).

8. And so they may, as they should, “speak boldly, as they ought to speak,” without the fear of men, which brings a snare; and not seeking to please them; for then they would not be the servants of Christ: thus the apostles, not intimidated with the threats and menaces of men, the persecutions of wicked men, and the opposition of false teachers; “were bold in their God to speak the gospel of God with much contention” (Eph. 6:19, 20; 1 Thess. 2:2, 4).

9. The gospel should be preached consistently; it should be uniform, and all of a piece; no contradiction, no yea and nay in it; the “trumpet” should not give

“an uncertain sound;” otherwise it will occasion great confusion in the minds of those that hear it, and throw them into the utmost perplexity, not knowing what to believe.

10. The word should be dispensed wisely; the ministers of it should be wise, as well as faithful, to give to everyone their portion, and that in due season; they should study to be skilful work men, rightly dividing the word of truth; it requires that they should have the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary; “he that winneth souls is wise;” and being “crafty,” the apostle says, he “caught the Corinthians with guile,” not with a sinful, but a laudable and commendable one.

VI. The utility of the public ministry of the word may be next considered. And,

1. In general; its use is for the enlargement of the interest of Christ in the world; and it is by means of the gospel being preached to all nations in all the world, that the kingdom of Christ has been spread every where; not only in Judea, where the gospel was first preached, but throughout the Gentile world multitudes were converted, and churches were set up everywhere; Christianity triumphed, and heathenism every where abolished. Julian the apostate observing this, in imitation of the Christians, and thinking thereby to increase and establish heathenism, appointed lectures and expositions of heathenish dogmas, respecting both morality and things more abstruse, and public prayers, and singing at stated hours, in pagan temples. [179]

2. The ministry of the word is for the conversion of sinners; without which churches would not be increased nor supported, and must in course fail, and come to nothing; but the hand of the Lord being with his ministers, many in every age believe and turn to the Lord, and are added to the churches; by which means they are kept up and preserved: and hence it is necessary in the ministers of the word, to set forth the lost and miserable estate and condition of men by nature, the danger they are in, the necessity of regeneration and repentance, and of a better righteousness than their own, and of faith in Christ; which things are blessed for the turning of men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

3. Another use of it is, “For the perfecting of

the saints;” for the completing of the number of the elect, in the effectual calling, even of those who are sanctified, or set apart by God the Father, by that eternal act of his, choosing them in Christ; or “for the jointing in of the saints,” as it may be rendered; who were disjointed and scattered abroad by the fall of Adam; these are gathered in by the ministry of the word; so that none shall perish, but all come to repentance; and be inserted into the body of the church, and presented perfect in Christ Jesus: hence, after this, and previous to what follows, the phrase, for the work of the ministry, is placed; pointing out this twofold use of it; as for the perfecting the saints, so,

4. “For the edifying of the body of Christ,” (Eph. 4:12) that is, his church; for it is by means of the word it maketh increase unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph. 4:16) and thus the churches in Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, having rest, and peace, and blessed, with the ministration of the gospel, were “edified,” and built up in their most holy faith, as individuals are (Acts 9:31; 1 Cor. 14:3).

5. The principal end and use of it, to which all the others tend, is the glory of God, and which ought to be chiefly in view in the performance of it (1 Peter 4:11).

[174] Vid. Poli Synopsin in loc et alios criticos, Zegerum, Drusium, &c.

[175] Witsii Aegyptiac. l. 2. c. 15. s. 5. p. 179.

[176] Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. c. 39.

[177] chnykyv “Catechumenos suos,” Drusius.

[178] Quod Omnis Probus, p. 877.

[179] Nazianzen orat. 3. adv. Julian. p. 101, 102. Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 16.

Chapter 4

OF PUBLIC HEARING THE WORD

The public hearing of the word is another ordinance of divine service under the gospel dispensation. Public reading of the scriptures was a part of synagogue worship (Acts 13:15, 15:21; see Luke 4:16, 17), and reading the scriptures publicly obtained in the primitive times of Christianity; as appears from Justin Martyr [180] and Tertullian; [181] and in later times there was a particular officer appointed

to this service, called the “lector,” or reader. Public hearing is connected with the public ministry of the word; they go together, and support each other, and the one cannot be without the other: under the former dispensation there was a public hearing of the law, or word of the Lord, at certain stated times and seasons; at the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles the law was to be read “before all Israel, in their hearing;” men, women, and children, were to be gathered together, that they might “hear and learn to fear” the Lord their God (Deut. 31:10-13), at certain times, as at new moons and sabbaths, the people used to come and sit before the prophets, and hear the word of the Lord from their mouths; and even in the Babylonish captivity, it is said to Ezekiel, of the people of the Jews, “They come unto thee as the people cometh;” whence it appears it was a custom and usual so to do (see Deut. 8:1, 14:1; Ezek. 33:31); when that people were returned from their captivity, in the times of Ezra and Nehemiah, the book of the law was brought forth publicly and read, in the open street, from morning till noon, “before men and women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to it” (Neh. 8:2, 3). In some periods of time, under the former dispensation, there was a great scarcity of hearing the word; in the times of Eli, and when Samuel was young, “the word of the Lord was precious;” that is, scarce and rare, as such usually be that are so; for “there was no open vision;” no public prophet, to whom the Lord spoke in vision, and to whom the people could have recourse, to hear and learn, and know the word and will of God. In the times of Asa the people of Israel had been for a long season “without a teaching priest;” and so without hearing the law, or word of the Lord, from his mouth; they had, as it was sometimes threatened, a famine, “not a famine of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord” (1 Sam. 3:1; 2 Chron. 15:3; Amos 8:11). Under the gospel dispensation, opportunities of hearing the word have been more frequent, and of hearing it more clearly, plainly, and fully; of hearing what kings and prophets desired to hear, but heard not; and that by all sorts of people, and oftentimes in great numbers; “The law and the prophets were until John,” read, explained, and heard publicly; “Since that time the kingdom of God is

preached,” the gospel of the kingdom, in a clearer manner, and “every man presseth into it,” to hear it (Luke 16:16), there were great flockings to hear John, when he came preaching in the wilderness of Judea; and multitudes attended the ministry of Christ and his apostles; in process of time the Jews indeed put away the word of God from them, and showed themselves unworthy of it, and even of everlasting life; when the apostles, as they were ordered, turned to the Gentiles, and they gladly received it (Acts 28:28), and it is both the duty and privilege of all, who have the opportunity of hearing it, to hear it; “For faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,” (Rom. 10:17) and this is what is to be treated of; concerning which may be observed the following things,

1. The object of hearing, or what is to be heard; this is a matter of moment, and about which men should be cautious; our Lord’s advice is, “Take heed what you hear,” (Mark 4:24) not the cunningly devised fables, and illusory dreams of men are to be attended to, and heard; but “the word of God;” between which there is as much difference as between chaff and wheat (Jer. 23:28), that word, which comes from God, relates his mind and will, especially concerning salvation by Christ, is to be hearkened unto; and whatsoever is delivered by the ministers of the gospel, agreeable to the word of God, which is fetched out of it, and confirmed by it, is to be heard and received, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God: not lies, spoken in hypocrisy, as all false doctrines are; for no lie is of the truth; not these, but “the word of truth,” is to be heard and embraced (Eph. 1:13), which comes from the God of truth; the substance of which is Christ, the truth, and which the Spirit of truth leads into the knowledge of, and contains in it nothing but truth: not the law, as in the hands of Moses; that voice of words, which they that heard, intreated they might hear no more, they were so terrible; but the gospel of salvation, which brings the good news and glad tidings of salvation by Christ. When Moses and Elijah were with Christ on the mount, the voice there from the excellent glory directed to hear, not Moses and Elias, but the beloved Son of God, saying, “Hear ye him”: the sheep of Christ will not hear the voice of a stranger, which they know not, but the voice of Christ, the great and good Shepherd, in the gospel and in his ministers; which is a voice of love, grace, and

mercy; a voice of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation by Christ; a soul quickening voice, a very powerful one, a soul charming, a soul alluring voice; a comforting and rejoicing one, and therefore very desirable to be heard, and very useful and profitable to attend unto; blessed are the people that hear and know this joyful sound.

II. The act of hearing, which is twofold, internal and external; there may be one, the latter, without the other, the former; sometimes they go together; and then hearing is not only a duty, but grace, benefit, and blessing.

First, there is an internal hearing of the word; when it is so heard as to be understood, and when men know it to be the word of the Lord, as the flock of Christ do, even the poor of the flock, and can distinguish the voice of Christ from the voice of a stranger; when it is heard so as to approve of it, like it, love it, and receive the love of the truth, and that from love to it; when men feel the power of it, enlightening their minds in the knowledge of divine things, attracting their affections to Christ, bowing their wills to him; it coming not in word only, but in power, works effectually in them; when they taste the sweetness of it, and eat it, and it is the joy and rejoicing of their hearts; and they esteem the words of Christ's mouth more than their necessary food; when they hear it so as to believe it, not with a bare temporary faith, but with a spiritual saving faith in God and Christ revealed in it (John 5:24), and when they hear so as to receive the word into their hearts, and it becomes the ingrafted word, and springs up, and brings forth fruit in heart and life.

Should it be asked, how any come by such hearing of the word, since men are naturally and wilfully deaf unto it, are like the deaf adder, which stops her ear to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely; they refuse to hearken, pull away the shoulder, stop their ears, that they should not hear? the answer is, that it is not of themselves, but of the Lord; as the seeing eye, so the hearing ear, both in a natural and in a spiritual sense, is from the Lord (Prov. 20:12), it is he that gives them ears to hear, which he does not give to all, only to some; when he gives them hearts and new spirits, then he gives them new ears to hear, what they never heard before, at least in such a manner; he opens their ears and hearts, as he did Lydia's, to attend to the things spoken in the ministry of the word;

he circumcises their uncircumcised hearts and ears, as to love him, so to hear his word with delight and pleasure; all which is done in regeneration: "He that is of God," who is born of God, "heareth God's words," internally and spiritually; "ye therefore," says Christ to the Jews, "hear them not, because ye are not of God," are unregenerate persons (John 8:47).

Secondly, there is an external hearing of the word, which is both a duty and a privilege, since it is the word of God that is heard, and oftentimes much profit arises from it; and it is therefore to be heard,

1. Constantly, and with great assiduity (Prov. 8:34), the public places of worship, meant by wisdom's gates and doors, where the word is to be heard, are daily or frequently to be attended; if the word is to be preached in season and out of season, it is to be heard as often; or otherwise preaching is to no purpose: much may be lost by a non-attendance on and a neglect of public worship, as the case of Thomas shows; and much advantage may be got by a perseverant waiting on the means of grace, as the case of the man having an infirmity eight and thirty years, after long waiting at the pool, may encourage to hope for and expect.

2. The word of God should be heard early and eagerly. It is said of Christ's hearers, "that all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him," (Luke 21:38) these were such who were swift to hear, and their earliness to hear showed eagerness to it: an instance of eagerness to hear we have in Cornelius and his family, who having sent to Joppa for Simon Peter, who was to tell him what he ought to do, prepared to receive him, and therefore when he came, thus addressed him; "Here we are all present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God," (Acts 10:33) they were ready waiting for the preacher, to hear what he had in commission to say unto them; and not the preacher for them, as the custom now is; so the Gentiles at Antioch, having heard the word of the Lord, desired that the same words might be spoken to them the next sabbath, when almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God, so eager and intent were they upon it (Acts 13:42, 44).

3. The word of God should be heard attentively; it is observed of Christ's auditory, "that all the people were very attentive to hear him," (Luke 19:48) or "hung on him," [182] as they were "hearing;" they

pressed to him, got close about him, and hung as it were upon his lips, [183] to catch every word that dropped from him; as Benhadad's servants, when they waited upon the king of Israel, on account of their master, "diligently observed whether anything would come from him, and did hastily catch it," to improve it in their master's favour (1 King 20:33). When our Lord entered into the synagogue at Nazareth, and had the book of Isaiah given him, out of which he read a passage, and explained it, "the eyes of all the synagogue were fastened on him," looked wistly at him, they attentively heard him, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth (Luke 4:20, 22), when "the eyes of a fool," while hearing the word, "are in the ends of the earth," roving and wandering here and there, and he inattentive to it.

4. The word of God should be heard with reverence; all irreverent looks and gestures should be avoided in hearing it; men should consider in whose presence they are, and whose word they are hearing; not the word of man, but the word of God; "Where the word of a king is, there is power," and it commands awe and reverence; and much more the word of the King of kings: God is to be feared, and had in reverence, "in the assembly of the saints;" in every part of religious worship there performed, and particularly in hearing his word; we read of some that "tremble" at his word, which I understand not of a slavish fear, and legal terror at it, but of a reverential affection for it, and behaviour under it.

5. The word of God is to be heard with faith, since without it, it is unprofitable (Heb. 4:2), as food not being mixed with a liquid, an agreeable humour in the stomach, is not digested, and becomes unprofitable; so the word, not being mixed with faith, is not concocted, and yields no nourishment.

6. The word of God heard, should be carefully retained, and not let slip [184] (Heb. 2:1) like leaking vessels, which let out the liquor put into them, or like strainers which immediately let through what is poured into them; such are the forgetful hearers of the word, which ought to be laid up in the mind and memory, as a jewel in a cabinet; and which, when heard, should be kept in an honest and good heart, not only for present use, but for future good (Ps. 119:11). I proceed to consider,

III. The various hearers of the word; for all men

do not hear alike, and to like profit and advantage. Some writers [185] distribute hearers into four sorts, whom they compare to the following things; some are like "sponges," which attract and suck in all, both good and bad; such are those hearers who receive and like all they hear; be it a sound, evangelical discourse, they will express their approbation of it; and be it the very reverse, they will commend it as a good discourse, not being able to distinguish between truth and error, sound and unsound doctrine; the best in those hearers is, they are not difficult, but are easily pleased. Others are compared to "hourglasses," in which the sand runs quick out of one glass into another; so some hearers, what they hear with one ear, they let out at the other, as is usually said. A third sort are compared to "strainers," cloth strainers, which let all the good liquor pass through, and retain the dregs and lees; so these let pass, and take no notice of what is valuable, which they hear; but if there is any thing in a discourse that is weak and impertinent, foolish and vain, that they are sure to observe. A fourth sort are compared to a sort of "sieves," which let pass everything that is good for nothing, and only retain the fine flour; these are the best of hearers, and who are fed with the finest of the wheat. But our Lord, with much greater propriety, has divided hearers of the word into four sorts also; one he compares to seed that falls on the wayside, which the fowls of the air pick up and devour: another sort, to seed that falls on stony ground, or on a rock, which springing up hastily, soon withers and comes to nothing: a third sort, to seed that falls among thorns, which growing up with it, choke it, and it becomes unfruitful: and a fourth sort, to seed that falls on good ground, and brings forth fruit of various degrees (Matthew 13:1-23).

First, one sort is comparable to seed that falls by the wayside; by which seem to be meant casual and accidental hearers, who passing by a place of worship stop and step in; not with an intention to hear, but to gratify some curiosity or another; and therefore hear in a very careless and indifferent manner, and forget what they hear as soon as they hear it: these are compared to a way by the side of grain fields, left for persons to walk on between them, and so a common path, a beaten road; to which their hearts are like, every sin, lust, and evil thought passing and repassing in them, and become desperately wicked; and as

a path thus frequently trodden becomes hard and unsusceptible of seed that falls upon it; so the hearts of men become hard through the deceitfulness of sin, and incapable of receiving any impressions upon them by the word they hear; and as such a wayside must be ploughed, broken up, and opened, ere seed can be received into it; so such hearts of men must be opened, as Lydia's was, to attend to the things spoken in the ministry of the word. These hearers are such who hear, but "understand" not what they hear, as a natural man does not, and so it is lost unto them. Our Lord interprets, "the fowls of the air," catching away what was sown, and devouring it, of the wicked one, Satan, the devil; and it being in the plural number in the parable "fowls of the air," may denote the wicked one with the spiritual wickednesses in high places, Satan and his principalities and powers, the devil and his angels, compared to fowls of the air, because of their habitation in it; Satan being the prince of the power or posse of devils that dwell in the air; and because of their voraciousness, seeking whom and what they may devour; and as where seed is sowing, birds flock about to pick up what they can; so where there is a ministration and hearing of the word, Satan is sure to be there, to hinder the benefit of it as much as in him lies; and who may be said to "catch away that which was sown in the heart;" not grace, which was not sown there, and which where it is cannot be taken away, but remains; but as Mark and Luke have it, "the word," that was sown in their hearts; not in their understandings, for such hearers understand it not; nor in their affections, these being distinguished from the stony ground hearers, who receive the word with joy; but in their memories, and that very slightly, the heart being put for the memory, as in Luke 2:51 out of which it is suddenly and secretly caught, being made to forget it immediately, by diverting the mind to other objects, and fixing the attention elsewhere, so that the word to such an hearer is entirely useless.

Secondly, another sort is like to seed that falls on stony ground, or on a rock, as Luke has it; by which such hearers are meant, who are constant and attentive, understand what they hear in some sort, and assent to it, "believe" it, at least "for a while," and make a profession of it, yea, receive it "with joy," with a flash of natural affection, like Herod, and others of John's hearers (Mark 6:20; John 5:35), yet

but stony ground still; their hearts are as hard as a rock, unbroken by the word, without any true sense of sin, and repentance for it, and destitute of any spiritual life and motion, stubborn, inflexible, stout hearted, and far from righteousness. Now it is said of this seed, that it "withered away," for want of depth of earth; and as Luke has it, because it lacked moisture, and through the scorching heat of the sun, and because it had no root; so hearers, comparable to such ground, and the seed on it, "wither" in their profession; the leaves of profession drop from them like leaves from trees in autumn, and leave them bare and naked; and because of the trouble they meet with in their profession, they are "offended and stumble, and in a time of temptation," as a time of persecution is, they "fall away;" not from grace they never had, but from the doctrine of grace they professed: which is owing, partly to the word not being sown deeply in their hearts; for as the seed to which they are compared soon sprung up, because it had but little depth of earth to get through, for the same reason it soon withered away; and so in these hearers, there being only some slight convictions, and superficial knowledge, and a temporary historical faith; but no solid, substantial truth and wisdom in the inward parts, they soon decline in their profession: and partly to their not being watered continually with the rain of heavenly doctrine, and the dews of divine grace, and also to the sun of persecution beating upon them they cannot bear, and to their having no root, neither in the love of God, nor in Christ, nor in themselves; the root of the matter not being in them, in of time they come to nothing.

Thirdly, a third sort is like to seed that falls among thorns, which choke it; these design such who having heard the word, "go forth," as Luke says, not in acts of growth and fruitfulness, as in Malachi 4:2 rather in the course of an external profession, as the virgins, wise and foolish, took their lamps of profession, and went forth to meet the bridegroom; or it may be, those hearers may be said to go forth, not to hear the word, but from it; neglecting and forsaking it, as Demas forsook the apostle Paul, having loved the world; of which complexion these hearers seem to be, and so went forth to their worldly business; like those invited to the wedding, who made light of it, and went their way, one to his farm, another to his merchandise. Our

Lord interprets the thorns which choked the seed, of worldly cares, deceitful riches, the lusts of other things, and the pleasures of this life, which all are of a surfeiting and suffocating nature. By the "care of the world," is not meant a laudable care of a man to provide for himself and family, and that he may have to give to them that need; but an anxious, immoderate one, which is, like thorns, distressing, afflictive, perplexing; and which is vain and fruitless, since by all a man's care and thought he cannot add a cubit to his stature; and yet so much engross his thoughts, as to hinder the usefulness of the word: riches are "deceitful" things, they do not give the satisfaction they promise, nor continue as long as may be expected; and are sometimes the means of leading out of the right way, and cause men to err from the faith, and drop the profession of it; or prevent their going into the right way, and following Christ, as the young man in the gospel: and like thorns, they are pricking, and pierce men through with many sorrows, who covet after them (1 Tim. 6:9, 10), and are injurious to others; the prince, the judge, and the great man, the best of them is as a brier, and the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge, who oppress and crush the poor; and they are unprofitable, as to another world, cannot profit in the day of wrath, nor give to God a ransom for the soul: and "other lusts," worldly and fleshly ones, as they are contrary to the word, they war against the soul, and so are hurtful; and the "pleasures of life" are but for a season, and short lived, and though they are sweet and pleasant for a while, they are bitterness in the end, and are found to be vanity and vexation of spirit, and lead to destruction; such hearers, in whom these things prevail, are like the earth, described Hebrews 6:8. Now it is said of the thorns, that they "sprung up," that is, of themselves, as thorns do, and are not sown and planted; and the lusts signified by them, are the works of the flesh, and spring from corrupt nature; and these "enter" into the heart, and overspread the powers and faculties of the soul, and so "choke" the word, as the thorns the seed, by overtopping it, and it becomes unfruitful, brings forth no fruit, at least none to perfection.

Fourthly, a fourth sort of hearers is like to seed that falls on good ground, and brings forth fruit of various degrees; by whom are meant such who hear, and "understand" what they hear; not merely

notionally, but experimentally; into whose hearts the word enters, accompanied with a divine power; the entrance of which give light into the knowledge of divine things; by which such know the worth of it, and prize it above thousands of gold and silver, and can discern things that differ, and approve what is excellent; can distinguish between truth and error, and receive the one and reflect the other; these are such hearers who hear the word, and "receive" it, as Mark has it; not into their heads only, but into their hearts, where it has a place, and dwells richly; who receive it not as the word of man, but as the word of God; as his witness and record which he bears of his Son, of his person, and divine Sonship, and of eternal life and salvation by him; and receive it gladly, as did the three thousand pricked to the heart; and with all readiness, like the noble Bereans, having searched and examined what they heard; and also receive the ingrafted word with meekness, subjecting their reason to divine revelation; not exercising themselves in things too high for them, rejecting every vain imagination, carnal reasonings, and all high thoughts exalted against the knowledge of Christ: these are such hearers, as it is expressed in Luke, who, "in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it;" where the good ground is explained of a good heart, made so by the Spirit and grace of God; otherwise the heart of man is wicked, yea, desperately wicked; nor is it in the power of man to make his heart good; it is God only that can create a clean and good heart in him; give him an heart of flesh, soft and tender, susceptible of the word, on which, through divine grace, it makes good impressions; and here it is laid up as a rich jewel in a cabinet, and kept and preserved for future use: here what is committed is kept and held fast, such will not part with it, nor depart from it, but keep it without wavering, being established in it, and with it; stand fast in it, in the profession of it: and these "bring forth fruit with patience;" which fruit they have from Christ, the green fir tree; and through an ingrafture into him, and abiding in him, as branches in the vine; and which is produced under the influence of the Spirit of God, and makes much for the glory of God; and which appears in the exercise of grace, and in the performance of good works: and this is brought forth "with patience" under sufferings and is increased thereby, and continues until it is brought

to perfection; and is in some more, in others less, and in all good fruit, of the same quality, though not of the same quantity (Matthew 13:23; Mark 4:20; Luke 8:15). I go on to observe,

IV. What is requisite to the right hearing of the word, both before it, at it, and after it.

First; what is necessary previous to hearing the word, and in order to it.

1. Prayer should go before it. Such who are desirous of hearing the word to profit and advantage, should pray for the minister, that he may be directed to what may be suitable to their cases, be assisted in his work, and be greatly blessed to their souls' good: and for themselves, that they might have their minds disposed to hear the word, and be kept from wanderings under it, and that they may understand what they hear, and receive it in the love of it; otherwise how can a blessing on Zion's provisions be expected, when it has not been asked? and how unreasonable is it to blame the preacher, when reflecting on their own conduct, should take the blame to themselves.

2. There should be a previous consideration of the nature, use, and end of this service; that it is intended the good and edification of the souls of men, and glory of God; it should be considered of what importance it is to themselves, and how grateful to God when rightly performed (1 Sam. 15:22), men should consider into whose presence they are entering, whose word they are about to hear; what attention should be given to it, and what reverence of it! the advice of the wise man should be regarded (Eccl. 5:1), they should consider the advantages which may arise from hearing the word, which they should propose to themselves for their encouragement, and consider what need they stand in of instruction, and what to be instructed in; for if they are wise in their own conceits, and fancy themselves to be wiser than their teachers, there is no hope nor expectation of the word heard being of any advantage to them; it is the meek and humble God will teach his way, and instruct by his word.

3. An appetite to the word is necessary to hearing it; the word is food, hearing and receiving it in faith is feeding on it; this cannot be comfortable done without a spiritual appetite; there must be a desire after the sincere milk of the word; the church "desired and sat down," as the words [186] may be rendered (Song 2:3), desired to sit down under the shadow of Christ,

his word and ordinances, and did sit down with delight; and it follows, "His fruit was sweet to her taste;" she had a gust for it, a relish of it; "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," the word of righteousness, "they shall be filled," satisfied with it, as with marrow and fatness: to hear the word without an appetite, is like a man sitting down at a table well furnished with provision, with delicious food, and well dressed and served up, but has no appetite to feed upon it.

Secondly, there are some things necessary while hearing the word.

1. A man should try what he hears, and while hearing; for "the ear tries words;" not that persons should sit as critics upon the words, phrases, and expressions of the preacher, to judge of the justness of his style, the propriety of his diction, and the cadency of his words; hearing the word to profit requires no such critical art: but men should try the things that are said, the doctrines that are delivered, by their own experience, whether agreeable to it; and by the word of God, whether according to it; and this they are to do while hearing it, so far as their judgment will reach, and they can recollect the sense of the sacred scriptures.

2. A man should take to himself what he hears, and while hearing it. Some hear not for themselves, but for others; when such and such expressions drop from the preacher, they presently conceive in their minds, that they are suitable to such a man, and hit such a man's case, and have no regard to themselves; whereas, in hearing, they should observe what is "for doctrine;" whether it is for the illumination of their minds in it, and for the establishment of them in the present truth; and if "for reproof" for sin, that it is for their own; and if "for correction" of conduct and conversation, that it is of their own; and if "for instruction in righteousness," in any branch of duty, that it concerns them; so when they hear of Christ as a Saviour, and of the great salvation by him, and of the blessings and promises of grace, they are to take these to themselves by faith, as belonging to them; "To you is the word of this salvation sent" (Acts 13:26).

3. Faith is to be mixed with the word, while hearing it; men should make faith of what they hear, or believe it for themselves, digest it as food, and so will it be profitable unto them (Heb. 4:2).

Thirdly, after hearing the word some things are to be done, which may be of use and service.

1. There should be a recollection of what has been heard, as much as may be; persons should retire privately, and meditate upon what they have heard; the beasts that were accounted clean under the law, were such as chewed the cud; hearers of the word should endeavour to fetch back and call over again what they have heard, when their meditation on it is often as sweet or sweeter than at the first hearing it.

2. When two or more meet together after hearing the word, and converse together about what they have heard, this may tend to much profit and advantage, to refresh one another's memories; what one has forgotten, another may remember; or what has appeared difficult to one, may be explained by another; and thus by speaking to and conferring with one another, it is a means of building up each other in their most holy faith.

3. It is proper to consider how it has been with them while hearing the word; if they have been careless and inattentive, wandering, cold, and indifferent under it; they will see reason for humiliation and lamentation that so it should be with them, while hearing such evangelic truths, and such excellent doctrines delivered to them; or if their souls have been enlarged, their hearts warmed, their affections raised, their judgments informed, their knowledge increased, and their souls established in the present truth, they will be led to praise and thankfulness: and upon the whole, there should be a concern that what they hear is put in practice, that they are "doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving their own souls," (James 1:22).

V. The utility of hearing the word, or the advantages which under a divine blessing arise from it, are next to be considered; and which may be regarded as so many encouraging reasons and arguments to attend to this duty; and which will be only just enumerated; as,

1. Conviction of sin, and of a lost and undone state and condition by nature, oftentimes comes by hearing the word; as the three thousand under Peter's sermon (Acts 2:36), so sometimes an unbeliever comes into a congregation, where the word is preached, and he is "convicted of all," of all his sins and iniquities, and he is "judged of all," condemned for them in his own conscience (1 Cor. 14:24, 25).

2. Conversion also is by means of it; the end of the word being preached and heard, is to turn men from the darkness of sin and error to the light of grace and truth; from the power, dominion, and slavery of Satan, to serve the living God; from the ways of sin and folly to the paths of righteousness and holiness; from a dependence on a man's own righteousness, to trust in the righteousness of Christ (see Acts 26:18); hence one of the epithets of the law, or doctrine of the Lord, from its effect, is, "converting the soul," (Ps. 19:7).

3. In this way, or by hearing the word, the Spirit of God, his gifts and graces, are conveyed into the hearts of men (Gal. 3:2).

4. Particularly faith usually comes this way (Rom. 10:17).

5. The joy of faith, and an increase of that, and of every other grace, are by means of it (Phil. 1:25).

6. Comfort is had by it; he "that prophesieth," or preacheth, "speaketh to comfort," (1 Cor. 14:3) the end and use of the gospel ministry is to comfort those that mourn; the commission given by Christ to his ministers, is to speak comfortably to his people (Isa. 40:1, 2, 61:2).

7. The knowledge of Christ, and an increase of it, are the fruits and effects of hearing the word, when blessed (2 Cor. 2:14).

8. Love to Christ is drawn forth, and glowing affection to him raised by means of it (Song 1:3; Luke 24:32).

9. Food and nourishment, in a spiritual sense, are by the word; it is found and eat, when heard, and souls are nourished with the words of faith and good doctrine, even with the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

10. Hearing seasons are sometimes sealing ones (Eph. 1:13). Besides public hearing the word, there should be a private reading of the scriptures, which should be searched to see whether what is heard be true or not (John 5:39; Acts 17:11), and they should be read in families, for the instruction of them in righteousness; and hereby even children may come to know the scriptures early in life (2 Tim. 3:15, 16; Eph. 6:4).

[180] Apolog. 2. p. 98.

[181] Deut. Anima, c. 9.

[182] exekremato “pendebat,” Vatablus.

[183] “Pendentque iterum narrantis ab ore,” Virgil.

[184] pararruomen, “perfluamus,” Vatablus.

[185] Vid. Amesium de Casibus Conscientiae, l. 4. c. 11. p. 187.

[186] chmdty vysvtyg.

Chapter 5

OF PUBLIC PRAYER

Prayer is one part of the saints’ spiritual armour, and a principal one, though mentioned last (Eph. 6:18), it has been often of use against temporal enemies, and for obtaining victory over them; as the prayers of Asa, Jehoshaphat, and others, show 2 Chronicles 14:11, 12, 20:3-5, 22. It is reported of Mary, queen of Scots, that she dreaded the prayer of John Knox, an eminent minister, more than an army of twenty thousand men. And it is of use against the spiritual enemies of God’s people, and for the vanquishing of them. Satan has often felt the force of this weapon; resist the devil, by faith in prayer, and he will flee from you. When the apostle Paul was buffeted and distressed by him, he had recourse to it; he besought the Lord thrice that the temptation might depart from him; and had for answer, “My grace is sufficient for thee!” and indeed, as this part of the Christian armour is managed, so it goes with the saint, for or against him. In the war between Israel and Amalek, when Moses held up his hands, an emblem of vigorous prayer, then Israel prevailed; but when he let down his hands, a token of remissness in prayer, Amalek prevailed. Prayer has great power and prevalence with God, for the removal or prevention of evil things, and for the obtaining of blessings. Jacob had the name of Israel given him, because, as a prince, he had power with God, and prevailed, that is, by prayer and supplication (Gen. 32:26, 28; see Hosea 12:3, 4). Elijah prayed earnestly, and his prayer was availing and effectual (James 5:16-18). Prayer is the breath of a regenerate soul; as soon as a child is born into the world it cries, as soon as a soul is born again it prays; it is observed of Saul upon his conversion, “Behold, he prayeth!” where there is life there is breath; where there is spiritual life, there are spiritual breathings; such souls breathe after God, pant after him as the hart panteth after the

water brooks: Prayer is the speech of the soul to God; [187] a talking to him, a converse with him, in which much of its communion with God lies. Prayer is an address to God in the name of Christ, and through him as the Mediator, under the influence and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, in faith, and in the sincerity of our souls, for such things we stand in need of, and which are consistent with the will of God, and are for his glory to bestow, and therefore to be asked with submission. Now though it is public prayer, or prayer as a public ordinance in the church of God, I am in course to consider, yet I shall,

1. Take notice of the various sorts of prayer, which will lead on to that; for there is a praying with all prayer, which denotes many sorts and kinds of prayer.

1. There is mental prayer, or prayer in the heart; and, indeed, here prayer should first begin; so David found in his heart to pray (2 Sam. 7:27), and it is “the effectual fervent,” or energoumene, “the inwrought prayer of the righteous man that availeth much;” which is wrought and formed in the heart by the Spirit of God (James 5:16). Such sort of prayer was that of Moses, at the Red Sea, when the Lord said to him, “Wherefore criest thou unto me?” and yet we read not of a word that was spoken by him; and of this kind was the prayer of Hannah; “She spake in her heart,” (1 Sam. 1:13) and this may be performed even without the motion of the lips, and is what we call an ejaculatory prayer, from the suddenness and swiftness of its being put up to God, like a dart shot from a bow; and which may be done in the midst of business the most public, and in the midst of, public company, and not discerned; as was the prayer of Nehemiah in the presence of the king (Neh. 2:4, 5), and such prayer God takes notice of, and hears; and, as an ancient writer [188] observes, “Though we whisper, not opening our lips, but pray in silence, cry inwardly, God incessantly hears that inward discourse,” or prayer to him, conceived in the mind.

2. There is prayer which is audible and vocal. Some prayer is audible, yet not articulate and intelligible, or it is expressed by inarticulate sounds; as, “with groanings which cannot be uttered;” but God knows and understands perfectly the language of a groan, and hears and answers. But there is vocal prayer, expressed by articulate words, in language to be heard and understood by men, as well as by the Lord; “I

cried unto the Lord with my voice,” &c. (Ps. 3:4, 5:2, 3) and to this kind of prayer the church is directed by the Lord himself (Hosea 14:2).

3. There is private prayer, in which a man is alone by himself; to which our Lord directs (Matthew 6:6), an instance and example of this we have in Christ (Matthew 14:23; see also an instance of this in Peter; Acts 10:9).

4. There is social prayer, in which few or more join together, concerning which, and to encourage it, our Lord says, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,” (Matthew 18:19, 20) an instance of this social prayer with men is in Acts 20:36 and it is this social prayer with fewer or more the apostle Jude has respect unto (Jude 1:20).

5. There is family prayer, performed by the head and master of the family in it, and with it. Joshua set a noble example of family worship (Josh. 24:15), and an instance we have in David (2 Sam. 6:20), and even Cornelius, the Roman centurion, before he was acquainted with Christianity, was in the practice of it (Acts 10:2, 30), and the contrary behaviour is resented, and the wrath and fury of God may be expected to fall upon the families that call not on his name (Jer. 10:25), and it is but reasonable service, since family mercies are daily needed, and therefore should be prayed for; and family mercies are daily received, and therefore thanks should be every day returned for them.

6. There is public prayer, which is performed in bodies and communities of men, who meet in public, unite and join together in divine worship, and particularly in this branch of it; for prayer always was made a part of public worship.

1st, this part of divine worship was set up in the days of Enos, for “then began men to call upon the name of the Lord;” that is, to pray in the name of the Lord, as it is paraphrased in the Targum, [189] of Genesis 4:26 not but that good men before this time prayed personally, and in their families; but now families becoming more numerous and larger, they met and joined together, in carrying on public worship, and this part of it particularly; and so it continued during the patriarchal state.

2ndly, under the Mosaic dispensation, while the tabernacle was standing, this practice was used: for

the tabernacle was called, the “tabernacle of the congregation;” because, as Munster observes, there the congregation of Israel met to pray and to sacrifice (Ex. 27:21). Moreover, there was another tabernacle which Moses pitched without the camp, which seems to be a temporary one, and which he called by the same name (Ex. 33:7), and which, according to the Targum of Jonathan, was not only a place for instruction in doctrine, but where everyone who truly repented went and confessed his sins, and asked pardon for them, and had it.

3dly, in the temple, both first and second, public prayer made a part of divine worship; here at the dedication of the first temple, Solomon prayed in public, all Israel present; and where the people, in after times, were to pray and make supplication; and here Jehoshaphat stood and prayed, and all the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem with him: and hence the temple was called “the house of prayer” (Isa. 56:7). Likewise in the second temple, prayer was wont to be made in it; we read of two men going up to the temple to pray, and what they prayed (Luke 18:10; see Acts 3:1). It was usual with the people to be employed in prayer at the time the incense was offered; so while Zechariah was burning incense in the temple, the people were praying without (see Luke 1:9,10); hence prayer is compared to incense, and the prayers of the saints are called odours, and said to be offered with much incense (Ps. 141:2; Rev. 8:3, 4), and Agatharcides, [190] an heathen writer, bears this testimony to the Jews, while the temple was standing, that they kept the seventh day as a rest from labour, and did no work in it, but continued in the temple, stretching out their hands in prayer unto the evening; and it should be observed, that there were a set of men at Jerusalem called “stationary men,” who were the representatives of the people in the country, who, because they could not appear in the temple at the time of sacrifice, the residing of the law, and prayer, these attended for them and represented them. [191]

4thly, public prayer was a part of synagogue worship, and which may be learned from what our Lord says of the hypocrites, who loved to “pray standing in the synagogues,” where they might be seen and heard of men (Matthew 6:5), the Jews in general have a great notion of public prayer, as being always heard, and that therefore men should always join

with the congregation, and not pray alone; but should always attend morning and evening in the synagogue; since no prayer is heard but what is put up in the synagogue; [192] and they say, in whatsoever place are ten Israelites, they are obliged to fit up a house where they meet for prayer, at every time of prayer, and this place is called a synagogue; [193] and which some take to be the same with, though others think they differ from, the “proseucha,” oratory, or place where prayer was wont to be made, into which Paul and Silas went near Philippi, and spoke to those who resorted thither; and in one of these it is thought our Lord continued a whole night praying (Acts 16:13; Luke 6:12), in which the Jews met for instruction, as well as for prayer, especially on Sabbath days; as is observed by Philo [194] and Josephus, [195] and was an ancient custom.

5thly, under the New Testament dispensation, prayer was always a part of public worship in the several churches; as in that at Jerusalem, the first Christian church. When the disciples returned thither after our Lord’s ascension, they continued in “prayer and supplication,” with the women and others, who constituted that first church; and it is observed, in commendation of those that were added to it, that they continued steadfastly “in prayer,” in the public prayers of the church, whenever they met together; and where there was sometimes a remarkable appearance of the divine presence; and it was to this part of service, as well as to the ministry of the word, the apostles gave themselves continually (Acts 1:14, 2:42, 4:31, 6:4). Such was the prayer made by this church, without ceasing, for Peter, when in prison, and was remarkably heard (Acts 12:5), so in the church at Corinth, public prayer was a part of divine worship; for it is with respect to that the apostle gives directions to men and women praying, that is, attending that part of public service, the one with their heads uncovered, the other with their heads covered (1 Cor. 11:4, 5), and it is with respect to his own practice in public that he says, “I will pray with the spirit,” &c. (1 Cor. 14:15, 16, 19). The several directions and exhortations to the churches to attend to the duty of prayer, does not regard them merely as individuals, but as bodies and communities, joining together in that service (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17), and public prayer seems to be chiefly intended by the apostle

(1 Tim. 2:1, 2, 8), and this was foretold of gospel times (Mal. 1:11). Now this practice obtained in the earliest times of Christianity, and is still continued in Christian assemblies; so Justin Martyr says, [196] that after reading the scriptures, and preaching, we all rise up in common, and send up prayers; and after the administration of the supper, he observes, the president or pastor of the church, according to his ability, pours out prayers and thanksgivings, and all the people aloud cry “Amen;” and so Tertullian, [197] “We come together in the congregation to God, and as it were with our hands by prayer compass him about; this force is grateful to God: we also pray for emperors, for their ministers, &c.” And from Justin, as well as from Origen, Cyprian, and others, we learn, that the gesture of the ancients in public prayer was “standing;” nay, Tertullian [198] says, “We reckon it unlawful to fast on the Lord’s day, or to worship on the knees;” and it was ordered by the council of Nice, “that whereas there were some who bent their knees, it seemed right to the synod that they should perform their prayers standing.” Now though my subject is public prayer, yet as all prayer agrees in the object of it; and in the main as to the matter and manner of it, and in persons and things to be prayed for, I shall proceed to consider,

II. The object of prayer; which is not a mere creature, animate or inanimate; it is the grossest absurdity to set up the wood of a graven image, and pray unto it, which cannot save; to pray to idols of gold and silver, the work of mens’ hands, which cannot speak, see, nor hear; are unable to give any help, or bestow any favour upon their votaries: nor to saints departed; for the dead know not anything of the affairs of men in this world; nor can they assist them in them; their sons come to honour, and they know it not; they are brought low, but not perceived by them; Abraham is ignorant of his sons, and Israel acknowledges them not; it is in vain to turn to any of the saints, or direct prayers unto them: nor to angels, who have always refused worship from men, of which prayer is a considerable part; the angel invoked by Jacob was not a created, but the increated one (Gen. 48:16). God only is and ought to be the object of prayer; “My prayer,” says David, “shall be unto the God of my life,” who gives life and breath to all; he upholds their souls in life, and in him they live, move,

and have their being; he is the Father of mercies, and the God of all grace, who only can supply with temporal mercies and spiritual blessings, and from whom every good and perfect gift comes; he only can hear the prayers of his people; he only knows men and their wants, and he only is able to help and relieve them; he is God all sufficient, needs nothing for himself, and has enough for all his creatures; he is a God at hand and afar off, and is nigh to all that call upon him, and is a present help in time of need; he is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works; he is gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and truth. All which, as it makes him to be a proper object of prayer, and recommends him as such, so serves greatly to encourage men in their addresses to him.

God in his Three Persons is the proper object of prayer; Father, Son, and Spirit; who are the one true God; and it is lawful to address either of them in prayer, though not one to the exclusion of the others. Sometimes the Father is prayed unto singly, and as distinct from the Son and Spirit; “If ye call upon the Father,” (1 Peter 1:17) as he may be called upon as a distinct divine Person in the Godhead, of which we have instances in Ephesians 1:16, 17, 3:14-16, the second Person, the Son of God, is said to be invoked by all the saints in every place (Acts 9:14; 1 Cor. 1:2), he is sometimes singly prayed unto; as by Stephen at his death; “Lord Jesus receive my Spirit!” and by the apostle John, for his second coming; “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!” (Acts 7:59; Rev. 22:20) and sometimes conjunctly with the Father; as when “grace and peace” are prayed for, as in almost all the epistles, “From God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ,” (Rom. 1:7; &c.) and sometimes in prayer he is set before the Father; and sometimes the Father before him, to show their equality (1 Thess. 3:11; 2 Thess. 2:16), the third Person, the Spirit of God, is also sometimes singly prayed to, and as distinct from the Father and Son (2 Thess. 3:5), and the blessings of grace are prayed for from all three together (2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4, 5).

The first person in the Godhead is usually addressed in prayer, under the character of a Father; so Christ taught his disciples to pray; “Our Father, which art in heaven,” &c. as he is the Creator and the Father of spirits, and the author of their beings; so the church in the times of Isaiah (Isa. 64:8), and also as he is the

Father of Christ, and our Father in Christ; as such is he frequently addressed (2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3). Now the reason why the address in prayer is generally made to him, though it may be made equally to either of the other two persons, is, because of the priority of order he has, though not of nature, in the deity, and because he bears no office; whereas the other two persons do bear an office, and an office which is concerned in the business of prayer.

Christ is the Mediator between God and men, by whom we approach to God, and offer up our prayers to him; there is no approaching to God in any other way; God is a consuming fire; the flaming sword of justice stands between God and sinners; there is no day’s man between them to lay his hands on both, but Christ; none can come to the Father but by him; he has opened a way to him through the vail of his flesh, and through his precious blood, which gives boldness to enter into the holiest of all; through him there is an access by one Spirit unto the Father; he is the way of acceptance with God, as well as of access unto him; it is by him we offer up the sacrifice of prayer and praise, which becomes acceptable to God through the incense of his mediation. The encouragement to prayer is taken chiefly from him; and the pleas at the throne of grace for blessings of grace are founded on his person, blood, righteousness, sacrifice, and intercession; from his being an advocate with the Father for us, and the propitiation for our sins, and from our having such and so great an High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, and is over the house of God; we are encouraged to come boldly to the throne of grace, to draw near with true hearts, and even in full assurance of faith (1 John 2:1, 2; Heb. 4:14, 16, 10:21, 22), believing, that whatsoever we ask in his name the Father will give it to us; yea, that Christ himself “will do it;” which shows his equality with his Father, and that he has the same power of doing what he does (John 14:13, 14, 16:23, 24).

The Spirit of God has also a great concern in prayer; he is the author and enditer of it; he is the “Spirit of grace and of supplication,” who forms it in the heart; and therefore it is called “inwrought prayer;” he creates divine breathings, and holy desires after spiritual things in men; yea, puts words into their mouths, and bids them take them with them; he impresses their minds with a feeling sense of their

wants, and fills their mouths with arguments, and puts strength into them to plead with God; he helps them under their infirmities, when they know not what to pray for, nor how; and makes intercession for them according to the will of God; he gives freedom to them when they are so shut up that they cannot come forth; where he is there is liberty; he is the Spirit of adoption, witnessing to their spirits that they are the children of God; enables them to go to God as their Father, and to cry Abba, Father; and as the Spirit of faith, encourages them to pray in faith and with fervency. Moses, when he prayed for Israel, when engaged in battle with Amalek, represented a praying saint in its conflict with spiritual enemies; a stone was put under him, on which he sat, while lifting up his hands, an emblem of Christ, the Eben Ezer, the stone of help in time of need; Aaron and Hur, the one on one side, and the other on the other, held up his hands, and stayed them; Aaron, who could speak well, was a type of Christ the advocate and spokesman, of his people, by whose mediation they are encouraged and supported in prayer; and Hur is a name which has the signification of liberty, and may point to the Spirit of God, who is a "free Spirit," and as such upholds and supports the saints in the exercise of grace and discharge of duty. The next to be considered are,

III. The parts of prayer, of which it consists; the apostle, in Philippians 4:6 uses four words to express it by; and which are commonly thought to design distinct species or parts of prayer; which are comprehended under the general name of "requests," or petitions, as "prayer and supplication with thanksgiving": and he also uses four words for it, [199] with some little difference, in 1 Timothy 2:1 "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks;" by which one and the same thing may be signified in different words, according to the different respects which it has; [200] but if these have different senses, and are different species or parts of prayer, Origen's [201] account of them seems as good as any; that "supplication" is for some good that we stand in need of; "prayer" for greater things, when in great danger, that is, deliverance from it; "intercession" is expressed with more freedom, familiarity, and faith, with greater confidence of having what is asked of God; and "thanksgiving" is an acknowledgment of good things obtained of God by prayer. But to proceed,

and more particularly consider the parts of prayer, of what it consists; and I mean not to prescribe any form of prayer, but to direct to the matter and method. And,

1. In prayer there should be a celebration of the divine perfections; and it is proper to begin with this; we should declare the name of the Lord to whom we pray, and ascribe greatness to our God; we should begin with some one or other of his names and titles, expressive of his nature, and of the relation he stands in to us as creatures, and new creatures; and make mention of some one or more of his perfections, which may serve to command an awe and reverence of him; to engage our affections to him; to strengthen our faith and confidence in him, and raise our expectations of being heard and answered by him, as before observed; as of his purity, holiness, and righteousness; of his omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence; and of his immutability and faithfulness, love, grace, and mercy.

2. There should be an acknowledgment of our vileness and sinfulness, of our meanness and unworthiness in ourselves; we should come before a pure and holy God under a sense of the depravity and pollution of our nature, and of our unworthiness to be admitted into his presence, and to worship at his footstool; when we take upon us to speak unto the Lord, we should own, with Abraham, that we are but "dust and ashes;" not only frail and mortal creatures, but sinful and impure; and with Jacob, that we are not "worthy of the least of all the mercies" showed us, nor of receiving any favour from God; and therefore do not present our supplications to him "for our righteousnesses, but for his great mercies".

3. There should be a confession of sin; of the sin of our nature, of original sin, of indwelling sin; of the sins of our lives and actions; of our daily transgressions of the law of God in thought, word, and deed: this has been the practice of saints in all ages; of David, Daniel, and others (Ps. 32:5, 51:3-5) and which is encouraged (1 John 1:9).

4. There should be a deprecation of all evil things, which our sins deserve; so our Lord taught his disciples to pray; "Deliver us from all evil;" and this seems to be the meaning of the saints oftentimes when they pray for the forgiveness of their own sins and those of others, [202] that God would deliver them out of present distress, of what kind soever, remove

his afflicting hand, which lies heavy upon them, and avert those evils which seem to threaten them, and prevent their coming upon them; in which sense we are to understand many of the petitions of Moses, Job, Solomon, and others (Ex. 32:32; Num. 14:19, 20; Job 7:21; 1 King 8:30, 34, 36, 39, 50).

5. Another part or branch of prayer is, a petition for good things, which are needed; for temporal mercies, such as regard the sustenance of our bodies, the comfort, support, and preservation of life; so our Lord has taught us to pray; "Give us this day our daily bread;" which includes all the necessaries of life. Agur's prayer with respect to this is a very wise one, and to be copied after (Prov. 30:7-9). Spiritual blessings are to be prayed for; which, though laid up in covenant, and are sure to all the covenant ones, what God has promised, and will be performed; and we may have this confidence in him, that whatsoever we ask, according to his will, we shall have; but then they must be asked for; seeing, for what he has promised, and will do, he will "yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them" (Ezek. 36:37).

6. Prayer should always be accompanied with thanksgiving; this should always be a part of it; since, as we have always mercies to pray for, we have always mercies to be thankful for (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6).

7. At the close of this work it is proper to make use of doxologies, or ascriptions of glory to God; of which we have many instances, either of which may be made use of (Matthew 6:13; Eph. 3:21; 1 Tim. 1:17; Jude 1:24, 25; Rev. 1:5, 6), which serve to show forth the praises of God, to express our gratitude to him, and our dependence on him, and expectation of receiving from him what we have been praying for; and the whole may be concluded with the word "Amen," as expressing our assent to what has been prayed for, our wishes and desires for the accomplishment of it, and our full and firm persuasion and belief of our having what we have been asking for, according to the will of God.

IV. The persons to be prayed for may be next considered. Not devils; for as God has not spared them, nor provided a Saviour for them, nor is any mercy promised to them, so none can be asked for them. But men; yet only the living, not the dead; for after death is the judgment, when the final state of men is inevitably fixed; and there is no passing out of

one state into another: nor those who have sinned the sin unto death, the unpardonable sin (1 John 5:16), yet those who are dead in sins, unconverted sinners, may be prayed for (Rom. 10:1), we may pray for unconverted friends and relations, for our children in a state of nature, as Abraham did for Ishmael; and especially we may pray in faith for the conversion of God's elect, as our Lord himself did (John 17:20), and it is an incumbent duty, to pray "for all saints;" of every country, of whatsoever denomination they may be, and in whatsoever circumstances; and therefore we are to pray to God as "our Father" and theirs, as the Father of us all; and for all that are his children, that love the Lord Jesus, bear his image, are called by his name, and call on his name; particularly for the ministers of the gospel, that they may speak the word boldly and faithfully, as they ought to speak it; that the word of the Lord, ministered by them, might have a free course, and be glorified, and be blessed for conversion, comfort, and edification; and that the Lord would raise up and send forth other labourers into his vineyard: yea, we are to pray "for all men;" for all sorts of men, "for kings, and all in authority," for civil magistrates, that they may be terrors to evildoers, and a praise to them that do well; and that the time may hasten on when kings shall be nursing fathers and queens nursing mothers to the church and people of God: we are to pray for the peace and welfare of the inhabitants of any city or country in which we dwell, since in the peace thereof we have peace. Nay, we are to pray for our enemies, who despitefully use and persecute us; this is enjoined us by Christ, and of which he has set us an example (Matthew 5:44; Luke 23:44) and so Stephen prayed for those that stoned him (Acts 7:60).

V. The manner in which prayer is to be performed is worthy of attention.

1. It must be done "with" or "in the Spirit;" "I will pray with the Spirit," says the apostle (1 Cor. 14:15), [203] by which he either means the extraordinary gift which he and other apostles had, of speaking with various tongues, which he determined to make use of, yet only when he could be understood by others; or the ordinary gift of the Spirit, his grace, influence, and assistance, which are necessary in prayer; and is the same which the apostle Jude calls, "praying in the Holy Ghost;" and the apostle Paul, "supplication in

the Spirit” (Jude 1:20; Eph. 6:18). The concern the Spirit of God has in prayer, and the need there is of his grace and assistance in it, and the use thereof, have been observed already; but it does not follow from hence that men ought not to pray but when they have the Spirit, and are under his influences: for prayer is a natural duty, and binding on all men, who are to pray as well as they can, though none but spiritual men can pray in a spiritual manner; and yet even such are not always under the gracious influences of the Spirit, and such, when destitute of them, should pray for them; for “our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him;” and when men are in darkness and distress, without the light of God’s countenance, the communications of his grace, and the influences of his Spirit, they stand in the more need of prayer, and should be more constant at it (Ps. 130:1; Jon. 2:2, 4, 7).

2. It should be performed “with the understanding also,” as in the forementioned place; with an understanding of the object of prayer, God in Christ; or otherwise men will pray unto and worship they know not what, an unknown God; and with an understanding of the way of access unto him, Christ, the Mediator between God and man; and with a spiritual understanding of the things prayed for, having their understandings enlightened by the Spirit of God: by whom they are taught what to pray for, and how to pray as they ought, and know that what they ask according to the will of God, that they have the petitions they desire of him.

3. It must be done in faith, without which it is impossible to please God in this or in any other duty; what we ask we should “ask in faith, nothing wavering;” it is the “prayer of faith” that is effectual; for our Lord assures us, “all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive” (Matthew 21:22).

4. Fervency in spirit is requisite to prayer; we should be fervent in spirit, “serving the Lord” in every branch of duty, and so in this prayer; for it is “the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man which availeth much” (James 5:16). Prayer, which is compared to incense, like that, burns sweetly, when kindled by the fire of the Spirit, and the flame of love; such earnest, fervent, and importunate prayer was made by the church for Peter incessantly; and

we have an instance of earnest, intense, and fervent prayer in our Lord, whose prayers and supplications were with “strong crying” and tears; and being in an agony, prayed the more earnestly and fervently (Luke 22:44; Heb. 5:7).

5. Prayer should be put up to God in sincerity; it should go forth, “not out of feigned lips,” but from the heart; men should draw nigh to God with true hearts, and call upon him in truth; that is, in the sincerity of their souls; for when they cry not to him with their hearts, it is reckoned no other than howling on their beds (Hosea 7:14).

6. It should always be made with submission to the will of God, as our Lord’s was when he prayed so earnestly: so when we want to have a favour conferred, or an affliction removed, it becomes us to say, “the will of the Lord be done” (Luke 22:42; Acts 21:14).

7. It should be performed with assiduity and watchfulness; there should be a “watching thereunto with all perseverance,” (Eph. 6:18) for a fit opportunity of doing it, and for the proper and suitable time of need, and when the Lord is nigh to be found: and there should be a watching in the same “with thanksgiving,” (Col. 4:2) for the aid and assistance of the Spirit; that the heart be lift up with the hands; that it does not wander in it, nor enter into temptation: and there should be a watching after it, for an answer to it, and a return of it; “In the morning,” says David, “will I direct my prayer unto thee, and look up” for the blessing or mercy prayed for; and again, “I will hear what God the Lord will speak” (Ps. 5:3, 85:8).

VI. The time of prayer, with the continuance in it, and duration of it; it should be “always;” “Praying always with all prayer,” (Eph. 6:18) hence these exhortations; “Continue in prayer; Pray without ceasing,” (Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:17). Not that men are to be always on their knees, and ever formally, praying; [204] for there are many civil duties of a man’s calling in life which are to be attended to; and other religious duties, besides prayer, which are not to be neglected; one duty is not to shut out another, whether on a civil or sacred account: but it is desirable to be always in praying frames, and the heart to be ready for it on all occasions; it should be daily, since there is daily need of it, daily cases call for it; we want daily bread for our bodies, and the inward man needs to be renewed

day by day. Temptations are daily; our adversary, the devil, goes about continually like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; and therefore we should pray daily that we enter not into temptation. The above exhortations are opposed unto, and strike at such who either pray not at all, judging it to be vain and fruitless (Job 21:15), or who have prayed, but have left off praying, which Job was charged with, though wrongly (Job 15:4), or who discontinue it because they have not an immediate answer; our Lord spoke a parable to this end, “That men ought always to pray, and not to faint;” to continue praying, and not be discouraged, because their prayers seem not to be heard at once; and gives an instance of the success of the importunate widow with the unjust judge (Luke 18:1; &c.), or who pray only when in distress; it is right to pray at such a time (James 5:13; Ps. 50:15), but this is what graceless persons, who are in a state of distance and alienation from God, and what carnal professors and careless souls will do (Isa. 26:16; Hosea 5:15).

The Jews had stated times in the day for prayer. Daniel prayed three times a day; and what these times were we learn from David; “Evening, and morning, and at noon” (Ps. 55:17). The prayer in the morning, according to Maimonides, [205] was from sunrising to the end of the fourth hour (or ten o’clock) which is the third part of the day (see Acts 2:15). The prayer at noon, was at the sixth hour (or twelve o’clock), at which time Peter went up to the housetop to pray (Acts 10:9). The evening prayer was at the ninth hour (or three o’clock in the afternoon), about the time of the evening sacrifice; at which time, which was the hour of prayer, Peter and John went up to the temple to pray; at this time we find Cornelius at prayer (Acts 3:1, 10:3), and this practice obtained among Christians in early times. Jerome [206] speaks of it as a tradition of the church, that the third, sixth, and ninth hours are times for prayer; and it is a practice laudable enough, where there is leisure from other lawful exercises; and when no stress is laid on the punctual performance of it at these precise times; and is not made a term and condition of acceptance with God; which would bring us back to the covenant of works, ensnare our souls, and entangle us with a yoke of bondage. What Clemens of Alexandria [207] observes, is worthy of notice; some, says he, appoint stated hours for prayer,

the third, sixth, and ninth hours; but “the Gnostic (who is endued with the true knowledge of God and divine things) prays throughout his whole life; his whole life is an holy convocation, a sacred festival:” yea it is said of Socrates, the heathen philosopher, to the shame of Christians, “the life of Socrates was full of prayer.” From the whole of this we learn, that at least a day should not pass over without prayer. I proceed to observe,

VII. The encouragement to prayer, and the advantages arising from it. Saints may be encouraged to it.

1. From the concern which God, Father, Son, and Spirit have in it; which has been taken notice of already. God the Father, as the God of all grace, sits on the throne of grace, holding forth the sceptre of grace; inviting men to come thither, where they may find grace and mercy to help them in their time of need: Christ is the Mediator, through whom they have access to God, audience of him, and acceptance with him; Christ is their Advocate with the Father, who pleads their cause, and makes intercession for them; he introduces them into the presence of God, and as the Angel of his presence presents their prayers to God, perfumed with his much incense. And the Spirit of God is the Spirit of grace and of supplication, who supplies them with grace, and assists them in their supplications to God; and by whom, through Christ, they have access to God as their Father.

2. From the interest saints have in God, to whom they pray, they have encouragement to it; he is their Father by adopting grace, whose heart is full of love, pity, and compassion; his heart is towards them, his eyes are upon them, and his ears are open to their cries; he is their covenant God and Father, who has provided blessings in covenant for them, and is ready to distribute them, upon their application to him by prayer (Phil. 4:19).

3. From the call of God in providence, and by his Spirit, to it, and his delight in it, saints may take encouragement to be found in the performance of it (Ps. 27:8), he delights to see the face, and hear the prayers of his people (Prov. 15:8; Ps. 102:17).

4. Many promises are made to praying souls; as of deliverance from trouble, &c. (Ps. 50:15, 91:15). For their encouragement it is said, “Ask, and it shall be given,” &c. (Matthew 7:7) yea, God has never “said

to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain" (Isa. 45:19).

5. The experience the people of God in all ages have had of answers of prayers, either to themselves or others, serve greatly to animate them to this duty: this was the experience of David, and he observed it in others (Ps. 40:1, 34:6), and this was not the case only of a single, and of a private person, but of good men in times past, in all ages (Ps. 22:4, 5).

6. It is "good for saints to draw nigh to God;" it is not only good, because it is their duty; but it is a pleasant good, when they have the presence of God in it, and their souls are drawn out towards him; and it is a profitable good to them, when God owns it as an ordinance, for the quickening the graces of his Spirit, subduing the corruptions of their hearts, and bringing them into nearer communion and fellowship with himself. Praying souls are profitable in families, in churches, in neighbourhoods, and commonwealths; when prayerless ones are useless, and obtain nothing, neither for themselves nor others. Of all the fruits which faith produces in Christians, says Beza, [208] prayer, that is, calling on the name of God, through Christ, is the principal one.

[187] omilia pros ton theon e euche Clem. Alex. Stromat. 1. 7. p. 722, 742.

[188] Clemens Alex. ut supra.

[189] In Reg. Hisp. Bibl.

[190] Apud Joseph. contra Apion. 1. 1. c. 22.

[191] Maimon. Cele Hamikdash, c. 6. s. 1, 5. See Lightfoot's Temple Service, c. 7. s. 3. p. 924, 925.

[192] Maimon. Hilchot Tephillah, c. 8. s. 1.

[193] Ib. c. 11. s. 1.

[194] Deut. Vita Mosis, 1. 3. p. 685. et de Leg. ad Caium, p. 1014.

[195] In Vita ejus, s. 54.

[196] Apolog. 2. p. 93.

[197] Apologet. c. 39.

[198] Deut. Corona Mil. c. 3.

[199] They seem to answer to four words used by the Jews, of prayer, vrkh vqsh tphlh tchnhg Vid. Vitrinam de Synagog. vet. par. 2. l. 3. c. 13. p. 1025. & c. 19. p. 1103.

[200] Witsius de Orat. Domin. Exercit. 1. s. 2, 4.

[201] peri euches, c. 44. Ed. Oxon.

[202] Of Praying for the Pardon of Sin; see the Body of Doctrinal Divinity, vol. ii. b. 6. c. 7. p. 354.

See on topic 1013.

[203] See a Discourse of mine on this text. See Gill on "1 Cor. 14:15".

[204] There were a sort of heretics in the fourth century, called Euchetae and Messalians; who, neglecting all business, pretended to pray continually, ascribing their whole salvation to it, Aug. de Haeres. c. 57. & Danaeus in ib.

[205] Hilchot Tephillah, c. 3. s. 1.

[206] Comment. in Dan. fol. 270. M.

[207] Stromat. 1. 7. p. 722, 728. Maximus Tyrius apud Witsium in Orat. Domin. Exercit. 2. s. 19. p. 43.

[208] Confessio Fidei, c. 4. art. 16. p. 34.

Chapter 6

OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

The whole Scripture directs to and furnishes with matter for prayer; but more particularly the prayer which is commonly called "The Lord's Prayer," may be considered as a directory to it; and so it seems to be designed by our Lord, when he says, "After this manner therefore pray ye," in such a brief and concise manner, in a few comprehensive expressions, in words to this purpose, or to the sense following; which he directed to in opposition to the many words, much speaking, and vain repetitions of the Scribes and Pharisees; indeed, the evangelist Luke has it, "He said unto them, when ye pray, say," the following words, that is, "after this manner," or to this sense, as it is explained in Matthew, where both the introduction to the prayer, and the prayer itself, are more fully expressed; for that it was not intended as a prescribed set form, in so many words, is clear; since then it would not have been varied, as it is by the two evangelists, by whom it is recorded; for though they both agree in the main, as to the sense, yet not in the express words: the "fourth" petition is in Matthew, "Give us this day our daily bread," which is a petition for present supply; in Luke it is, "Give us day by day our daily bread," which is a prayer for a continued supply, for the future as it may be needed, as well as for the present: the "fifth" petition is expressed in Matthew, "Forgive us our debts," and in Luke, "Forgive us our sins;" in Matthew it is, "as we forgive;" in Luke, "for

we also forgive": and the doxology, which Matthew gives at large, is wholly left out in Luke; "For thine is the kingdom," &c. And that it was not understood by the disciples as a form of prayer to be used by them as such, seems evident; since we do not find that they ever so used it; but a most excellent summary of prayer it is, for its brevity, order, and matter, and a pattern of it worthy to be followed; and it is very lawful and laudable to make use of any single petition in it, either in the express words of it, or to the sense of it; and even the whole of it, provided a formal and superstitious observance of it is avoided, as used by the Papists. The matter of it is very full and comprehensive; by one of the ancients [209] it is said to be, "a breviary of the whole gospel;" and by another, [210] "a compendium of heavenly doctrine." It may justly be preferred to all other prayers, because of the author, order, and matter of it; though not to the slight and neglect of other petitions the scriptures furnish us with: there were a set of men in the twelfth century, called Bogomiles, who among other odd notions, had this, that only the Lord's prayer was to be reckoned prayer; and that all other was to be rejected as vain clamour: [211] the Socinians say, [212] this prayer is an addition to the first command of the law; and which with other things, add to the perfection of the law, which they suppose to be imperfect until Christ came, and as if such prayer was unknown to the Old Testament saints; but though this prayer is not formally, and in so many words, expressed in the Old Testament, yet it is materially, or the matter of it is to be found there; especially in the Psalms of David, of which this prayer may be said to be the "epitome," as the Psalms may be considered and made use of as a "commentary" on that; it is indeed, the summary of the prayers and petitions used by good men, in and before the times of Christ, [213] selected and put together, and inserted in this prayer by him in this manner, as a directory to his disciples; in which may be observed, a preface, petitions, and a conclusion, with a doxology.

1. A preface, "Our Father which art in heaven;" in which the object of prayer is described, by his relation to us, "Our Father," and by the place of his habitation, "which art in heaven".

First, by the relation he stands in to us, "Our Father" which may be understood of God, essentially

considered; of the Three Persons in the Godhead, who are the one God, the Creator, and so the Father of all; in which respect this term, "Father," is not peculiar to any one person in the Deity, but common to all three, being equally "Creators," (Eccl. 12:1) as in the original; and so are addressed as the one God, Creator, and Father of all (Isa. 64:8; Mal. 2:10), and in this sense every man, good and bad, regenerate and unregenerate, may use this prayer, and say, "Our Father": or else this is to be understood of God personally, that is, of one Person in the Godhead, even of God the Father, the first Person, who stands in the relation of a Father in a special sense, the Father of our Lord Jesus, who, such, is the object of prayer (Eph. 3:14), and our Father in Christ; "I go to my Father and your Father," says Christ (John 20:17), my Father by nature, yours by grace; mine by natural filiation, yours by special adoption; our sonship is founded on our conjugal union and relation to Christ, the Son of God, and on our relation to him, as the firstborn among many brethren. God, as the Father of Christ, has not predestinated us to the adoption of children by him, and to be conformed to his image; but has actually put us among the children, and taken us into his family, by an act of special love and favour (1 John 3:1), of which adoption an evidence is given in regeneration; for such who have "power to become the sons of God," are those who are "born of God;" whom he, as the God and Father of Christ, has "begotten again of abundant mercy," of free grace and favour, of his own good will (John 1:12, 13; 1 Peter 1:3), so that the Father of Christ is our Father, both by adoption and regeneration; and as such may be addressed by us, as here directed; which shows the true order and manner of prayer, which is to be made to the Father, the first Person; not because of priority of nature, but of order in the Deity; and through the Son, who is the mediator; and by the Spirit, the Spirit of grace and adoption; and which are all laid together in one text (Eph. 2:18), no man can come to the Father but by Christ; and as no man can call Jesus Lord but by the Spirit, so no man can call God "Father," in this special relation, but under the testimony of the Spirit of adoption.

Now the consideration of God as "our Father," in our addresses to him, is of great use:

1. To command in us a reverence of God; a son

honours and reverences a father, or ought to do; and if God is our Father, he expects honour and reverence; and when we approach him, it should be with "reverence and godly fear;" not with slavish fear, as a servant, but with filial fear, as a son.

2. It tends to encourage us to use freedom with him, as children with a father; to pour out our souls before him, and tell him all our mind and all our wants; and "where the Spirit is," as a Spirit of adoption, crying, "Abba," Father, "there is liberty".

3. It will serve to give us boldness at the throne of grace, and a fiducial confidence that we shall have what we ask of him (Luke 11:13).

4. The idea of God as our Father, excites in us, and inspires us with sentiments of the tenderness of his heart, of his pity and compassion, and of the great love and affection he bears towards us, and therefore cannot deny us any good thing needful for us (Ps. 103:13; Isa. 63:15, 16; Luke 15:20, 22; 2 Thess. 2:16).

5. It cannot but fill us with gratitude for the many favours which he, as a kind indulgent Father, has bestowed on us; having nourished and brought us up, fed us all our lives long, clothed us, and provided everything for us, and protected us from all evils and enemies; and we may say, with David, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever and ever!" (1 Chron. 29:10).

6. This may teach us subjection to him, the Father of Spirits, and submission to his will, in all things we ask of him (Luke 22:42).

7. Addressing him as "our Father," instructs us to pray for others as well as for ourselves, even for all saints; for all the children of God, to whom he stands in the same relation, being the Father of us all (Eph. 4:6).

Secondly, the object of prayer is described by the place of his habitation and residence; "which art in heaven" (see Ps. 123:1). Not that God is limited, included, and circumscribed in any place, for he is everywhere, and fills heaven and earth with his presence; but as such is the weakness of our minds that we cannot conceive of him but as somewhere, in condescension thereunto he is represented as in the highest place, in the height of heaven; for as he is the high and lofty One, he dwells in the high and lofty place; heaven is his throne, the habitation of his glory, where is his palace, where he keeps his court, and has

his attendants; and so is expressive of the greatness of his Majesty, and therefore he ought to be approached with the highest reverence; and such a view of him will lead us to some of the divine perfections, which greatly encourage in the work of prayer; as the omniscience and omnipresence of God (Ps. 11:4, 115:3, 135:5, 6), and "since God is in heaven," and we "upon earth," our "words should be few," but full, and be expressed with great lowliness and humility, with great modesty and self-abasement, as being "but dust and ashes" who speak unto him (Eccl. 5:2; Gen. 18:27), and the consideration of his being in heaven, should draw off our minds from the earth, and all terrestrial things, and from asking them, and teach us to look upwards, to God in heaven, and seek those things which are above, from whence comes every good and perfect gift; and since our Father is in heaven we are directed to pray unto, we should look upon heaven, and not this world, as our native place; if we are born again, we are born from above, are partakers of an heavenly birth, and of an heavenly calling, and should seek the better country, the heavenly one; our conversation should be in heaven, and our hearts be where our treasure is; our Father is in heaven, and our Father's house and mansions of bliss in it are there; there is our portion, patrimony, and inheritance. From the preface I pass to consider,

II. The petitions in this prayer, which are six, some make them seven; the first three respect the glory of God: the other our good, temporal and spiritual.

1. The first petition is, "Hallowed be thy name;" which teaches to begin our prayers with the celebration of the name of God, and with a concern for his glory, and as the end for which he has made all things; nor will he give it, nor suffer it to be given to another; this we should have in view in all we do, and in whatsoever we ask of him; this should be uppermost in our minds, that his great name be glorified (Josh. 7:9). By his name may be meant God himself, as when saints are said to trust in his name, to fear his name, and to love his name, and the like: or his nature and perfections; as when it is said, "What is his name?" that is, his nature, "if thou canst tell;" and "how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" that is, what a glorious display is there of thy perfections in all the earth (Prov. 30:4; Ps. 8:1), or any of the great names and titles of God, by which he has made

himself known; as the Lord God Almighty, Jehovah, &c. (Ex. 6:3) and, indeed, everything by which he has manifested himself, particularly his word, his gospel, which is called his name, and which he has magnified above all and every of his names, and in which the greatest discovery is made of himself, his perfections and glory (John 17:6; Ps. 138:2). Now when we pray that his name may be "hallowed," or sanctified, for hallowed is an old English word, now in little use, and is the same as sanctified; the meaning is, not that God can be made holy, or be made more holy than he is; for he is originally, underatively, immutably, and perfectly holy; there is none holy as the Lord: not the holy angels; "The heavens," that is, the inhabitants of the heavens, "are not clean in his sight," when compared with him: but the meaning is, that he be declared, owned, and acknowledged to be holy; as he is by the seraphs in Isaiah's vision, and by the four living creatures around the throne, who continually say, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" and when the glory due to his holy name is given him, and particularly when thanks are given at the remembrance of his holiness: and he may be said to be hallowed, or sanctified, both by himself and by others, and both may be prayed for in this petition. He is sanctified by himself when he makes a display of his perfections, as he does in all his works; in the works of creation, of providence, and redemption, and particularly of his holiness and justice (Ps. 145:17), and when he shows his resentment against sin, takes vengeance on it, and inflicts punishment for it; thus he says of Zidon and of Gog, that he shall be known that he is the Lord when he "shall have executed his judgments" on them, "and shall be sanctified in them," (Ezek. 28:22, 38:16, 23) he may be said to sanctify his name, by giving his holy word and holy ordinances to men, which direct them in the paths of holiness and righteousness; and especially by making his people a holy people; he has not only chosen them to be holy, and called them with an holy calling, and unto holiness, but he implants principles of grace and holiness in them, and at last brings them to a state of perfect and unblemished holiness and purity: and his name may be sanctified by others; by civil magistrates, when they act for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well; and by ministers of the word, when they speak according to the oracles of God, that he in all

things may be glorified; and by common saints, when they "sanctify the name of the Lord," (1 Peter 2:14, 4:10; Isa. 29:23) and this they do when they exercise the grace of faith, fear, and love; when they believe him, to sanctify his name, the not doing which was resented in Moses and Aaron; and they sanctify him when they make him their fear and dread, and love his name (Num. 20:12; Isa. 8:13; Ps. 5:11), and when they show a regard to his word, worship, and ordinances; "which is but our reasonable service," (Rom. 12:1) and when they study to promote holiness of life in themselves and others (2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Peter 1:15, 16; Matthew 5:16), and are careful that the name of God may not be blasphemed through them, or on their account: and whereas nothing is more contrary to the sanctification of the name of God, than the profanation of it, by taking it in vain, by swearing falsely by it, and by the horrid oaths and cursings of wicked men; it is sanctified when magistrates punish for these things, ministers inveigh against them, and every good man discountenances and discourages them: and in the use of this petition we pray that the glory of God may be more and more displayed and advanced in the world, in the course of his providence, and the dispensations of it; that his word may run and be glorified, in the conversion and sanctification of sinners; and that there may be an increase of holiness in all his people; and that all profanation of the name of God among men, may be prevented and removed.

The *Second* petition is, "Thy kingdom come;" the Jews have a saying, [214] that prayer, in, which is no mention of the kingdom, that is, of God, is no prayer. It may be inquired,

1st, whose kingdom this is; by the connection of the petition with the preface, it seems to be the Father's kingdom; "Our Father--thy kingdom come;" but as the Father and the Son are one in nature and power, their kingdom is the same; and so it appears to be on one account or another in every sense of it. There is the kingdom of providence, in which both are jointly concerned; "My Father worketh hitherto," in the government of the world, and the disposition of all things in it, and "I work" with him, says Christ (John 5:17) so that this "kingdom" is also "his": the mediatorial kingdom, which seems more peculiarly Christ's, is in some sense the Father's, since he is the Father's King, whom he has set over his church; and

the kingdom he has is by his appointment, for which he is accountable to him, and at the end will deliver it up to the Father (Ps. 2:6; Luke 22:29). The kingdom of grace, set up in the hearts of the Lord's people, is the kingdom of God, which lies in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; this also is the kingdom of God's dear Son, into which men at conversion are translated. Both the spiritual and personal reign of Christ, the Father has and will have a concern in. When the kingdoms of this world are converted to Christ, they will become the "kingdoms of our Lord," of our Lord God the Father, "and of his Christ," the Son of God. Christ speaks of drinking wine in his "Father's kingdom," (Matthew 26:29) meaning either in the personal reign, or in the ultimate glory, which is a kingdom prepared by the Father, and is in his gift; and yet is called, "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11).

2ndly, It may be further inquired, which of these kingdoms it is, the coming of which is to be prayed for, as future. It seems not to be the kingdom of providence, since that took place from the beginning of the world; though it may be prayed for, that it might more fully appear, and that there may be a greater display of the power and providence of God in the government of the world; that men may know, as Nebuchadnezzar did, that the most High ruleth in it, to the terror of the wicked inhabitants of it, and to the joy of the righteous (Ps. 97:1, 99:1). But rather the gospel dispensation, often called the kingdom of God, and of heaven, may be meant, which when this petition was directed to, was not yet come, though near. John and Christ began their ministry with saying, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and which soon came, though not with observation, with pomp and splendour: upon our Lord's resurrection, and especially at his ascension to heaven, it appeared more manifest, when he was made and declared Lord and Christ, and multitudes in the land of Judea became obedient to the faith of him; it had a further advance when the gospel was carried into the Gentile world, and the apostles were caused to triumph every came with power, seen in the destruction of the Jews for their unbelief and rejection of him, those enemies of his who would not have him to reign over them (Matthew 16:28; Mark 9:1), and still more when paganism was abolished, and Christianity established

in the Roman empire; on occasion of which it is said, "Now is come the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ," (Rev. 12:10) but this kingdom will come in glory, and which is yet to come, and so to be for, at the destruction of antichrist, and when the spiritual reign of Christ will take place; and this voice will be heard in heaven, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!" (Rev. 19:1-6) and still more gloriously, when Christ shall appear a second time in person, and take to himself his great power and reign, called, "his appearing and his kingdom," (2 Tim. 4:1) when he will come in person, and the dead in him shall rise first; which happy dead will be made kings and priests, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years, during which time Satan shall be bound, as to give them no disturbance. This is yet to come; no such of Satan, and reign of Christ with his saints (Rev. 20:1-10), have as yet been; [215] the personal coming of Christ, and reign with his saints, are still future, and to be prayed for; as by John (Rev. 22:20), and seems to be chiefly intended in this petition, since it is so closely connected with,

The *Third* petition; "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven;" which as yet has never been done in the full sense of it, by any man on earth, excepting our Lord Jesus Christ, but will be done by all the saints in the personal reign of Christ. The will of God is either secret or revealed; the secret will of God is the rule of his own actions, in creation, providence, and grace (Eph. 1:11; see Rev. 4:11; Dan. 4:35; Rom. 9:15). This is unknown to men, until it appears, either by prophecies of things future, or by facts and events that are come to pass; it is always fulfilled; "Who hath resisted his will?" it cannot be resisted, so as to be null and void. There is no counteracting the will of God; whatever schemes contrary to it, formed by men, are of no avail; "the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). The providential will of God, or what appears in the dispensation of his providence, are a guide to us in our actions; we should say, as James directs us, we will go here and there, do this or that, "if the Lord will," (James 4:14, 15) and even as this will of God appears in adverse dispensations, it should be acquiesced in and submitted to, without murmuring and repining; with respect to every event it should be said, "The will of the Lord be done," (Acts 21:14) in imitation

of Eli, Job, David, Hezekiah, and others, and even of our Lord himself (1 Sam. 3:18; Job 1:21; 2:10; 2 Sam. 15:25, 26; Ps. 39:9; Isa. 39:8; Luke 22:42).

The revealed will of God is either what is made known in the gospel, and which expresses the good will of God, his grace and favour, declared in the way and method of saving sinners by Christ, or what is signified in the law, which is the "good, acceptable, and perfect will of God;" the matter of it is "good," and when a right use is made of it, and when rightly and truly obeyed, is "acceptable to God," through Christ, and is a "perfect" rule of life, and conversation to men. To the doing of which will the knowledge of it is requisite (Col. 1:10). Faith in God; without which it is impossible to please him (Titus 3:8). The grace and spirit of Christ; without which nothing can be done to any purpose; this may be expected, since it is promised, and may in faith be prayed for (Ezek. 36:27) and when it is done aright, it is done with a view to the glory of God, and without any dependence on it; acknowledging, that when we have done all we can, we are unprofitable servants.

The rule of doing the will of God, as expressed in this petition, is, "as it is done in heaven;" meaning not the starry airy heavens, though the inhabitants of them do the will of God, in their way, in a perfect manner; the sun knows, and punctually observes, its rising and setting, and the moon its appointed seasons of change and full, of increase and decrease; and the planetary orbs keep their stated courses; sun, and moon, and stars, praise the Lord, as they are called upon to do, and even the meteors in the air (Ps. 148:3, 8). But rather the third heavens are meant, the inhabitants of which are glorified saints, the spirits of just men made perfect, and are perfect in their obedience, and the holy angels, who may be chiefly designed; these readily, cheerfully, and voluntarily "do the commandments of God, hearkening to the voice of his word," at once to fulfil it; so in this petition it is desired, that saints do the will of God, "not by constraint, but willingly;" at least not by any other constraint but that of love; angels are thought by some to be called "seraphim" from their flaming love and burning zeal for the glory of God; saints are desirous of being fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and that in sincerity, in singleness of heart; angels do the will of God speedily, and

without delay, hence wings are ascribed unto them, and Gabriel is said to fly with the Lord's message to Daniel; so saints desire, with David, "to make haste, and not delay" to keep the commandments of God; and not some of them only, but all; not a part, but the whole will of God (Ps. 119:60, 61, 128), angels do the will of God constantly, they always behold the face of our Father in heaven, and serve him incessantly, day and night; and saints would, as they should, be "stedfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" and though they cannot, in the present state, do it perfectly, as the angels do, yet they are desirous of it, and reach towards perfection; and when the kingdom of Christ comes on earth at his appearing, then will this petition be fulfilled.

The *Fourth* petition is, "Give us this day our daily bread;" by which is meant, either spiritual or corporal food: some understand it of spiritual food; as the word read, preached, and heard, which is that to the soul as bread is to the body, refreshing, nourishing, and strengthening; and the ordinances, called the goodness and fatness of the Lord's house, particularly the Lord's Supper, the bread of the eucharist; but that was not instituted when this directory was given; and when it was, was not to be administered daily; rather Christ, the bread of life, with respect to which the disciples made a request to Christ similar to this petition; "Lord, evermore give us this bread!" but it seems best of all to understand it of corporal food, which sense the order of the prayer directs to; and which, if not intended, would be imperfect; since then there would be no petition in it for temporal mercies, which yet is necessary. "Bread," with the Hebrews, includes all the necessaries and conveniences of life (see Gen. 3:19; 28:20); the epithets of it are, "our" bread and "daily" bread: ours, not by desert, for we are not worthy of the least mercy; not what we have a natural right to, and a claim upon; Adam had a grant of all good things, sinning, all were forfeited; men in common now enjoy them, through the indulgence of providence; only believers in Christ have a real and proper right unto them; which they have through interest in him, and by being coheirs with him: ours, what we have in a lawful way, by inheritance from our parents, by legacies from our friends, by our own labour and industry, and in a way of lawful trade and

commerce: "ours," and not another's; not what is got from others, neither by fraud, and is the bread of deceit; nor by force and rapine, and is the bread of violence and oppression; nor by theft, and is the bread of wickedness; nor enjoyed in sloth, and is the bread of idleness; such bread is not ours, but another's; and, indeed, to live upon alms, is to live on another's bread; and though lawful, is not desirable, but to be deprecated; "Give me neither poverty," &c. and when we are directed to pray, give us our bread, we are taught to pray for others as well as for ourselves; that our fellow creatures and fellow Christians might have bread as well as ourselves; even "the congregation of the Lord's poor," (Ps. 74:19) the other epithet, "daily" bread, the word used, for it is only in this place, and differently rendered; in the Syriac version, "The bread of our necessity," or indigence, what is "necessary for the day," as the Persic version; and seems to be the same Job calls his "necessary food," what is necessary for the support of life, and what our heavenly Father knows we have need of; food that is fit to eat, such as a father will give to a son; not a stone, nor a scorpion, but proper food; as every creature of God, designed for that purpose, is good; so epiousios may signify, that which is fit for our nature, substance, and being, as a learned Lexicographer interprets [216] it; what is fit for the sustentation of our bodily substance, and the preservation of our life and being; and is what Agur calls food "convenient," suitable to our nature, condition, and circumstances; and as much of it as is "sufficient". The manna of the Israelites might with great propriety be called their daily bread; since it was rained about their tents every morning, and was gathered by them every day, and that by everyone, "according to his eating;" that is, as much as he could eat, or was proper for him to eat (Ex. 16:16-18).

The petition is, "Give us" our daily bread; which shows it is to be prayed for, and to be expected as the gift of God, from whom every good gift comes; and it may be expected, because promised; "Bread shall be given him": and though it is our bread, gotten by our labour and industry, yet it is to be ascribed to the bounty and blessing of God, and acknowledged a gift of his; for it is "the blessing of the Lord upon the diligent hand that maketh rich," (Prov. 10:4, 22) and when we pray that this may be given, we pray for other things to be given with it, or it will be of no

avail; as that God would give us health and appetite; for if our bones are chastened with strong pain, and our bodies filled with diseases, we shall be like the sick man, whose "life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat;" and likewise that God would give nourishment with it; for this is not from food itself alone, nor at the option and will of men, but is of God; and therefore a blessing is to be asked upon our food, or otherwise how can we expect it should be nourishing unto us? (see Deut. 8:3; 1 Tim. 4:5) yea, a "power to eat" of what we have is to be asked of God; for some are so unnatural and cruel to themselves, as to withhold from themselves what is meet, as well as from others; for, for a man to eat of the fruit of his labours in a sober way, is the "gift of God," (Eccl. 5:18, 19; 6:2) and what we ask, and God gives us, is for our use, and not to be abused by us; which is neither for true pleasure, nor profit, nor honour; and since what we have is by gift, we should be content with such things as we have, and be thankful for them: and this petition teaches us, that we should be daily dependent on God, and his providence, and not trust in the gift, but in the Giver; and not think to set our "nest on high," out of the reach of providence, and as if delivered "from the power of evil;" but remember, that he that gives can take away (1 Tim. 6:17; Hab. 2:9). The time when food is to be prayed for is, "this day;" which may teach us the brevity and uncertainty of life, since we cannot boast, promise, and assure ourselves, of a tomorrow; and may instruct us to depress all anxious and immoderate care of what we shall eat, and drink, and wear on the morrow, since we know not what a day may bring forth; and sufficient for the day is both the evil and good of it: and we may learn by it, that our wants may be expected to return on us daily; the food of yesterday will not suffice for this day, nor the food of this day for the morrow; it must be asked for every day: and from hence it appears, that we should pray daily, always, and without ceasing; as the word of God directs.

The *Fifth* petition is, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" by debts are meant "sins," as appears from Luke 11:4 where the same petition is, "Forgive us our sins;" these are called "debts," not as owing to God; it is obedience we owe to God, and in case of sin, satisfaction to his law; and in failure of obedience, and not making satisfaction, we owe a

debt of punishment, and become liable to the curse of the law, to eternal death, which is the wages and demerit of sin; and these debts are numerous, we owe ten thousand talents or more, and cannot answer to one debt of a thousand: men are incapable of paying their debts themselves, nor can any creature pay them for them; and so are liable to a prison. Christ only is the surety of his people, he has undertook to pay their debts, and has blotted out the hand writing against them. And when we are directed to pray for the forgiveness of these debts, or sins, it supposes a sense of sin, and of the guilt of it, chargeable upon us; and likewise an acknowledgment of it, which God requires, and we are encouraged to give; since if we confess our sins, God is just and faithful to forgive them; also a sense of our inability to pay our debts, and of others paying them for us: and by application to God for the forgiveness of sins, it shows that we believe that God can forgive sin; and he only, as indeed none can but himself; and he forgives sin freely and fully; we not being able to pay, he frankly forgives, and even all trespasses, and that for Christ's sake, on account of his bloodshed, and satisfaction made: and therefore there is encouragement to pray for the forgiveness of sin, as David, Daniel, and other saints did, and as Christ's disciples and followers are directed to; that is, for the manifestation and application of pardoning grace; which is all that can be meant, and we want; it is not a request that Christ may be sent again to pay our debts for us, and his blood be shed again for the remission of sins, or a new act of pardon pass in the mind of God; but that we may have a fresh application of pardon, already procured and passed; and this we are to pray for daily, since we are daily sinning, in thought, word, and deed; and therefore forgiveness is to be prayed for, as frequently as we pray for our daily bread, with which petition this is joined.

The reason or argument made use of to enforce this petition is, "as we forgive our debtors;" or, as Luke has it, "for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us;" pecuniary debts are to be forgiven when the debtor is unable to pay; and criminal debts or sins, and injuries committed by one Christian against another, are to be forgiven, as Christ has forgiven them: not that our forgiveness of others is, the cause of God's forgiveness of us; for the moving cause of God's forgiveness is his free favour, grace, and mercy; it

is according to the multitude of his tender mercies, and according to the riches of his grace; and not the deserts of men; the meritorious cause of it is the blood of Christ, shed for the remission of sins; and the satisfaction of Christ, for the sake of which they are forgiven. Nor is our forgiveness of fellow creatures the model of God's forgiveness of us; there is no perfect comparison between them, much less an equality. God forgives as Lord of all, and who has an absolute power so to do; but men forgive those who are their equals, and sinners like themselves; God forgives for Christ's sake, and upon a satisfaction made; but men without, and at most upon repentance; God forgives great sins, and, indeed, all manner of sin; but what man forgives are trivial offences, injuries to their persons or properties; but not sins committed against God. But this is an argument taken from God's own grace, in the hearts of his people, and as an evidence of it; that if he has given them such grace as to forgive their fellow creatures and Christians, then they may hope and expect, that he who is the God of all grace, and from whom they have received theirs, will forgive their sins, of his rich grace, and for Christ's sake; the reasoning is much the same with that in Luke 11:13. Nor is it to be expected, that God should forgive us our sins without our forgiving the sins of others; nor can we put up such a petition without forgiving others, (see Matthew 6:14, 15; 18:28-35; Mark 11:25, 26).

The *Sixth* petition is, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," which some make to be a "sixth" and "seventh;" but they seem to be two parts and branches of the same.

1st, "Lead us not into temptation". There are various sorts of temptation.

1. Some are of God, as, by enjoining things hard, difficult, and trying; so God tempted Abraham, by ordering him to take and offer up his son, on one of the mountains he should show him, whereby he tried his faith in him, his love and obedience to him, and his fear and reverence of him (Gen. 22:1-12), and sometimes by laying afflictions upon his people; which, though they cause heaviness, should be accounted joy; because they try and prove faith and patience, whereby they become more illustrious and precious (1 Peter 1:6, 7; James 1:2, 3), but not by soliciting any to sin (James 1:13), yet there is a sense

in which God may be said to lead into temptation, or there would be no occasion to deprecate it; and that either providentially, as Christ himself was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil (Matthew 4:1) and as when things occur in providence, and objects are presented, which, though good and lawful in themselves, yet meeting with the corruptions of nature, are incentives to, and occasion of sin; as the Babylonish garment, the shekels of silver and wedge of gold spied and found by Achan, were to him; and as a train of circumstances, by meeting together in providence, which led on to David's sin with Bathsheba, (Josh. 7:21; 2 Sam. 11:2) or however permissively; so Satan was suffered to tempt and beguile Eve, and to move and provoke David to number the people, and to sift Peter, and put him on denying his Lord and Master, for which he desired to have him; and God may be said to lead into temptation, when he withdraws the influence of his grace, which only can keep from it; leaves men to the corruptions of their own hearts, as he did Hezekiah (2 Chron. 32:31).

2. Others are more immediately from Satan himself; hence he is called "the tempter," (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5) he solicits to sin, as he did our first parents, and does all men, both good and bad; he tempts by suggesting evil things into the mind, as he did into Judas, and Ananias and Sapphira; in the one to betray his Lord, and in the other to lie against the Holy Ghost; and by filling good men with doubts and fears, with unbelieving and desponding thoughts about their interest in the love, favour, and grace of God, and even with things blasphemous and atheistical, contrary to the dictates and sentiments of their own minds; all which are very distressing and afflictive, and therefore expressed by buffetings, siftings, and fiery darts; and his temptations with all sorts of persons are managed with great art and cunning, and are suited to the age, circumstances, conditions, constitutions, and tempers of men.

3. There are other temptations, which are from the world; some from the better things in it, as from riches, which are deceitful, and draw men to set their hearts upon them, and to trust in them, and to covet after them, and to seek to gain them in an illicit way; by which they fall into temptation and a snare, and into foolish and hurtful lusts, and pierce themselves

through with many sorrows: and from the honours of it; seeking great things for themselves, honour from men, and not that honour which comes from God; and so are diverted from Christ, his gospel and interest, loving the praise of men more than the praise of God: and from the pleasures of it; the love of which detracts from the love of God; not only the pleasures of sin, to which few have the courage of Moses, to prefer afflictions with the people of God; but even lawful recreations men are tempted to carry to an excess; nay, the very necessities of life, table mercies, prove a snare; the good things of life are abused in their using. Some temptations arise from what may be called the evil things of the world; as poverty, which may be a temptation to steal, or to do things unwarrantable, either to prevent it, or to relieve under it. And afflictions of various sorts, under which even good men may be tempted either to neglect, overlook, and slight them; or to faint under them, and to murmur and repine at the hand of God upon them. The customs of the world, which are usually vain and sinful, are very ensnaring; and therefore the apostolical advice is, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed;" and it is no wonder that worldly and fleshly lusts, or that the sinful things in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, should be enticing and ensnaring, and which, by promising liberty, make men the servants of corruption. There are temptations to good men from the men of the world; by whom they are enticed to join them in things sinful, and whose conversation and evil communications corrupt good manners. Joseph, by being among Pharaoh's courtiers, learnt to swear by the life of Pharaoh. And the reproaches, menaces, and persecutions of the world, are temptations to men, either to make no profession of religion, or when made, to drop it; such a time is called, the "time of temptation" (Luke 8:13; Rev. 3:10).

2f1d. There are temptations from the flesh, from indwelling sin, from the corruption of nature, which of all are the worst and most powerful; "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed," (James 1:14) there is a deceitfulness in sin, in internal lust, which sadly entangles, ensnares, and captivates; "the flesh lusteth against the spirit". Now in this petition, "Lead us not into temptation," we pray to be kept from every occasion of sinning,

and inclination to it, and appearance of it, and from every object which may allure to it; and that we might be kept from the sin which most easily besets us, or we are most inclined to; and that God would not leave us to Satan and our own corruptions, but hold us up by his power, when only we shall be safe; and that he would not suffer us neither to enter into, nor to fall by a temptation; and especially that we may not sink under it, and be overcome by it; but that we may be able to resist every temptation, and be victorious over all.

2ndly, the other branch of the petition is, "but deliver us from evil;" either from the evil of afflictions, called "evil things," because the effects of sin, and disagreeable to men (Luke 16:25), from these God has promised to deliver, and does deliver, and therefore may be prayed for in faith; or from the evil of sin, from committing it; this was the prayer of Jabez (1 Chron. 4:10) and from the guilt of it on the conscience, by the blood of Christ, the same with the forgiveness of it; and from the dominion of it, that it might not reign in us; such a prayer see in Psalms 19:13; 119:133, and from the being of it, and the sad effects of it (see Rom. 7:23, 24); or from evil men, unreasonable and cruel; from falling into their hands, and being ill used by them (2 Thess. 3:9), and especially from the "evil one," Satan, and from his temptations; and agrees with the former part of the petition.

III. This prayer is concluded with a doxology, or ascription of glory to God; "For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, for ever" (see 1 Chron. 29:11); and these may be considered as so many reasons, pleas, and arguments, for obtaining the things requested, and to encourage faith therein; "For thine is the kingdom," of nature, providence, grace, and glory; and so all things appertaining thereunto, are at the dispose of God: "and the power;" to give daily bread, to forgive sin, to preserve from temptation, to support under it, and deliver out of it: "and the glory;" arising from all this, to whom alone it is due; and to be for ever given: "Amen," a note of asseveration of the truth herein contained; and used as an assent to the petitions made, and as a wish for the fulfilment of them; and as expressive of faith and confidence, that they would be answered.

[209] Tertullian. de Oratione, c. 1.

[210] Cyprian. de Orat. Domin. p. 265.

[211] Harmenopolus apud Witsii Exercitat. 6. de Orat. Domin. s. 28.

[212] Cateches. Racov. Qu. xix. and xx.

[213] Of the Agreement between them see Gill on "Matthew 6:9" and following, in which I have the happiness to agree with those celebrated writers, Witsius in Exercitat. 6. de Orat. Dominic. s. 32. & Vitranga de Synagog. vet. l. 3. par. 2. c. 8. p. 962. et c. 18. p. 1099.

[214] T. Bab. Beracot. fol. 40. 2.

[215] "Quos mille annos ligati Satanae in ecclesiae historia non invenio; nunquam enim tamdiu ligatus fuisse videtur diabolus." Witsii Orat. Dominic. Exercitat. 9. s. 24. p. 151.

[216] o epi te ousia emon armozon, Suidas in voce, epiousios.

Chapter 7

OF SINGING PSALMS, AS A PART OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

Next to prayer may be considered, singing the praises of God, as a religious duty: this may be done in a private manner, by a person singly and alone (James 5:13), and between two or more; so Paul and Silas sang aloud praises to God in the prison (Acts 16:25), and in the family, between a man and his wife, with his children and servants: of this private singing of psalms in the family Tertullian [217] speaks, and makes use of this as an argument with Christians to marry among themselves, that this duty may be the better and more harmoniously performed; but I shall treat of it as an ordinance of divine and public service; and endeavour,

1. To show what singing is, according to the common idea we have of it, as a natural act of the voice; and as a religious duty distinct from other acts of religion. Singing may be considered either in a proper or in an improper sense. When used improperly, it is ascribed to inanimate creatures; the heavens, earth, mountains, hills, forests, trees of the wood, the pastures clothed with flocks, and the valleys covered with grain, are said to sing and shout for joy, or are exhorted to it (Isa. 44:23, 49:13, Ps. 65:12, 13). Singing, taken in a strict and proper sense,

and as a natural act, is an act of the tongue or voice; though not every action of the tongue, or sound of the voice, is to be called singing. Speech is an action of the tongue; but all kind of speaking is not singing; singing is speaking melodiously, musically, or with the modulation of the voice. These two sounds, speaking or saying, and singing, have not the same idea annexed to them; should we be told that such a man, as commonly expressed, said grace before and after a meal, we should at once understand what is meant, that he asked of God a blessing upon his food, before eating, and returned thanks after it, according to the common use of speech, in prayer to God, and in conversation with men: but if it should be said, he sung grace before and after a meal, we should not be able to form any other idea of it, but that he did it in a tonical, musical way, with a modulation of the voice. It is not any clamour of the tongue, or sound of the voice, that can be called singing; otherwise why should the tuneful voice and warbling notes of birds be called singing (Song 2:12), any more than the sound of the voice of other animals; as the roaring of the lion, the bellowing of the ox, the bleating of the sheep, the neighing of the horse, the braying of the ass, the barking of the dog, or the grunting of the hog? The clamorous noisy shouts of conquerors, and the querulous notes, shrieks, and cries of the conquered, are very different from the voice of singing: when Moses and Joshua came down from the mount, says Joshua, "There is a noise of war in the camp; and he (Moses) said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery; neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the noise of them that sing do I hear;" that sung and danced about the calf (Ex. 32:6, 17, 18). And singing musically with the voice, as a religious action, is distinct from all other religious acts and exercises.

1. From prayer: James speaks of them as two distinct things in the place before quoted; and so the apostle Paul, when he says, "I will pray with the Spirit, and I will sing with the Spirit also;" or if he means the same, he must be guilty of a very great tautology (1 Cor. 14:15). Paul and Silas in prison, both prayed and sung praises, which are evidently two distinct exercises (Acts 16:25).

2. It is distinct from giving thanks; Christ, in the institution of the Supper, gave thanks, this he did as his

own act and deed, singly and alone; but after supper he and his disciples sung an hymn or psalm together; and the apostle having directed the church at Ephesus to sing psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, makes mention afterwards of "giving thanks" to God in the name of Christ, as a distinct duty incumbent on them (Matthew 26:26, 27, 30, Eph. 5:19, 20).

3. It is distinct from praising God; for though we do praise him in singing, yet all praising is not singing. Singing is only one way of praising God; there are others; as when we celebrate the adorable perfections of God, or speak well of them in preaching, or in common discourse; when we return thanks to him for temporal and spiritual mercies in prayer; when we show forth his praise, and glorify him by our lives and conversations; in neither of which senses can we be said to sing; if praising is singing, what then is singing of praise!

4. It is different from inward spiritual joy, which is wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, and arises from views of interest in the love of God, in the covenant of grace, in the person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice of Christ; and this indeed fits a person for singing the praises of God, but is distinct from it; "Is any merry?" *euthumei tis*, is any of a good mind, or in a good frame of soul? "let him sing psalms": but then the frame and the duty are different things; spiritual joy is not singing; but the cause and reason of it, and makes a man capable of performing it in the best manner.

5. Though there is such a thing as mental prayer, there is no such thing as mental singing, or singing in the heart, without the voice. Speaking or preaching without the tongue or voice, are not greater contradictions, or rather impossibilities, than singing without a voice or tongue is. Such an hypothesis is suited for no scheme but "quakerism;" and we may as well have our silent meetings, dumb preaching, and mute prayer, as silent singing: "singing and making melody in the heart," is no other than singing with or from the heart or heartily; or, as elsewhere expressed, "with grace in the heart," [218] that is, in the exercise of it; it does not exclude the voice in singing, but hypocrisy in the heart, and requires sincerity in it, as a learned man [219] observes. I go on,

II. To prove, that singing the praises of God has always been a branch of natural or revealed religion,

in all ages and periods of time, and ever will be.

1. It was a part of the worship of God with the heathens; as prayer is a natural and moral duty, so is singing the praises of God: as men by the light of nature are directed to pray to God, when in distress, or for mercies they want (Jon. 1:6), so they are directed by the same to sing the praises of God for mercies received. A modern learned writer [220] observes, that "though religions the most different have obtained in various nations and ages, yet in this they all agree, that they should be solemnized in hymns and songs:" according to Plato the most ancient kind of poetry lay in those devotions to God which were called hymns [221]; the credit and applause which Homer got [222] was owing to the hymns he composed for the deities; and among his works is still extant an hymn to Apollo; as Orpheus before him, composed hymns to the several deities, which are yet in being under his name. The whole science of music was employed by the ancient Greeks in the worship of their gods, as Plutarch [223] attests. One part of the religious worship of the Egyptians, consisted of hymns to their deities, suitable to the honour of them, and which they sung morning and evening, at noon, and sun setting, as Clemens of Alexandria and Porphyry relate; and the Indians also spent the greatest part of the day and night in prayers and hymns to the gods, as the last of these writers affirms. [224] Remarkable is the saying of Arrianus the Stoic philosopher; [225] he says, "If we are intelligent creatures, what else should we do, both in public and private, than to sing an hymn to the Deity?--If I was a nightingale, I would do as a nightingale, and if a swan, as a swan; but since I am a rational creature, I ought to praise God, and I exhort you to the selfsame song:-this is my work while I live, to sing an hymn to God, both by myself and before one or many." From these, and other instances which might be produced, we may conclude, that the Gentiles were by the light of nature directed, and by the law of nature obliged, to this part of worship; and consequently that it is a part of natural religion.

2. It was practised by the people of God before the giving of the law by Moses; the eighty eighth and eighty ninth psalms are thought by some [226] to be the oldest pieces of writing in the world; being long before the birth of Moses, composed by Heman and Ethan, two sons of Zerah, the son of Judah; the one

in a mournful elegy deplores the miserable state of Israel in Egypt; the other joyfully sings prophetically their deliverance out of it. The ninetieth psalm was written by Moses himself, at what time it is not said; however, certain it is, that Moses and the children of Israel, sung a song at the Red Sea, after their passage through it, and the destruction of the Egyptians in it; which is still on record, and it seems will be sung again when the antichristian Pharaoh, and the antichristian powers, are destroyed by the Christian conquerors, standing on a sea of glass, with the harps of God in their hands (Ex. 15:1; Rev. 15:2, 3). Now this being before the law of Moses, when first sung, it was not done by virtue of that law; nor was it of ceremonious institution, nor a part of worship peculiar to the Levitical dispensation; nor was it by any positive law of God to the sons of men that we know of; but was sung by the Israelites according to the dictates of their consciences, and the examples of others before them, by which they were influenced, as to cry to the Lord when in distress, so to sing his praises when they were delivered.

3. It was not a part of divine service peculiar to Israel under the law; but when psalmody was in the most flourishing condition, under the direction and influence of David their king, he in many of his psalms, calls upon and exhorts the nations of the earth, to sing the praises of God; "Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands," or "all the earth;" let the people, even "all the people praise thee; let the nations be glad and sing for joy, sing unto the Lord all the earth!" &c. (Ps. 66:1, 2, 67:3, 5, 96:1): Now if singing was not a part of moral worship, but of a ceremonious kind, the nations of the earth would have had no concern in it, nor would it have been obligatory upon them.

4. When the ceremonial law was in its greatest glory, and legal sacrifices in highest esteem, singing of psalms and spiritual songs was preferred unto them, as more acceptable to God than the offering of an "ox or bullock" (Ps. 69:30, 31). Now no other reason of this preference can be given, but that the sacrifice of an ox was of ceremonial institution, whereas singing the praises of God was a part of moral worship, which might be performed in a spiritual and evangelic manner.

5. When the ceremonial law, with all its rites, was abolished, this duty of singing the praises of God

remained in full force; at the same time the apostle tells the churches, that the law of commandments was abolished, and they were no more to be judged with respect to meats, and drinks, and holy days, these shadows being gone; he exhorts them most strongly to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 2:14, 15, 5:19; Col. 2:16, 17; 3:16). Now it is not reasonable to suppose that the apostle, in the same epistles, written to the same persons, should declare them disengaged from the one, and under obligation to regard the other, if they equally belonged to the same ceremonial law.

6. That the churches of Christ under the gospel dispensation were to sing, have sung, and ought to sing the praises of God vocally, appears

(1). From the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning it. In many of the psalms respecting the times of the Messiah, the churches of God in them are invited to sing the praises of God; as in Psalms forty seventh, sixty eighth, and ninety fifth, and in many of the prophecies of Isaiah it is declared, that not only the watchmen, the ministers of the word, “should lift up the voice, and with the voice together sing;” but that churches “should break forth into joy, and sing together,” (Isa. 52:7-9; see Isa. 26:1; 35:1, 2, 54:1) blessed be God these predictions are in a great measure fulfilled; gospel churches among the Gentiles, as well as in Judea, have lift up their voices and sung the praises of God, according to these prophecies.

(2). This also is evident from express precepts and directions given to gospel churches concerning it; it is not only prophesied of in the Old Testament, but is commanded in the New; particularly the churches at Ephesus and Colosse, are expressly enjoined to sing “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16) and directions are given them in what manner they are to sing them, which will be observed hereafter.

(3). This is clear from New Testament instances and examples. Christ and his disciples sung an hymn or psalm together at the celebration of the Lord’s Supper; which they did as a church, in the midst of which Christ sung an hymn, and they with him (Matthew 26:30). [227] In Hebrews 2:12 the church at Corinth sung psalms in the times of the apostles; there were indeed disorders among them in the performance of this ordinance, as of others, which

the apostle rectifies, and blames them, but not for that itself, provided they observed the rules he gave them (1 Cor. 14:26).

(4). This practice obtained in the earliest times of Christianity, and has continued to the present time. Pliny, [228] an heathen, in his letter to Trajan the emperor, written at the latter end of the first, or beginning of the second century, acquaints him, that the sum of the charge against the Christians was, that “they met together on a stated day, before it was light, and sung a song among themselves to Christ, as to God.” And Tertullian, [229] in the beginning of the third century, speaks of reading the scriptures, singing psalms, preaching, and prayer, as parts of public worship. And Origen, a little later in the same century, observes, [230] the need of the Spirit of God to assist in singing psalms and hymns to the Father in Christ, eurhythmos, emmelos, emmeros kai sumphonos, in good rhyme, melody, and metre, and in vocal concert. The proofs would be too numerous, and indeed endless, to give of its continuance and use in after ages; [231] it will be sufficient to observe, that the book of the Revelation is a representation of the service of the churches of Christ on earth, as well as of their state, condition, and sufferings, and their deliverance from them, in each of the periods of time until his second coming; in which we frequently have an account of their being concerned in this work of singing (Rev. 4:9-11, 5:9-13, 7:10-12), particularly at the time of the reformation from popery, and at the fall of Babylon, or antichrist (Rev. 14:1-8, 15:2, 3, 19:1-7), when the spiritual reign of Christ will take place; at which time, “from the uttermost parts of the earth will be heard songs, even glory to the righteous,” (Isa. 24:16) and in the millennium, upon the first resurrection, when the personal reign of Christ will begin, the raised ones will sing, as they will be exhorted, and will have reason so to do; “Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust,” (Isa. 26:19) in short, when all other ordinances will cease, this of singing the praises of God will be in its highest glory and perfection (Isa. 35:10). I shall next inquire,

III. What that is which is to be sung, or the subject matter of singing; and the direction is to these three, “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

1. By Psalms may be meant the Book of Psalms,

composed by David, Asaph, and others; but chiefly by David; hence he is called “the sweet Psalmist of Israel,” (2 Sam. 23:1) this is the only sense in which the word is used throughout the whole New Testament; nor is there any reason to believe the apostle Paul designs any other in the places referred to; nor the apostle James, in James 5:13. Those who are of a different mind ought to show in what other sense the word is used, and where; and what those Psalms are we are to sing, if not the “Psalms of David,” &c. since it is certain there are psalms which are to be sung under the gospel dispensation.

2. By “hymns” are intended, not any mere human compositions; since I can hardly think the apostle would place such between psalms and spiritual songs, made by men inspired by the Holy Ghost, and put them upon a level with them, to be sung; but rather this is only another name for the Book of Psalms; the running title of which may as well be the “Book of Hymns,” as it is rendered by Ainsworth. [232] The hundred and forty fifth psalm is called an hymn of David; and the psalm our Lord sung with his disciples after the Supper, is said to be an hymn; and so the psalms of David in general are called umnoi, “hymns,” both by Josephus [233] and Philo the Jew. [234]

3. By “spiritual songs” may also be meant the same psalms of David, Asaph, &c. the titles of some of which are songs; as sometimes “a psalm and song, a song and psalm, a song of degrees,” and the like; together with all other spiritual songs written by men inspired of God; called “spiritual,” because of the author of them, the Spirit of God; the penmen of them, such as were moved by the same Spirit; and the matter of them spiritual, useful for spiritual edification; and are opposed to all loose, profane, and wanton songs. And as these three words, “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,” answer to thlym mzymym and syrym the titles of David’s Psalms, and are by the “Septuagint” rendered by the Greek words used by the apostle, it may be reasonably concluded, that it was his intention that the churches he writes to should sing them; but inasmuch as the “word of God” and Christ in general furnishes out matter for singing his praises, I deny not, but that such hymns and spiritual songs, composed by good men, uninspired, may be made use of; provided care is taken that they be agreeable to the sacred writings, and to the analogy of faith, and are

expressed as much as may be in scripture language; of such sort were those Tertullian [235] speaks of, used in his time, as were either out of the holy scripture, or “de proprio ingenio,” of a man’s own composure; and such seem to be the songs of the brethren, in praise of Christ, as the Word of God, ascribing divinity to him, condemned by some heretics. [236]

IV. The manner in which psalms, &c. are to be sung may be next considered.

1. Socially, and with united voices; so Moses and the children of Israel sung at the Red Sea; so Christ and his disciples sung after the Lord’s Supper; so the watchmen will sing in the latter day, even with their voice together; so did Paul and Silas in prison; and thus the churches are directed in Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16.

2. With the heart along with the mouth, as heartily as well as vocally, which is making “melody in the heart,” (Eph. 5:19) or performing the duty in sincerity and truth; and not as the Israelites, who flattered God with their lips, sung the praises of God, but soon forgot his works.

3. “With grace in the heart,” (Col. 3:16) with the several graces; not one note, but a mixture of notes, makes melody; many voices, yet one sound, make a chorus: [237] so singing must be with various graces; with faith in God, without which it is impossible to please him; and with strong love and affection for him; and also “with reverence and godly fear;” for God is “fearful in praises” nvr’ reverend in them, to be praised with great fear and reverence of his Majesty.

4. “With the Spirit,” as the apostle Paul determined to do (1 Cor. 14:15), with the Spirit of God, whose assistance is necessary in this as in prayer; and with our spirits, sincerely, fervently, and affectionately, and in a spiritual manner, suitable to the nature of God, who is a Spirit.

5. “With the understanding also;” with the understanding of what is sung; and in such a manner, and in such language, as may be understood by others; for one end of the duty is, not only to speak to ourselves in it, but to “teach” and “admonish” others; and perhaps the apostle may have some regard to one of the titles of David’s psalms mskyl “Maschil,” which signifies, a psalm giving instruction, and causing to understand. In a word, besides our mutual edification.

6. We should have in view the glory of God; for we

are to “sing unto the Lord;” not to ourselves, merely to raise our natural affections, to gain applause from others, by the fineness of our voice, and by observing an exact conformity to the tune; but to the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, the one God, who condescends to inhabit the praises of Israel. What remains now is only,

V. To answer to some of the principal objections made to this duty; these are chiefly made against the matter and manner of singing, and the persons, at least some of them, who join in this service.

1st, the matter and manner of singing, particularly David’s psalms; to which are objected,

1. That they were not written originally in metre; and therefore are not to be sung in such manner; nor to be translated into metre for such a purpose. The contrary to this is universally allowed by the Jews, and appears from the different accentuation of them from that of other books, and is asserted by such who are best skilled in the Hebrew language, both ancients and moderns. Josephus [238] says, David, in a time of peace, composed divine songs and hymns, of various metre, some trimetre, that is, of three feet; and others of pentametre, that is, of five feet. And Jerom, [239] who, of all the fathers best understood the Hebrew tongue, takes the psalms to be of the Lyric kind, and therefore compares David, to Pindar, Horace, and others; and for the metre of them appeals to Philo, Josephus, Origen, Eusebius, and others. Gomarus [240] has given hundreds of verses out of the psalms, which agree with Pindar and Sophocles; [241] and the word commonly used throughout that Book, in the judgment of learned men, signifies metre; [242] and since then the Psalms were originally written in metre, it is lawful to translate them into it, in order to be sung in the churches of Christ.

2. It is doubted whether the Book of Psalms is suited to the gospel dispensation, and proper to be sung in gospel churches. Nothing more suitable to it, nor more proper to be sung in it; since it abounds with prophecies concerning the person and offices of the Messiah, his suffering and death, resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God, now more clearly understood, and more capable of being sung in an evangelic manner; and also is full of precious promises; is a large fund of experience, a rich mine of gospel grace and truth, and so is greatly

suited to every case and condition the church of Christ, or a particular believer may be in at any time; a little care and prudence in the choice of proper psalms on particular occasions, would fully discover the truth of this.

3. It is objected, that cases are often met with in this book we cannot make our own; and to sing them, it is suggested, would be lying to God; and that some are quite shocking, as curses and imprecations on wicked men; and seem to show a want of that charity which is recommended in the gospel. To which it may be replied, that singing cases not our own, are no more lying to God than reading them is, singing being but a slower way of pronunciation, in a musical manner. Besides, when we sing the cases of others, we sing them as such, and not our own; which yet may be useful by way of example, advice, comfort, or instruction; and being sung in public, may be suitable to some in the community, though not to others; and so the end of singing be answered: and the same objection will lie equally against public prayer, and joining in that, since it cannot be thought that every petition is suitable to all: and as for curses and imprecations on wicked men, these may be avoided; we are not obliged to sing all that are in the psalms; besides, these may be considered only as prophetic hints of what may be expected will befall such persons, and may be sung to the glory of God, and with instruction to ourselves; since herein may be observed the justice and holiness of God, the vile nature of sin, the indignation of God against it, and abhorrence of it, and in which it is to be had with all good men.

4. It is urged, that to sing David’s Psalms, and others, is to sing by a form, and then why not pray by one? I answer, the case is different; the one may be done without a form, the other not; the Spirit is promised as a Spirit of supplication, but not as a Spirit of poetry; and if a man had an extraordinary gift of delivering out an extempore psalm or hymn, that would be a form to others who joined him; add to this, that we have a Book of Psalms, but not a book of prayers. David’s Psalms were composed to be sung by form, and in the express words of them, and were so sung (see 1 Chron. 16:7; 2 Chron. 29:30); hence the people of God are bid, not to “make” a psalm, but to “take” a psalm, ready made to their hands (Ps. 81:1, 2).

5. It is observed, that David’s psalms were sung formerly with musical instruments, as the harp, timbrel, and cymbal, and organs; and why not with these now? if these are to be disused, why not singing not singing itself? I answer, these are not essential to singing, and so may be laid aside, and that continue; it was usual to burn incense at the time of prayer, typical of Christ’s mediation, and of the acceptance of prayer through it; that is now disused; but prayer being a moral duty, still remains: the above instruments were used only when the church was in its infant state, and what is showy, gaudy, and pompous, are pleasing to children; and as an ancient writer [243] observes, “these were fit for babes, but in the churches (under the gospel dispensation, which is more manly) the use of these, fit for babes, is taken away, and bare or plain singing is left.” As for organs, of which mention is made in Psalm 150:1-6, the word there used signifies another kind of instruments than those now in use, which are of a later device and use; and were first introduced by a pope of Rome, Vitalianus, and that in the seventh century, and not before. [244]

2ndly, there are other objections, which lie against some persons singing; as,

1. Women, because they are ordered to “keep silence in the churches;” and are not “permitted to speak,” (1 Cor. 14:34, 35) but this is to be understood only of speaking and teaching in public, in an authoritative way (1 Tim. 2:11, 12), otherwise it would not be lawful for them to give an account of the work of grace upon their hearts; nor to give evidence in any case, and the like: as for singing the praises of God, it is a moral duty, and equally binding as prayer on both sexes; and the God of nature and grace has given women faculties capable of performing it; and having a voice suited for it, to join in harmonious concert, ought to be exhorted to it, and encouraged, and not discouraged and discountenanced. Miriam, and the women with her, sung at the Red Sea; and Deborah sung with Barak; and it is a prophesy of gospel times, that “women” should come and “sing in the height of Zion,” (Jer. 31:8-12) and, indeed, what else is the “woman’s prophesying,” but singing, allowed by the apostle, with her “head covered;” as is well judged by a learned writer; [245] since prophesying is explained by singing, as well as by praying and preaching, (1 Cor. 11:5, 14:15, 24, 26; see 1 Chron. 25:1-3) where

prophesying is used in the same sense.

2. The singing of unbelievers, and singing with them, are objected to by some; but then this supposes that it is the duty of believers, and is allowed of; or otherwise the objection is impertinent. Now let it be observed, that singing the praises of God, as well as prayer, is a moral duty, and so binding on all men, believers and unbelievers; and though none but the former can sing in a spiritual and evangelical manner; yet the latter are obliged to do it, in the best way they can; and it may be as well objected to their admission to public prayer, as to public singing; and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to know who are such in public assemblies; and supposing they ought not to sing, how can this affect believers? it is not their sin; nor should they neglect their duty on this account; but rather blush to see such so forward to it, to whom it is thought it does not belong, and they so backward to it. Besides, it has been the practice of the saints in all ages, to sing in mixed assemblies; there was a mixed multitude that came out of Egypt with the Israelites, in whose presence they sung at the Red Sea, and who very probably joined them in it, since they shared in the common deliverance. It was the resolution and practice of David, to sing the praises of God among the heathen (Ps. 18:49, 51:9), and, indeed, some ends of this ordinance cannot be otherwise answered; which are to declare the Lord’s doings, his wonders, and his glory among them (Ps. 9:11, 96:3), and this has been an ordinance for conversion; it was of great use in forwarding the reformation from popery, as bishop Burnet, [246] in his history of it, relates; and it has been made very useful to souls under their first awakenings. Austin [247] speaks of it from his own experience: he says, “How much have I wept at thy hymns and songs, being exceedingly moved at the voices of thy church sweetly sounding. These voices pierced into my ears; thy truth melted into my heart, and from thence pious affections were raised, and the tears ran, and it was well with me.”

3. It is urged, that singing is not proper for persons in any distress, only when in good and comfortable frames; and which is very much grounded on James 5:13 the sense of which is, not that such are the only persons that are to sing psalms, or this the only time of doing it; any more than that afflicted persons are the only ones to pray, and the time of affliction the

only time of prayer; but as affliction more especially calls for prayer, so a good and joyful frame on account of good things, for singing of psalms. What more distressed condition could a man well be in, than that in which Heman the Ezrahite was when he penned and sung Psalm 88:1-18? as the church sung in the wilderness in the days of her youth, when she came out of Egypt; so it is prophesied that she should hereafter sing there as then; and as the church is now in the wilderness, where she is nourished with the word and ordinances, for a time, and times; and half a time, she has reason to sing on that account (Hosea 2:14, 15; Rev. 12:14).

[217] Ad uxorem, l. 2. c. 6. p. 190. c. 8. p. 191.

[218] "Necesse est hic in corde, ex corde intelligi, scilicet, ut non solum ore, sed etiam corde cantemus," Hieron. in Col. 3. 16.

[219] Zanchius in Eph. v. 19.

[220] Lowth. de Sacr. Poesi Heb.. Praelect. 1. p. 21.

[221] Deut. Legibus, l. 3. p. 819. Ed. Ficin.

[222] Herodotus de vita Homeris, c. 9. p. 558. Ed. Gronov.

[223] Deut. Musica, p. 1140.

[224] See my Discourse on Singing, p. 10, 11.

[225] Arrian. Epictetus, l. 1. c. 16. & l. 3. c. 26.

[226] Lightfoot, vol. 1. p. 699, 700.

[227] See the old translation of this text exposed, which is pleaded for, and what was the hymn or psalm sung at this time, in a Discourse of mine on Singing, p. 34, 35, &c.

[228] Ep. 1. 10. ep. 97. vid. Tert. Apol. c. 2. & Euseb. Eccl.. Hist. 1. 3. c. 33.

[229] Deut. Anima, c. 9.

[230] peri euches c. 6. p. 7. Ed. Oxon. 1686.

[231] See my Discourse on Singing, p. 45, 46, &c.

[232] "Vox umnoi, cum Hebraeo titulo thlym multo melius congruit." Lowth.

[233] Antiq. 1. 7. c. 12.

[234] L. de mutat. nom. et l. de Somnis, et alibi.

[235] Apolog. c. 39.

[236] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 1. 5. c. 28. & l. 7. c. 30.

[237] Seneca, Ep. 84.

[238] Antiq. 1. 7. c. 12.

[239] Ep. ad Paulin. tom. 3. fol. 3. 2. praefat. in lib. Job fol. 8. 2.

[240] Davidis Lyra inter opera ejus, t. 2. p. 317, &c.

[241] See my Discourse on Singing, p. 23, 24.

[242] mzmvr, "metrum, vel numeros, sive quam Graeci ruthmon, vocant, significat," Lowth. de Sacr. Poesi Heb.. Praelect. 3. p. 40. in marg. & Praelect. 4. p. 44. vid. Gejerum, & Michaelem, in Psalm iii. 1.

[243] Autor. Qu. et. Respons. inter opera Justin. p. 462.

[244] Platina de vitis Pontif. p. 86.

[245] Works, vol. 2. p. 785, 1157. see Targum Jon. in 1 Sam. x. 5. and xix. 20, 23, 24.

[246] Hist. of the Reformation, vol. 2. p. 94.

[247] Confession. 1. 9. c. 6.

Chapter 8

OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP, AS TO PLACE AND TIME

The circumstances of "place" and "time" of public worship deserve consideration; since for public worship there must be some certain "place" to meet and worship in, and some stated "time" to worship at. As to the first of these, it may soon be dispatched; since there does not appear to be any place appointed for it until the tabernacle was erected in the wilderness. It is probable that there was some certain place where our first parents worshipped, after their expulsion from the garden of Eden; whither Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices, and offered them; but where it was is not easy to say; perhaps the cherubim and flaming sword, at the east of the garden of Eden, were the symbols of the divine presence, since the Lord is frequently represented as dwelling between the cherubim; which may have respect, as to the cherubim in the tabernacle and temple, so to these; and there might be a stream of light, splendour, and glory, an emblem of the Shekinah, or divine Majesty, which had then appeared in the form of a flaming sword; and now near to this, or however in sight of it, might be the place of public worship; and hence when Cain was driven front these parts, he is said to be "hid from the face of God," and to go out "from the presence of the Lord," (Gen. 3:24, 4:3, 4, 14, 16). As for the patriarchs in succeeding times, before the flood, it does not appear that they had any other places to worship in but their own houses, where families

might agree to meet, and worship in them in turn and course. And the patriarchs after the flood, as they were strangers, sojourners, and travellers in the earth; they built altars here and there for their convenience, and where they worshipped. Abraham in his travels came to a place near Bethel, as it was afterwards called, and built an altar, and worshipped; and on his return from Egypt he came to the same place again, and there worshipped as before (Gen. 12:8, 13:3, 4). Jacob, in his travels, came to a place called Luz, and where he remarkably enjoyed the divine presence, and thought it no other than the house of God, and therefore set up a stone for a pillar, and said it should be the house of God; and called the name of the place Bethel; and which God so honoured as to call himself by the name of the "God of Bethel;" and hither, with his family, he came many years after, and erected an altar unto God (Gen. 28:17-22, 31:13, 35:6, 7). There does not seem to be any settled place of worship until the tabernacle was built in the wilderness; and then every man was to bring his offering to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and there offer it, before the tabernacle of the Lord (Lev. 17:4, 5), and this tabernacle was moveable from place to place; not only while in the wilderness, but when the Israelites were come into the land of Canaan: it was first at Gilgal, then at Shiloh, after that at Nob and Gibeon; hence the Lord says, he had not dwelt in an house, in any fixed place, from the time the Israelites came out of Egypt; as if he had before; [248] but had walked in a tent, in a tabernacle (2 Sam. 7:6). It had been said by the Lord, that when the Israelites came into the land that was given them, there would be a place chosen of God to dwell in, and where all offerings were to be brought, and feasts kept (Deut. 12:10, 11), the name of the place was not mentioned, but it eventually appeared, that the city of Jerusalem, and the temple there, were meant; and the place where the temple was to be built was first discovered by David, and shown to Solomon; and which was confirmed to him by the Lord himself, to be the place he had chosen for an house of sacrifice (1 Chron. 22:1; 2 Chron. 7:12), and this continued a place of worship until destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar; and after the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity it was rebuilt, and remained to the times of Christ. Indeed, after the captivity, there were synagogues erected in various parts of the land

of Judea, which were a sort of chapels of ease, where prayer was made, and Moses and the prophets read and expounded on Sabbath days; but no sacrifices were offered in them, nor any of the yearly feasts kept there: and whereas there had been, before the times of Christ, there still was a controversy between the Jews and Samaritans, whether the temple at Jerusalem or mount Gerizzim, were the place of worship; this was decided by our Lord, who declared that the time was coming, that neither at the one place nor at the other, should God be worshipped; but everywhere (John 4:20, 21), as the apostle also says (1 Tim. 2:8), and, indeed, since, under the gospel dispensation, as was foretold, the name of the Lord should be great among the Gentiles, from the rising of the sun to the going down of it; and offerings of prayer and praise should be offered to him in every place (Mal. 1:11). No one place could be fixed on for all the nations of the earth to meet and worship in; and saints are now therefore at liberty to build places of worship for their convenience wherever they please, as the first Christians did, and continued to do.

But the circumstance of "time," or a stated day of worship, requires more particular consideration; it having been a matter of controversy which has exercised the minds of good and learned men, for a century or two past, and not yet decided to the satisfaction of all parties; and in order to obtain what satisfaction we can, it will be proper to inquire,

1. What day has been, or is observed, as a stated time of public worship; with the reasons thereof. And,

First, it has been thought and asserted, that the seventh day from the creation was enjoined Adam in a state of innocence, as a day of public and religious worship, and so to be observed by his posterity in after times; but if it was enjoined Adam in his state of innocence, it must be either by the law of nature, written on his heart, or by a positive law given him.

1st, It does not seem to be the law of nature written on his heart; for then,

1. He must be bound to keep a Sabbath before the institution of it; he was created on the sixth day, after the image of God; one part of which was the law of nature, written on his heart; but the institution of the Sabbath day was not until the seventh day, if it was then; for it is yet a matter of question.

2. There would have been some remains of it in his

posterity after the fall; and even among the Gentiles, for these have the “law written in their hearts,” (Rom. 2:14) but now it does not appear that they were ever directed by the law and light of nature to observe the seventh day of the week as an holy Sabbath; what has been alleged in favour of it will be considered hereafter.

3. Was this the case, it would have been reinscribed with other laws in more legible characters on the hearts of God’s people in regeneration, according to the promise in the covenant of grace (Heb. 8:10), and had the law of the seventh day Sabbath been one of them, it must easily have been discerned by them; and the observance of it would have been out of question. Nor,

2ndly, does it seem to be enjoined Adam, by any positive law; and, indeed, if it had been written on his heart, as a branch of the law of nature, there would have been no need of any such law to have directed and instructed him; and to have a positive law given him, to keep a seventh day Sabbath, without any positive rules and directions what worship should be observed by him on that day, which do not appear, the law would have been useless; we have no account of any positive law given to Adam in a state of innocence, but that which forbid eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which tree, and its fruit, we know nothing of; and did we, that law would not be binding upon us. The proof of such a law, with respect to the Sabbath, is founded,

1. On Genesis 2:2, 3, where it is said, that God having ended his work, “rested on the seventh day, and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it”. But,

(1). No mention is made of a Sabbath, and of the sanctification of that, as in the fourth command (Ex. 20:11), only of the seventh day, and not of that as a Sabbath.

(2). The words are a narrative of what God did himself; but do not contain a precept of what Adam should do; they only declare what God did, that he blessed and sanctified the seventh day; but do not enjoin Adam to keep it holy, as a Sabbath.

(3). At most they seem only to design a destination of that day to holy service hereafter; God “blessed” it, that is, pronounced it an happy day; all his works being finished, and man, an holy creature, the crown and

glory of all, made after his image: [249] on a survey of which, God rested, and took delight, pleasure, and refreshment in them, on the seventh day; which he “sanctified,” not by keeping it holy himself, nor by imparting any holiness to it, which a day is not capable of; but he separated, or set it apart for holy use in after time, which is a very common sense of this word: so Jeremiah was sanctified before he was born; that is, appointed and ordained to be a holy prophet; which purpose was not carried into execution until some time after; and so God might be said to sanctify or set apart in his mind and purpose the seventh day to be an holy Sabbath in future time; though it was not actually executed, as it should seem by what will be hereafter observed, until many hundred years after the creation. Besides,

(4). The words in Genesis 2:2, 3, are understood by many learned men proleptically, or by way of anticipation; as other things are in this same chapter; so some places are called by the names they bore in the times of Moses, which they had not from the beginning (see Gen. 2:11-14); or the words may be considered as in a parenthesis; and the rather, since had they been read, or to be read, in common with the preceding, the word “God,” and the phrase the “seventh day,” would have been omitted; and have been read, “and he blessed and sanctified it;” and the reason for it, which follows, seems manifestly taken from the fourth command, as given on Mount Sinai (Ex. 20:11), and Moses writing his history of the creation, after this precept was given, took the opportunity of inserting this whole passage, to give the greater sanction to it with the Israelites.

(5). After all, be it that the text in Genesis enjoins the keeping the seventh day from the creation as a Sabbath; which seventh day now cannot be known by any people or persons whatever, it could never be the same with the Jewish seventh day Sabbath; for that was to be observed after six days labour of man; “Six days shalt thou labour,” &c. whereas this could be only after the six days labour of God, who rested from his work on the seventh; but it was Adam’s first day, and could not with any propriety be called a rest from labour to him, when, as yet, he had not laboured at all: such a Sabbath was not suitable to him in a state of innocence, which supposes imperfection and sin; the creature would not have been in bondage had

he not sinned, this was the effect of the fall; Adam, in innocence, had no manservant nor maidservant, nor any cattle in a state of bondage, groaning under burdens, to rest from their labours. This is a law merely calculated for sinful man.

2. The other remaining proof of such a law so early is taken from Hebrews 4:3, 4, where no mention is made of a seventh day Sabbath; and in which the apostle takes notice of the several rests which had been under the former dispensation, and shows, that neither of them was the rest promised, and had, under the gospel dispensation: not the seventh day rest from the creation, for that was God’s rest: not the rest of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, which Joshua gave them; for then David, a long time after, would not have spoken of another day of rest, the gospel dispensation, into which believers now enter. Upon the whole, it must appear at least very dubious and uncertain, that there was any institution of a seventh day Sabbath from the creation; and especially when it is considered,

Secondly, that there is no proof of the patriarchs from Adam to the times of Moses observing such a day. For,

1. We no where read of any law being given them for the observation of the seventh day Sabbath; Adam and Eve had a law which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge; which Tertullian calls the primordial law; Abel was taught the law of sacrifices; Noah had the laws which forbid eating the blood with the flesh of a beast alive, and the shedding of human blood; and Abraham the law of circumcision; but neither of them had any law, as we know of, which enjoined them to observe the seventh day Sabbath. The Jews pretend that there were seven laws given to the sons of Noah; but this of keeping the seventh day Sabbath is not among them.

2. Many of the religious actions of the patriarchs are taken notice of, and commended, both ceremonial and moral; as their offering of sacrifice, calling on the name of the Lord, prayer to God, and meditation on him and his works their piety, fear of God, and eschewing evil; but not a word of their observance of a seventh day Sabbath.

3. The sins of men, both before and after the flood, are observed, but Sabbath breaking does not appear among them. The old world was full of violence,

rapine, and oppression; and in the new world, intemperance, incest, idolatry, and other sins, men were chargeable with; but not with this: it does not appear among the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah; nor is it to be found among the abominations for which the old inhabitants of Canaan were cast out of it. But no sooner was the law of the Sabbath given to the Israelites in the wilderness, but we hear of the breach of it, and of a severe punishment of it.

4. It was the general opinion of the ancient fathers of the Christian church, that the patriarchs did not observe a Sabbath, nor were obliged to it; but were righteous men, and saved without it: not Adam, nor Abel, nor Enock, nor Noah, nor Melchizedek, nor Lot, nor Abraham, nor Job, nor any before Moses; so say Justin Martyr, [250] Irenaeus, [251] Tertullian, [252] and Eusebius; [253] by whom are mentioned particularly all the above persons, as good men, and non-observers of a Sabbath. Some have fancied that they have found instances of a seventh day Sabbath observed in the time of the patriarchs; as at the offerings of Cain and Abel, which ate said to be “in process of time,” or “at the end of days,” (Gen. 4:3) but this phrase seems to design, not the end of a week, or seven days, no number being expressed, but rather the end of a year, days being sometimes put for a year; [254] and so refers to the harvest, at the end of the year, when the fruits of the earth were gathered in; and therefore Cain might think his sacrifice, at that time, would have been the more acceptable. And some conjecture a Sabbath was observed by Noah, in the ark (Gen. 8:10, 12), since he is said to send out the dove again after seven days; but this number seven has respect, not to the first day of the week, from whence the days were numbered; but the first sending out of the dove, be it on what day it may. And besides, Noah might have respect to the known course of the moon, which puts on another face every seven days; [255] and which, in its increase and wane, might have an influence upon the water, which he was careful to observe and make trial of this way. Moreover, it is observed, that in Job’s time there was a day when the sons of God met together (Job 1:6, 2:1), but who these sons of God were, whether angels or men, is not certain; nor where, nor on what day they met; no mention is made of a seventh day, much less of a Sabbath; nor of a certain rotation of this day

every week; nor of the distance between the first and second meeting. Arguments from this, and the above instances, must be very farfetched, and are very slight and slender grounds to build such an hypothesis upon, as the observation of a seventh day Sabbath.

Thirdly, there is no mention of a Sabbath before the descent of the manna in the wilderness of Sin: some of the Jewish writers [256] speak of it as given at Marah, a few weeks before, which they suppose is included in the word “statute,” (Ex. 15:25) but this is said without any foundation; but the seventh day from the descent of the manna is expressly called a “Sabbath,” (Ex. 16:23-26) and is the first we hear of, and which appears to be quite a new thing; for had the Israelites been used to a seventh day Sabbath, the rulers of the people might easily have conjectured, that the reason of twice as much bread being gathered on the sixth day, was on the account of the Sabbath being the day following, as a provision for that, had that been the case, without coming to tell Moses of it, who gave this as a reason of it to them; “Tomorrow is,” or rather it should be supplied, “shall be, the rest of the holy Sabbath to the Lord;” for a “tomorrow” cannot be spoken of with propriety in the present tense, “is;” but as future, “shall be;” and therefore on the seventh day, when the manna ceased, which was a confirmation of it, he says to them, “see,” take notice of it, as something new and wonderful, and a sufficient reason of the institution of the Sabbath, and why that day was given unto them for a Sabbath; and when the fourth command was given, a month after, it is introduced with a “memento,” as the other commands are not; “Remember,” what had been lately enjoined them; and that appears to be a new law; for when a man was found the breach of it, no penalty being as yet people brought him to Moses, and he was put into the ward, until the mind of God was known concerning it (Num. 15:31-36). Moreover, if there had been a Sabbath before the giving of the manna, the Sabbath preceding the seventh day from the descent of that, must have been the fifteenth of the month, on which day it is certain the Jews had a wearisome journey, by divine appointment, the cloud going before them (Ex. 16:1), and was concluded with gathering quails; so that it was not a day of rest to them, nor the rest of the holy Sabbath to the Lord.

Fourthly, the seventh day Sabbath, as it was

declared on the descent of the manna, that it was peculiar to the Jews; “The Lord hath given you the Sabbath;—so the people rested the seventh day” (Ex. 16:29, 30). Song it was when it received a further sanction from the fourth precept of the decalogue. For,

1. The whole decalogue, or ten commands of the law of Moses, as such, were given to the Jews only; [257] as a covenant, it was made with the Israelites in the wilderness, and not even with their fathers, which were before them; and in which respect they had the preference to all other nations on earth, as Moses affirms (Deut. 5:2-21, 4:6-8), and as is affirmed by David (Ps. 147:19, 20) and by the apostle Paul, (Rom. 9:4), and which appears from the preface to the decalogue; “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt;” which cannot be said of any other nation.

2. The fourth command is particularly and expressly declared as peculiar to them; “My Sabbaths shall ye keep,” saith the Lord; “for it is a sign between me and you,” and not others (Ex. 31:13), that is, of the national covenant between them. The same is repeated (Ex. 31:16, 17), where the children of Israel, as distinct from all other nations to whom it was no sign, are directed to keep the Sabbath. Song Nehemiah says, that when God spoke to the Israelites in the wilderness, he made “known to them his holy Sabbath;” which it seems had not been made known unto them before; but now was made known to them, and not to others; and is mentioned along with peculiar precepts, statutes, and laws commanded them (Neh. 9:14), and the prophet Ezekiel, from the Lord, tells the Jews, that the Lord had “given,” to their fathers in the wilderness, his “Sabbaths, to be a sign between him and them;” it is not said he restored them, but “gave” them, denoting a new institution, and as peculiarly belonging to them: and this is the sense of the Jewish nation in general, [258] that the Sabbath only belongs to them, and that the Gentiles are not obliged to keep it; for though a Gentile proselyte or stranger within the gate, for the sake of national decorum, and to avoid offence and scandal, was to do no work on it for an Israelite, yet he might for himself, as the Jews interpret it; [259] but then this supposes, that a stranger not within the gate, was not obliged to observe it. Besides, some of the Jewish writers understand this stranger, or proselyte,

of a proselyte of righteousness, who was under equal obligation to the commands of the law as a Jew.

3. The time and place when and where this precept was given, with the reason of it, show that it was peculiar to the Jews; it was given them in the wilderness, after they were come out of Egypt; and their deliverance from thence is expressly observed, as the reason why it was commanded them (Deut. 5:15). The Lord’s resting on the seventh day from his works of creation, is used as an argument to enforce the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath, now enjoined; but not as a reason of the institution of it.

4. None but Jews were ever charged with the breach of the seventh day Sabbath; the children of Israel were charged with it in the wilderness, soon after it was enjoined them (Ezek. 20:20, 21, 23, 24), so in Nehemiah’s time, though the Tyrians, who sold fish to the Jews on Sabbath days, were threatened, and shut out of the city, and forbid to come there with their goods; yet it was the Jews who bought them, who are charged with the profanation of the Sabbath (Neh. 13:15-20), and it was the sense of the Jews, that the Gentiles are not to be punished for the breach of it; yea, rather, that they are punishable for keeping it; [260] they having no other laws binding upon them: but the seven laws they speak of, as given to the sons of Noah.

5. The law of observing the seventh day Sabbath is not of a moral nature; was it, it would be binding on all mankind, Jews and Gentiles; and could not have been dispensed with, nor abolished, as it is (Matthew 12:1-12; Col. 2:16, 17), and if such, as has been observed, it must have been written on the heart of Adam, when created; and would be, not only reinscribed on the hearts of regenerate men, but even the work of it would appear to be written on the hearts of Gentiles, as their consciences would bear witness; whereas it does not appear. Some, indeed, pretend to say, that the seventh day of the week was reckoned holy with the Gentiles; but of all the instances produced from Clemens and Eusebius, there is but one now extant among the poets, and that is in Hesiod; and the seventh day he speaks of as holy, is not the seventh day of the week, but the seventh day of the month, the birthday of Apollo, as the poet himself suggests, and the Scholiasts [261] on him; which was the seventh day of the month Thargelion, kept sacred at Athens on that account;

hence Apollo was called Ebdomegena. [262] As for the Jews’ seventh day Sabbath, the Heathen writers [263] speak of it as having its origin from Moses, and as peculiar to the Jews, [264] and the day itself was held by them in the utmost contempt (see Lam. 1:7); there is scarce a poet of theirs [265] but has a lash at it, and at the Jews on account of it; and represent them as a parcel of idle people, who keep that day to indulge themselves in sloth; the principal day of the week sacred with the Gentiles, was the first day of the week, dedicated to the sun, and from thence called Sunday: so that if any argument can be drawn from the observation of the heathens, it is in favour of the Christian, and not of the Jewish Sabbath.

6. It is impracticable and impossible, that a seventh day Sabbath should be kept by all people, in all nations of the world, at the same time exactly and precisely. It was and could only be observed by the Jews themselves, when they were together under a certain meridian; it cannot be kept now by them, as they are scattered about in distant parts of the world, with any precision, at the same time; such an hypothesis proceeds upon a false notion that the earth is plain, and has everywhere the same horizon, and is not globular, nor having horizons, and meridians, and degrees of longitude different in every place and country; which latter is most certainly true. If the earth is a globe, consisting of two hemispheres, when it is day on one side of the globe, it is night on the other; so that let the Sabbath begin at what time you please; if from sun setting, as the Jews begin theirs, and continue it to sun setting the next day; when it is sun setting with us, it is sunrising with those in the other hemisphere; and so “vice versa;” and if it is begun at midnight, and continued to midnight, as with us; when it is midnight on one side the globe, it will be midday, or noon, on the other: so in each case there must be half a day’s difference in the exact time of the Sabbath; and according to the variations in horizons, meridians, and longitudes, will the day differ. If therefore the earth is a globe, as it is certain, it is; and as horizons, meridians, and longitudes differ, as they most certainly do, then it is impossible that the same exact precise time should be every where kept; and God has never commanded that which is impossible. Besides, it may be observed, that in Greenland, and other northern countries, for several

months together, there is no sun rising nor sun setting, and so no days to be distinguished that way, the sun being at such a time always above the horizon; so that a Sabbath day, consisting of twenty four hours, or of a day and a night, cannot be observed in such parts of the world; nay, it has been made to appear, that one and the same day, at one and the same place, may be Friday, Saturday, and what is called Sunday. Supposing a Turk, whose Sabbath is Friday, and a Jew, whose Sabbath is Saturday, and a Christian, whose Sabbath is the first day of the week, dwell together; the Turk and the Christian set out on their travels at the same time, leaving the Jew where he was; the Turk by travelling westward loses a day, and the Christian travelling eastward gets one; so that both compassing the world, and meeting together again at the same place, the Jew continuing where he was, the same day will be Friday to the Turk, a Saturday to the Jew, and Sunday to the Christian; so Dr. Hevlin. [266] Those that travel round the world westward, it is observed by others, [267] as this makes their days longer, so they find fewer in compassing the globe, losing one day in tale, though they lose no time; so that if the Sabbath of their nation was the seventh, they would find it their sixth on their return: and those that travel eastward, as their days are shorter, are more in number, and gain one in tale; and on their return, would find their eighth, or first day of the week, to be the nation's Sabbath. Song there would be three Sabbaths kept in a nation, and all exactly observing time. It may be said, the same objection will lie against the first day as the seventh. It is granted; but then we observe that on another footing, as will be seen presently.

Fifthly, the first day of the week, or Lord's day, is now the day of worship observed by the generality of Christians; upon what account, and by what authority, must be our next inquiry. Not by virtue of any positive precept, or express command of Christ, for which there is none; wherefore some great and good men, as Calvin, [268] Beza, [269] Zanchius, [270] and others, have been of opinion that it was a matter of pure choice, in the first churches, and a branch of their Christian liberty; who were left free, as to choose a place where, so the time when to worship; and therefore fixed on this day, and substituted it in the room of the Jewish Sabbath, antiquated, as being most proper and suitable, and having the sanction of

an apostolic practice; to which I have been inclined to agree; only cannot but be of opinion, that the practice and examples of the apostles of Christ, men respired by the Holy Spirit, who wrote, taught, and practised no other than agreeable to "the commandments of the Lord," (Matthew 28:20; 1 Cor. 14:37) carry in them the nature, force, and obligation of a precept. Song though there is no express command for infant baptism, yet had it been countenanced, as it has not been, by the like practice and examples of the apostles, we should have judged it our duty to have followed such a practice and such examples; it is upon this footing we observe the first day of the week, as being

1. The most proper and suitable day for divine worship; as the change of the day of worship was necessary, there being a new dispensation, and new ordinances of divine service; and to testify to the world our faith of Christ's coming, death, and resurrection from the dead no day was so proper as the first day of the week, which immediately followed upon, and was the next remove from the seventh day Sabbath, now abrogated; so that the Christian church was never without a day of worship, pointed at so early by the practice of the apostles, who met that very first day of the week on which Christ rose from the dead; and which further shows the propriety and suitableness of this day as a day of rest; Christ had now finished the great work of our redemption and salvation; and so ceased from his work, as God did from his; and it may be further observed, that after our Lord's resurrection from the dead, we never read, throughout the whole New Testament, that ever the Jews' seventh day Sabbath was kept by any Christian assembly; only the first day of the week. Song that,

2. The observation of this day is confirmed by the practice and examples of the disciples of Christ, and of the first churches; for,

(1). On the very day Christ rose from the dead, which was the first day of the week, the disciples assembled together, and Christ appeared in the midst of them, and by his gracious presence and divine instructions, showed his approbation of their thus meeting together, and encouraged them to it; and on that day week they met again, and Christ again stood in the midst of them; now though there had been a seventh day preceding this, the disciples did not assemble on that day, but on this, and Christ with

them (John 20:19, 29).

(2). The apostles met together on the day, of Pentecost, which was the first day of the week, as has been proved by many learned writers. Just before our Lord's ascension, he ordered his disciples to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Spirit; and though there were two Jewish seventh day Sabbaths before Pentecost, from the time of his ascension, yet it does not appear that they met together on either of them; but on this day they did; and it looks as if they had an order from Christ to meet on it, and a promise from Christ that they should then have the Spirit descend upon them; and therefore it seems they were waiting for that day, in expectation of having the promise fulfilled on and hence it is said, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place," (Acts 2:1) and this day was honoured and confirmed by the miraculous effusion of the Spirit, by preaching the gospel to men of all nations, and by the conversion and baptism of three thousand persons.

(3). It was on the first day of the week that the disciples at Troas met together to break bread, when Paul preached unto them (Acts 20:7). Now he had been there seven days before, so that there must have been in that time a seventh day Sabbath of the Jews; but it does not appear that he and they assembled on that day; but only on the first, and that for religious worship, he, to break bread to celebrate the Supper of the Lord, and they, to hear him preach.

(4). The apostle Paul gave orders to the church at Corinth, as he had to the churches of Galatia, to make a collection for the poor saints on the first day of the week, when met together (1 Cor. 16:1, 2) which shows that it was usual to meet on that day; yea, it implies an order, or the renewal and confirmation of an order, to meet on that day, or otherwise how should the collection be made on it; and what day so proper as when the saints meet for divine worship, and their hearts are warmed and refreshed with the word and ordinances. In an ancient copy, mentioned by Beza on the place, after "the first day of the week," it is added, by way of explanation, the "Lord's day;" and also in others; [271] and so Jerome [272] explains it.

(5). This is the day John means by the "Lord's day," when he says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," (Rev. 1:10) he speaks of it as then a well known

name of it; so called because Christ rose from the dead on it; in commemoration of which it was kept, and in which his gospel was preached and ordinances administered; for it was now upwards of sixty years from the resurrection of Christ to John's being an exile in Patmos, where he wrote his Revelation; and this day was observed as a day of religious worship in the earliest ages of Christianity. Ignatius, [273] who died but eight or ten years after the apostle John, says, "Let us keep the Lord's day, on which our Life arose." And Justin Martyr, [274] a few years after him, says, on the day commonly called Sunday (by the heathens, meaning the first day of the week) all met together in city and country for divine worship. Dionysius of Corinth, speaks of the Lord's day as an holy day, [275] and Clemens of Alexandria, [276] in the same century, observes, that he that truly keeps the Lord's day glorifies the resurrection of the Lord. Tertullian, [277] in the beginning of the third century, speaks of the acts of public worship, as "Lord's day solemnities". And in the same century Origen [278] and Cyprian [279] make mention of the first day as the "Lord's day," and the time of worship; and so it has been in all ages to the present time. Now upon the whole, since it does not appear that a seventh day Sabbath was enjoined Adam in innocence; nor that the patriarchs ever observed it; and that the first mention of it was at the giving of the manna; and that it was ordered to be observed by the Jews, and them only, by the fourth precept of the decalogue, since abrogated; and that the first day of the week, or Lord's day, is substituted in its room, as the day of worship, by the practice and example of the apostles; there surely can remain no scruple about the observance of the latter: but if, after all, the fourth command, with the morality of it, hangs upon the minds of any; be it that that command is still in force, though not granting it, which would bring us back to Judaism, and into a state of bondage; and allow it all the morality that can be ascribed to a day; according to the letter of it, it requires no more nor other than this, a rest on the seventh day, after six days labour; it does not direct to any epoch from whence it is to begin, as from the creation of the world, the seventh day from which the greatest mathematician in the world cannot assure us which it is, nor even the year of the creation; it only directs to, and regards the seventh day from whence a

man begins to labour in whatsoever place or country he lives; nor does it direct to any set time or hour when to begin these seven days, or by what names to call the days of the week; the rule is only, "Six days shall thou labour and do all thy work," or thou mayest if thou wilt, "but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God;" and such an account of time as is made in whatsoever place a man lives, is to be taken, and of which every man is capable; it does not require he should be a skilful mathematician a man that uses the spade, or follows the plough, is capable of counting six days, on which he has wrought, and when he comes to the seventh, he must know it is not his own, but the Lord's; and such an account a man may keep, let him live on what side of the globe he will; in Europe or in America, north or south; in Great Britain, or in the East and West Indies: nor is the observation of the first day any objection to this rule, since that is after six days labour; the very first day on which Christ rose, kept by his disciples, was after six days labour; for the Jews' sabbath being between that and the six days labour can be no objection, since that was a day of rest, and not of labour; so that for that time there were two successive days of rest, after the six days of labour; when, upon the next return of the first, which was immediately after, it proceeded regularly, as it does now. In short, the only safe rule to go by is, that of the apostles, be the day what it may; "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord," (Rom. 14:6) or he ought so to do. Which leads me to observe,

II. In what manner the Lord's day is to be regarded or observed; not to ourselves, to our own profit and pleasure; but to the Lord, to his service and glory.

1. Not as a Jewish Sabbath; with such strictness and severity as not to kindle a fire, dress any manner of food, and travel no further than what is called a Sabbath day's journey; though perhaps these were not enjoined with the strictness some have imagined.

But, 2. We are not to do our own work; that is, to follow any trade, business, or occupation employed in on other days; otherwise there are works of piety, mercy, and charity to be done; and also of necessity, for the preservation of life, the comfort and health of it, our own or others.

3. It is to be employed more especially in acts of public worship, in assembling together for that

purpose, in preaching, and hearing the word preached, in prayer and staging praises.

4. In private acts of devotion, both before and after public worship; such as has been already observed, when the duty of public hearing the word was considered.

5. The whole of the day should be observed, from morning to evening; the early part should not be indulged in sleep, nor any part spent in doing a man's own business, in casting up his accounts, and setting right his shop books; nor in carnal pleasures and recreations, in games and sports; nor in walking in the fields; nor in taking needless journeys. But besides public worship, men should attend to reading the scriptures, prayer and meditation, and Christian conferences; and in such pious exercises should they spend the whole day.

[248] See my Note on 1 Chron. xvii. 5. See Gill on "1 Chron. 17:1".

[249] Vid. Heidegger. Hist. Patriarch. Exercit. 3. s. 58. p. 109.

[250] Dialog. cum Trypho. p. 236, 240, 241, 245, 261, 319.

[251] Adv. Haeres. 1. 4. c. 30.

[252] Adv. Judaeos, c. 2, 3, 4.

[253] Hist. Eccl. 1. 1. c. 2, 4. Demonstr. Evangel. 1. 1. c. 6. & Praepar. Evangel. 1. 7. c. 6. p. 304.

[254] Vid. Heidegger. Hist. Patriarch. Exercit. 5. s. 18. p. 178.

[255] Ibid. Exercit. 18. s. 32. p. 562.

[256] T. Sanhedrin, fol. 56. 2. Seder Olam Zuta, p. 101. Ed. Meyer. Yalkut, par. 1 fol. 73. 2, 3.

[257] Vid. Zanchii. Oper. tom. 4. 1. 1. c. 11. p. 222, 223.

[258] Zohar in Exod. fol. 26. 4. T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 59. 1. Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 24. s. 1.

[259] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 9. 1. Piske Tosephot Yebamot, art. 84. Maimon. Hilchot Sabbat, c. 20. s. 14.

[260] T. Bab. Betza, fol. 16. 1. & Sanhedrin, fol. 58. 2. & 59. 1. Bemigdar Rabb. fol. 234. 4. Maimon. Hilchot, Melachim, c. 10. s. 9.

[261] Proclus & Moschepulus in ibid.

[262] Plutarch. Sympos. 1. 8. c. 1.

[263] Justin e Trogo, 1. 36. c. 2. Tacit. Hist. 1. 5. c. 4.

[264] "Cultaque Judaeo septima Sacra viro," Ovid. de arte amandi, l. 1.

[265] Juvenal. Satyr. 6. v. 158. Satyr. 14. v. 105, 106. Pers. Satyr. 5. v. 184. Martial. 1. 4. ep. 4. vid. Senecam apud Aug. de Civ. Dei, 1. 6. c. 11.

[266] History of the Sabbath, par. 1. p. 48.

[267] See Dr. Watts's Holiness of Times, &c. p. 55.

[268] Institut. 1. 2. c. 8. s. 34.

[269] Confess. Fidei. c. 5. s. 41.

[270] In Precept. 4. tom. 4. p. 670.

[271] Vid. Mill. in loc.

[272] Adv. Vigilantium Oper. tom. 2. fol. 42.

[273] Ad Magnes. p. 35.

[274] Apolog. 2. p. 98, 99.

[275] Apud Euseb. 1. 4. c. 23. Irenaeus, 1. 5. c. 24.

[276] Stromat. 1. 7. p. 744.

[277] Deut. Anima, c. 9.

[278] Homil. 5. in Esaiam, fol. 104. 3. et alibi.

[279] Ep. 33. p. 66. & Ep. 58. p. 138.

BOOK IV.

OF PRIVATE WORSHIP, OR VARIOUS DUTIES, DOMESTIC, CIVIL, AND MORAL

Chapter 1

OF THE RESPECTIVE DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

1. Of the Respective Duties of Husband and Wife.

Having considered Public Worship in all its branches, I now proceed to treat of Private Worship; by which I mean, not merely the private teachings and instructions of a master of a family, to those who are under his care; nor private conferences of the saints, by which they may edify one another; nor private reading of the scriptures, which are to be searched whether the things heard in the ministry of the word are true, and which are to be read in the family for instruction; nor private prayer, in the closet or in the family; nor private singing the praises of God, which may be performed in like manner: which are all branches of private worship, and have been touched on in the preceding Book. But what I mean by private worship, and intend to treat of, are the personal, relative, domestic, and civil duties incumbent on particular persons, in their different relations to one

another; and so every other duty and good work: which all come under the name of "cultus", or "worship"; being all to be performed with a respect to God, under his authority, according to his will and command, and in obedience to it, and with a view to his glory. In this manner all relative and mutual duties are to be performed; the subjection of wives to their husbands is to be made as "unto the Lord", the Head of the man, and in obedience to him; and husbands are to love their wives, "as Christ loved the church", according to his pattern and example, and as influenced by his love (Eph. 5:21, 29). Children are to obey their parents "in the Lord", as being what he requires, and has encouraged by his promise; and parents, as an act of religion, are to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:1, 4). Servants are to be obedient to their masters, "as unto the Lord", as his servants, and "doing the will of God from the heart"; and "with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, fearing God". And masters are to do their duty to their servants; "Knowing that they also have a master in heaven", to whom they are accountable, (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-24, 4:1) and subjects are to obey magistrates, as being the "powers ordained of God", and magistracy an ordinance of God; and magistrates are to protect their subjects, and to be "terrors, not to good works", but for the encouragement and praise of them, and for the discouragement and punishment of those that are evil (Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13, 14). God has a concern in all these, and men have a concern with him in them. These I shall briefly treat of in their order; and begin with the respective duties of husband and wife, which are summed up in these two general comprehensive ones; "love" on the one part, and "reverence" on the other, (Eph. 5:33) and these arise from a conjugal union and marriage relation between the said parties; marriage is an union of male and female, of one man and of one woman in lawful wedlock, agreeable to the original creation of man, (Gen. 1:27; Mal. 2:15) and agreeable to the course of Providence, which has been kept to ever since in all ages and nations; there being continually nearly the same number of males and females born into the world, at most as thirteen to twelve, or fourteen to thirteen; the surplus on the side of the males, being a provision by the wise Orderer of all things for a supply for war, for the seas, &c.

and by this conjugal union, male and female, become one, even one flesh, (Gen. 2:24; Matthew 19:6) which union is therefore very near and strict, and, indeed, indissoluble but by death, excepting in one case, unfaithfulness in the one to the other, by adultery or fornication, (Rom. 7:2; Matthew 5:32) and this state is to be entered into with mutual consent; indeed, with the consent of all parties who have a concern in it; with the consent of parents and guardians, under whose care single persons may be; and especially with their own consent, for none are to be forced into it against their wills; no, not by their superiors; it must be their own voluntary act and deed: and being thus entered into, it is a very honourable state; "Marriage is honourable in all", (Heb. 13:4) it being an institution of God, and that of God in paradise; by whom our first parents were directed to it, in a state of purity and innocence; God made the woman for an help meet, and brought her to the man, proposed her to him, whom he approved and accepted of, and she became his wife, (Gen. 2:18, 22-24) it was the Lord's act and deed, and to him Christ ascribes the act of marriage (Matthew 19:6). Christ honoured it by his presence, and at such a solemnity wrought his first miracle, and manifested forth the glory of his Deity, (John 2:1, 2, 11) and what makes this state yet more honourable is, that the marriage of Adam and Eve was a type and emblem of the conjugal union of Christ and the church, (Eph. 5:32) Adam was a figure or type of Christ, and, among other things, in his marriage; and Eve, the mother of all living, was a type of the church; Adam was first formed, and then Eve; Christ was before the church, and, indeed, before all things; Eve was formed from Adam, from a rib taken out of his side; the church has her original from Christ, and her subsistence by him; all her grace, blessings, and happiness, are from him; her justification and sanctification are from him, signified by the blood and water which sprung from his pierced side. Eve was brought by the Lord to Adam, not against her will, but with it, and by him presented as a proper match for him, which he approved and accepted of; and the church was brought to Christ, and given to him by his Father, to be his spouse and bride, whom he liked, accepted of, and betrothed to himself; and her consent is obtained by the drawings and influences of his Father's grace: and though this is no direct proof

of, yet it has a favourable aspect upon, and may serve to illustrate the "supralapsarian" scheme; that Christ had an interest in his church, and she in him, and was espoused unto him before she fell in Adam; this marriage transaction between Adam and Eve being before the fall. Moreover, marriage is honourable with respect to the ends of it; which even before the fall, and supposing Adam had stood, hereby he would have had an help meet; and the first law of creation would have been carried into execution, increase and multiply; a godly seed, a legitimate offspring would have sprung from hence; families formed and built up, and the world peopled with inhabitants; and since the fall the ends and uses of it are to preserve chastity, to prevent incontinence, and to avoid fornication; as well as to answer the other ends: and particularly this state appears honourable: when the duties of it are observed by both parties; as,

First, love on the part of the husband. "Husbands love your wives", Ephesians 5:25 instances of which are in Isaac, Jacob, Elkanah, and others (Gen. 24:67, 29:18, 20; 1 Sam. 1:5). The nature and manner of showing it, and the reasons of it, might be observed.

1st, the nature of it.

1. It is superior to any shown to any other creature whatever; as to the neighbour, who, though to be loved by a man as himself, yet a man's wife is himself, and loving her is loving himself, the other part of himself, (Eph. 5:28) parents are to be loved, but a wife before them; for a man is to leave father and mother, and to cleave to his wife, (Gen. 2:24) children are to be loved, but the wife before them; as well as the husband by the wife; "Am not I better to thee than ten sons?" (1 Sam. 1:8) and Christ is to be loved before any relations (Matthew 10:37; Luke 14:26).

2. It should be a love of complacency and delight, taking pleasure and delight in her person, company, and conversation, (Prov. 5:18, 19; Eccl. 9:9) as is the love of Christ to the church, who is his Hephzibah, in whom is all his delight.

3. Should be chaste and single, as the love of Christ is, (Song 6:9) and for this reason a man should not have more wives than one, whereby his love would be divided or alienated, and hate the one and love the other, as is commonly the case; and therefore the law provided for the firstborn, of whichsoever it might be (Deut. 21:15, 17; see 1 Cor. 7:2).

4. It should be mutual; the wife is to love the husband, as the husband the wife, (Titus 2:4) and generally her love is the most strong and affectionate, (2 Sam. 1:26) and the reason why the husband is more frequently exhorted to it, it may be, is because most wanting in the performance of it.

2ndly, the manner, or how, and in what way it is to be expressed; not in words only, but in deed and in truth; by real facts, which speak louder than words.

1. In making all proper provision for her temporal good, signified by "nourishing" and "cherishing" her, (Eph. 5:29) which include food and raiment, and all the necessaries of life; he is to "provide things honest", decent, convenient, and suitable, to his rank, state, condition, circumstances, and abilities; and he that "provideth not for his own", especially for his own wife, his own children and family, "is worse than an infidel" (Rom. 12:17; 1 Tim. 5:3).

2. In protecting her from all abuses and inquiries; as she is the weaker vessel, she is to be taken under his wing and shelter; he is to be a covering to her, as Abraham was to Sarah; which may be signified by the ceremony used at marriage, or by which that act is expressed, a man's spreading his skirt over the woman, (Gen. 20:16; Ruth 3:9) he is to expose himself to danger, and even risk his life in her defence, and for her rescue (1 Sam. 30:5, 18).

3. In doing everything that may contribute to her pleasure, peace, comfort, and happiness; "he that is married" is to care "how he may please his wife"; nor does the apostle blame him for it; but rather commends him for it, or recommends it unto him (1 Cor. 7:33). "Hatred stirreth up strifes", contentions, quarrels, the consequence of which is confusion, and every evil work; "but love covereth all sins", conceals faults, and hides failings and infirmities (Prov. 10:12).

4. In seeking her spiritual welfare; her conversion, if unconverted, and her spiritual peace, comfort, and edification, she being an heir with him of the grace of life; by joining with her in all religious exercises; in family worship, in reading, in prayer, in praise, in Christian conference and conversation; by instructing her in everything relating to doctrine, duty, and church discipline; in answer to questions she may and has a right to ask him at home (1 Cor. 14:35). To all which are opposed hatred and bitterness; "Husbands love your wives, and be not bitter against them"; not

giving bitter language, threatening words, sour looks, and especially bitter blows; which is cruel, churlish, barbarous, and brutish, unbecoming the man and the Christian.

Thirdly, the reasons or arguments enforcing this duty of the love of a man to his wife, are such as follow.

1. The nearness between them, she is his own flesh; and "no man ever yet hated his own flesh", which would be monstrously unnatural; she is "himself", the other part of himself, and to be loved as his own body, which to love is a principle [280] in nature (Eph. 5:28, 29, 33).

2. The help, advantage, and profit he receives by her; she is provided as an help meet for him, and becomes such to him in the affairs of the family, (Gen. 2:18) she is his companion, and which is used as a reason why he should not deal treacherously with the wife of his youth, (Mal. 2:14) she is his companion in prosperity and adversity; shares with him in his cares and troubles, in his joys and sorrows; sympathizes with him in all conditions, weeps when he weeps, and rejoices when he rejoices; she is a partner with him in the blessings of grace now, and will be a partner with him in eternal glory.

3. The glory and honour she is unto him; "The woman is the glory of the man", in whom are seen his power and authority, (1 Cor. 11:7) one who is loving and chaste to him, and is careful of her family affairs, does him honour, and is a credit and crown to him, and makes him respectable among men; his heart safely trusts in her, and through her conduct he is known and respected "in the gates" (Prov. 12:4, 31:10, 11, 23).

4. The strongest and most forcible argument of all to a good man, is the love of Christ to his church; which is the pattern and exemplar of a man's love to his wife and most strongly enforces it, (Eph. 5:25-28).

Secondly, the duties on the part of the wife, are reverence, subjection, obedience, &c.

1. Reverence; and "let the wife see that she reverence her husband", (Eph. 5:33) which reverence is both internal and external; she ought to think well, and even highly of him, and not despise him in her heart, as Michael, Saul's daughter, did David her husband, (2 Sam. 6:16) and she should speak of him and to him in a respectable manner, as Sarah did to Abraham, calling him Lord (1 Peter 3:6; Gen. 18:12).

2. Subjection and submission to him; “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands”, not to others; “as unto the Lord”, the Lord Christ, the head of every man, and so of the church; “and as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything”; that is, in things relating to family affairs; not in anything that is contrary to the laws of God and Christ; for God is to be obeyed rather than men, than any man, than husbands themselves, (Eph. 5:22, 24) and this subjection and submission is not a servile one; not like that of servants to their masters, or of handmaids to mistresses, and much less like that of slaves to tyrants, or who have taken them and hold them captives; but as the body, and members of it, are subject to the head, by which they are governed, guided, and directed to what is for their good; and that in a wise, tender, and gentle manner.

3. Obedience. the apostle directs, that wives be “obedient to their own husbands”, (Titus 2:5) Sarah is an example of this; and an instance we have of her immediate and quick obedience to the orders of Abraham, (1 Peter 3:6; Gen. 18:6).

4. Assistance and help in family affairs, agreeable to the original end of her creation; guiding the house with discretion, keeping her children and servants in good order and decorum; abiding at home, and managing all domestic business with wisdom and prudence (1 Tim. 2:14; Titus 2:5).

5. Assuming no authority over her husband, as not in ecclesiastical, so not in domestic matters; seeking to please him in all things, doing nothing without his will and consent, and never contrary to it; not intermeddling with his worldly business and concerns, but leaving them to him (1 Tim. 5:11, 12; 1 Cor. 7:34).

6. Continuance with him in every state and circumstance of life; going with him wherever God in his providence, and his business in life call him; as Sarah with Abraham in the land of promise, in Egypt, and elsewhere; she should do as Ruth proposed to Naomi (Ruth 1:16). There are reasons why the wife should be found in the performance of these duties. Some,

7. Taken from her creation, time, manner, and end of it; Adam was formed first, and then Eve; and therefore in point of time had the superiority; the man was made not of and for the woman; but the woman

was made of and for the man, and to, be an help meet and assistant to him (1 Tim. 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:8, 9; Gen. 2:18).

2. From the consideration of the fall, and her concern in it; “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression”, at least first, and the means of drawing her husband into it; and therefore it is part of the sentence denounced upon her for her transgression, “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (1 Tim. 2:14; Gen. 3:16).

3. From the man being the head of the woman; and therefore she should be in subjection to him as such (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23).

4. From her being the weaker vessel, and therefore standing in need of his shelter and protection.

5. From her own credit and honour concerned herein; as it would be to her discredit and dishonour to behave irreverently, and to be disobedient; to submit to him, “as is fit the Lord”, is decent and becoming, (Col. 3:18) and so to be is ornamental to women, and the best ornament they can deck themselves with; “Being in subjection to their own husbands” (1 Peter 3:3-5).

6. The chief argument of all is taken from the subjection of the church to Christ, (Eph 5:22, 24). In short, both parties should consult each other’s pleasure, peace, comfort, and happiness, and especially the glory of God; that his word, ways, and worship, may not be reproached and evil spoken of through any conduct of theirs (Titus 2:5).

[280] “Fateor insitam nobis esse corporis nostri charitatem”, Seneca, Ep. 14.

Chapter 2

OF THE RESPECTIVE DUTIES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN

These duties arise from a relation founded in nature. There is a natural instinct [281] in all creatures, even in the brutal creation, and in the more brutish part of that, to love their young, take care of them, provide for them, supply them, protect and defend them; “Even the sea monsters give suck to their young ones”, (Lam. 4:3) much more such an affection appears in human and rational beings; “Can a woman forget her

suckling child?” &c. (Isa. 49:15) OF THE RESPECTIVE DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE, may be more increased, since it may be then better known; and children of every class, state, and condition of life, though they may be superior to parents in worldly honour, wealth, and riches, are to obey them, as the cases of Joseph and Solomon show. And though such who are the true and genuine offspring of parents, or who are so in a proper sense, may be chiefly meant, yet in them are included spurious ones, and such who are children by adoption, as Moses and Esther; or by the law of marriage, sons and daughters-in-law, as Moses to Jethro, and Ruth to Naomi, who were all obsequious to those to whom they stood thus related. By “parents” are meant, though chiefly immediate ones, yet include all in the ascending line, as a father’s father and mother, a mother’s father and mother, or grandfathers and grandmothers, or if any higher are living they are entitled to obedience; and, indeed, all who stand in the room and stead of parents, as adoptive ones, step-fathers and step-mothers, tutors, guardians, governors, nurses, &c. while under their care, and in a state of minority, obedience is to be yielded to them; but particularly both parents are meant, father and mother, as it is explained in the next verse; “Honour thy father and mother”; father is put first, on account of order, of precedence and dignity; sometimes the order is inverted, to show the equal respect that should be had to both (Lev. 19:3). The duty enjoined, is “obedience”, which includes love, honour, reverence, gratitude, and subjection.

1. Love; from whence all true obedience to God, to Christ, and to creatures flow; disobedience is owing to a want of love; such who are disobedient to parents, are without natural affections, as before observed: parents are greatly to be loved, but not more than God and Christ; “He that loveth father or mother more than me”, says Christ, “is not worthy of me”, (Matthew 10:37).

2. Honour: obedience is explained by honour, (Eph. 6:1, 2; see Mal. 1:6) which honour lies, (1). In thought and estimation; children are to think highly, and to entertain an honourable esteem of their parents; to which is opposed, a “setting light” by them, (Deut. 27:16) a mean and contemptible opinion of them leads to disobedience to them (Prov. 30:17). (2). Is expressed by words; by speaking honourably of them and to them; “I go Sir”, was language which carried in it honour and respect, though it was not

First, the duties of children to their parents are included and comprehended in that general exhortation; “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right” (Eph. 6:1). The persons of whom this duty is required, are “children”; and the persons to whom it is to be performed, are “parents”; by the former are meant children of each sex, male and female, sons and daughters, being in an equal relation, and in equal obligation to obedience to parents; and of every age, from infancy to manhood; and though the power of parents over children is less when grown up, the duty of observance, gratitude,

[281] “Communi autem animantium omnium est conjunctionis appetitus procreandi causa, et cura quaedam eorum quae procreata sunt”, Cicero de Officiis, l. 1. c. 4.

[282] eusebein. Valerius Maximus has a chapter, de Pietate in Parentes, l. 5. c. 4.

[283] “Diligere parentes prima naturae lex”, ib. s. 7. et extern. s. 5.

[284] Laert. vit. Solon. p. 46.

[285] Poem. Admon. v. 6.

[286] Aurea Carmin. v. 1, 2.

[287] Paraenes. ad Demonic. Orat. 1.

[288] peri philadelphias, p. 479. Vol. 2.

[289] prota theon tima, metepeita te seio goneas, Phocyl. Pythag. &c. ut supra.

[290] Deut. Decalogo, 759, 760.

[291] Laert. vit. Solon. l. 1.

[292] “Ergo age, chare pater, cervici imponere nostrae: Ipse subibo humeris, nec me labor iste gravabit”. Virgil. Aeneid. l. 2. prope finem.

[293] Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 23. Aristot. Hist. Animal. l. 6. c. 13.

[294] monos palaios, en tois ton pelargon kurbesin, Aves, p. 604.

[295] “Hostis est uxor, invita quae ad virum

[296] T. Bab. Kiddushin. fol. 30. 2.

[297] “Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem, testa diu”, Horat. Epist. l. 1. ep. 2. v. 69.

[296] T. Bab. Kiddushin. fol. 30. 2.

[297] “Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem, testa diu”, Horat. Epist. l. 1. ep. 2. v. 69.

Chapter 3 OF THE RESPECTIVE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

These duties arise not from a relation founded in nature, as those of parents and children; but from a relation founded in contract, compact, covenant, and agreement. Men are by nature, or as to their original make, alike and equal; there is no difference, of bond and free; [298] God has made of one blood all men, all spring from the same original, [299] whether that be traced up to Noah or to Adam; and, indeed, we hear nothing of a servant before the times of the former; and that threatened as a curse for sin, (Gen. 9:25) for as Austin says, [300] it is sin, and not nature, that deserves this name; it is from the lust of the flesh that wars come, and from these captivity, servitude, and bondage, which is through force, and not will; no man has a legal power to make another man his servant against his will, nor has he any right to his service without his consent: that servitude which arises from contract, compact, and covenant, which almost only obtains among Christians, is of all the most just, lawful, and defensible, because with it best consists the natural liberty of mankind; such as an apprenticeship, which a man enters into of his own will, or with the advice and consent of those under whose care he is; when, by an indenture or covenant, he agrees to serve a master for a certain term of years, on certain conditions, mutually agreed unto; or as when one is hired for certain service, by the year, or by the month, or by the day; [301] of which hired servants the prodigal in the parable speaks; “How many hired servants of my father”, &c. and were as early as in the times of Job, (Job 7:1, 2) and it is of the duties of such towards their masters, and of the duties incumbent on masters towards them, that I shall now treat.

First, of the duties of servants to their masters. These are more largely and frequently spoken of in the epistles of the apostles; because that Christian servants were impatient of the yoke of heathen masters, and had it insinuated into them, by some licentious

persons and false teachers, that civil servitude was inconsistent with Christian liberty; from whence great scandal was like to arise to the name and doctrine of Christ, and the Christian religion, which were liable to be blasphemed, and spoken evil of on that account (1 Cor. 7:21; 1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:10). And it may be proper to consider,

1st, of whom duty is required, and to whom it is to be performed; “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters” (Eph. 6:5). By “servants” are meant such of this character, male and female, men servants and maid servants, whose relation to them that are over them, their duty to them, and obligation to it are the same; as also they share alike in privileges and benefits belonging to them, (Ex 20:10; Job 31:13, 15) and “masters” also include “mistresses”, as well as masters, who are to be submitted to, one as another, (Gen. 16:8, 9) and those of whatsoever temper and disposition, whether good or ill natured, kind and gentle, or churlish, morose, and perverse, and froward, (1 Peter 2:18) and whether truly gracious and religious, or not; “Masters according to the flesh”; or though carnal, and in a state of nature, and in things belonging to the flesh, outward and temporal things, are to be submitted to, (Eph. 6:5) and especially such who have “believing masters” should not “despise” them, and disobey their commands, “because they are brethren”, in the same spiritual relation, and of the same Christian community; but, on the contrary, should rather do them “service”, with all constancy, cheerfulness, and readiness, “because they are faithful”, true believers in Christ, and beloved of God, and of his people; “and partakers of the benefit”, of the same grace, and of the same redemption and salvation by Christ, (1 Tim. 6:2) and they are “their own masters” they are to be obedient to, and not others, who have no right to their service (Titus 2:9).

2ndly, the duties to be performed by servants to their masters; which are comprehended in these general terms of “subjection” to them, and “obedience” to their lawful commands, (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22; Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18) and which include “honour”, that is to be given them; for they are to be counted “worthy of all honour”, in mind and thought, and to be expressed by words and gesture. They are to be had in honour and esteem, and to be spoken honourably of, and respectably to (1 Tim. 6:1) “Fear”,

or reverence, which is to be given to all to whom it is due, to all superiors, and so to masters; “If I be a master, where is my fear” (Mal 1:6). Strict and close attention to orders given; the words of their mouth are to be hearkened to, and the motions of their hands, pointing and directing to business they are to do, are to be observed, (Ps. 123:2) and a ready and cheerful compliance to execute their commands; “I say to my servant, Do this; and he doth it” immediately, at once (Matthew 8:9) Seeking to please them in all things, that they may obtain their affection and good will (Titus 2:9) Showing all fidelity in what they are intrusted with; not misspending their time embezzling their master’s goods, and wasting his substance (Titus 2:10). Acting the same faithful part as Jacob to Laban, and Joseph to Potiphar, and to the keeper of the prison.

3rdly, the manner in which this duty of obedience, in its several branches, is to be performed; it must be universal; “in all things”, (Col. 3:22; Titus 2:9) not in things sinful; but in all things lawful, which are not contrary to the law of God and gospel of Christ, and to the interest of true religion, and the dictates of conscience; over which masters have no power. Obedience should be yielded “with all fear”, (1 Peter 2:18) with the fear of masters, of offending them, and incurring their just displeasure; with fear of their frowns, rebukes, and corrections, and especially as fearing God (Col. 3:22). Servants that fear the Lord will say and act as Nehemiah did; “So did not I, because of the fear of the Lord” (Neh. 5:15). In “singleness of heart”; with simplicity and sincerity; not with duplicity of mind, dissimulation, fraud, deceit, and lying; as Gehazi behaved to his master, Elisha, (2 King 5:25, 26). Not “with eye service”; that is, doing his master’s business only while under his eye, and in his presence; but in his absence, and while they imagine it will continue, do as the wicked servant in (Matthew 24:48, 49) their obedience should be cordial and hearty; what they do they should do it “heartily as to the Lord, and not to man”; not as pleasing men, but “as the servants of Christ doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service”; not grudgingly, nor murmuring, nor by force and constraint, but willingly, and of a ready mind (Eph. 6:5-7; Col. 3:23).

4thly, the arguments enforcing such obedience are,

1. The authority and command of God; it is by the authority of God that the exhortations to obedience are given; and it is to be yielded in conformity to his will, as if done to him rather than to men.

2. The honour and glory of God, and of Christ, and of his gospel, is concerned herein, that his name and doctrine be not blasphemed, by a contrary behaviour; but that the gospel, and a profession of it, be adorned by a suitable conduct (1 Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:10).

3. The example of Christ must be of great weight with the true lovers of him; who, though equal with God, took on him the form of a servant, and condescended to do the duty of one, was faithful and righteous, always did the things that pleased God, delighted in doing his Father's will and work, and was constant and assiduous in it; in all which he set an example to tread in his steps.

4. The benefit arising to servants from their obedience, in general, what good thing they do, the same they shall receive of the Lord; for God is not unrighteous, to forget their service; but will recompense it either now or hereafter, with a reward of grace, (Eph. 6:8) and particularly with the reward "of the inheritance", which they "know" they shall "receive of the Lord", (Col. 3:24) by which is meant, the heavenly glory, called an "inheritance", because their Father's bequest unto them; and a reward, not of works, but of grace; and so have the strongest motive and greatest encouragement to obedience that can be had.

Secondly, there are duties incumbent on masters, with respect to their servants, "And ye masters, do the same things unto them", (Eph. 6:9) not the same duties; but what belong to them, they should do in the same manner, in obedience to the will of God, in the fear of God, and with a view to his glory. And,

1. There are some thing, they are to do, with respect to the moral, spiritual, and eternal good of their servants.

(1). They are to set good examples to them, of temperance, sobriety, prudence, virtue, and religion; examples have great force in them; as a man is so will his servants be (Prov. 29:12). David determined to "walk within his house", before his children and servants, "with a perfect heart", with all integrity and uprightness, thereby setting an example to them (Ps. 101:2).

(2). They are to teach and instruct them in the knowledge of divine things; as Abraham taught his servants, who were trained up in his house, as in civil things, so in matters of religion (Gen. 14:14; 18:19).

(3). They are to pray with them, and for them; for prayer is to be made for all men, as for superiors, for kings, and all in authority; so for inferiors, and for servants; which is a part of family worship (Jer. 10:25; Josh. 24:15).

(4). Should allow time and leisure for religious services, to read and hear the word of God, to pray and praise, and to meditate, according to the provision made for rest and cessation from labour, in the fourth precept of the Decalogue; and they should be put upon as little service as may be on whatsoever day for worship is observed.

2. There are other duties, which relate to their temporal good. As,

(1). They are to teach them the business they are put apprentices to them for, and learn them the whole mystery of their art, so far as they are capable of receiving it; or otherwise they will not act the faithful part.

(2). To give them that which is "just and equal", according to the laws of God and men, of justice and equity, food convenient for them, what is fit to be eaten, and a sufficiency of it; so in the house of the prodigal's father there was bread enough and to spare for the hired servants: raiment also is to be provided for them, [302] if in the agreement, and what is suitable to their relation and circumstances; and when they are sick should take care of them, and be concerned for their health, and recovery of it; as the centurion was, who applied to Christ on the behalf of his servant (Matthew 8:5-10). A contrary behaviour in the Amalekite towards his servant, was barbarous and cruel (1 Sam. 30:13).

(3). They should pay them their just wages, and that in due time, according as agreed upon; the law of God directs to the payment of them immediately, and not let them abide all night, till the morning, (Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15) if they are detained, and they cry unto the Lord, he will avenge them (James 5:4).

(4). Obedient servants are to be encouraged, and used kindly, and with respect: according to the law of God, enjoined the Jews, when a servant had served out his time, he was not only to be let go free, but

he was not to be sent away empty; but to be liberally supplied from the flock, from the floor, and from the winepress (Deut. 15:12-14). Disobedient ones are to be corrected; and if they will not be corrected by words, then with stripes; yet to be given with moderation; [303] servants are not to be used in a cruel and inhuman manner, as if they were beasts, and not men. Seneca [304] complains of some masters in his time, who used them worse than beasts, and speaks of them as most proud, most cruel, and most contumelious; (see Prov. 29:19; Luke 12:48) the apostle advises, to "forbear threatening", (Eph. 6:9) that is, not to threaten too much and too often, and with too great severity; nor should they be forward to carry it into execution; and especially when they repent and amend, they should be forgiven.

Now the argument to enforce these duties on masters, is taken from their having a "Master in heaven"; who is up other than Christ, who is a good Master, and where he is his servants shall be; he grants them his presence now, and will enter them into his joy hereafter, (Matthew 23:8,10; 25:21; John 13:13, 15; 12:26) and who is the Master of masters, as well as of servants, and to whom they are accountable, and with him is no respect of persons, bond or free, (Eph. 6:8, 9; Col. 3:9-5) and he is in heaven, from whence he looks down and beholds all that is done on earth, by masters as well as servants, and who is able to plead the cause of the injured, and to avenge them. Happy it is when love and harmony, freedom and familiarity, [305] subsist between masters and servants, so far as is consistent with the relation; an instance of which we have in Boaz, who went to his reapers in the field, and thus saluted them, "The Lord be with you!" To whom they replied, "The Lord bless thee!" (Ruth 2:4) a good master and good servants, mutually happy in each other.

[298] phusei d' outhen diapherein, aliqui apud Aristot. Politic. l. 1. c. 3.

[299] "Vis tu cogitare istum, quem servum tuum vocas, ex iisdem seminibus ortum, eodem frui coelo, aequae spirare, aequae vivere, aequae mori?" Seneca, Ep. 47.

[300] "Nomen istud culpa meruit, non natura", August. de Civitate Dei. l. 19. c. 15.

[301] "Corpora obnoxia sunt et adscripta dominis;

mens quidem sui juris", Seneca de Beneficiis, l. 3. c. 20.

[302] "Est aliquid quod Dominus praestare servo debeat, ut cibaria, vestiarius", Seneca, ib. l. 3. c. 21. "necessaria ad victum", c. 22.

[303] "Servis imperare moderate, laus est". Seneca de Clementia, l. 1. c. 18.

[304] Epist. 47.

[305] "Vive cum servo clementer, comiter quoque, et in sermonem admitte, et in consilium, et in convictum, ib".

Chapter 4

OF THE RESPECTIVE DUTIES OF MAGISTRATES AND SUBJECTS

The duties of subjection and obedience to magistrates, supreme and subordinate, are frequently inculcated in the sacred writings; and the reason why the apostles so often and so strongly urge them, is because of the scandal to the Christian religion, which was like to arise from a contrary behaviour, of which there was danger; since in the first churches were many Jews, who were impatient of the Roman yoke, and Christians in general were called Jews by the heathens; and it was enough to fix the charge of sedition on any to say they were Jews, who were troublers of the state, (Acts 16:20, 21) and of all the Jews the Galileans were reckoned the most turbulent, and factious, and the most averse to payment of taxes to the Roman governors, (Acts 5:37; Luke 13:1) and Christ and his followers were commonly called Galileans, and so liable to the same imputation; besides, the first Christians might not be so willingly subject to heathen magistrates, because they were such, and many of them very wicked men, called, "spiritual wickednesses in high places"; and Nero, the then reigning emperor, when the apostle Paul wrote many of his epistles, was a monster of wickedness; and they might also imagine, that subjection to men was inconsistent with Christian liberty. To all which may be added, that there were many false teachers, men of bad principles and practices, who "despised dominion, and spoke evil of dignities"; wherefore the apostles thought it necessary to "put in mind" the saints they wrote to, of their duties of subjection and obedience to civil government, that the gospel, and the religion of Christ, might not be evil spoken of; and

for the same reason we who are called Baptists, and by way of reproach Anabaptists, should be careful to observe these duties; since it seems there were some of the same name formerly, in foreign countries, who held, if not misrepresented by many writers, that it was not lawful for a Christian man to bear the office of a magistrate; and from thence inferred, that the laws of such were not to be obeyed: and nothing is more common with every puny writer against us, than to upbraid us with the riots and tumults at Munster in Germany; which, though begun by Paedobaptists, yet because some called Anabaptists joined them, men of bad principles and scandalous characters, the whole blame was laid upon them. But be these things as they may, what is all this to us here in England, who disavow and declare against all such principles and practices; as our general behaviour, our writings and public confessions of faith, printed at different times, manifestly show? and yet the calumny is continued; wherefore it becomes us to wipe off the foul aspersion, both by our declared abhorrence of it, and by our conduct and deportment towards our superiors; that those who falsely accuse our good conversation in things civil, may blush, and be ashamed.

Now as the respective duties before treated of, arise from relations of a different nature; those of husbands and wives from a relation founded in marriage; and those of parents and children from a relation founded in nature; and those of masters and servants from a relation founded in contract and compact; so those of magistrates and subjects arise from a relation founded in consent, agreement, and covenant: a coalition of men, and bodies of men, in a political sense, whether it arose from “mutual fear”, as Hobbes [306] says; or rather from a propensity in human nature to society, man being a sociable animal, as Aristotle, [307] and other politicians think; yet it most certainly was by agreement and consent; and men being thus united together, agreed to choose some from among themselves to preside over them, to keep the better decorum and order among them; with these they entered into covenant, on certain conditions and fundamental laws made; when they agreed, the one to govern according to those laws, and to defend the lives, liberties, and properties of men from lawless persons; and the other swore fidelity to them, and promised a cheerful subjection and obedience to their

lawful commands, and to support their government: and this is the original of free and well regulated states; from whom certain respective duties, both of magistrates and subjects, arise; now to be treated of. And,

First, it will be proper to consider, of whom the duties of subjection and obedience are required, and to whom they are to be yielded.

1st, of whom they are required: of everyone that belongs to the commonwealth; “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers”, (Rom. 13:1) that is, every man; see (Rom. 2:9, 10) every man that has a soul, every rational man; and to be subject to and obey civil magistrates, is but his reasonable service; everyone of each sex, male and female, men and women; of every age, young and old; and of every state and condition, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, ecclesiastics not excepted; the papists plead for an exemption of them, but without any reason.

The priests under the law were subject to civil government; as Abiathar to Solomon, (1 King 2:26, 27) and so the ministers of Christ under the gospel; Christ and his apostles paid tribute to Caesar, and even Peter, whose successor the pope pretends to be, (Matthew 17:24-27) The apostle Paul appealed to Caesar, owned his authority, and claimed his protection (Acts 25:10, 11). The same doctrine was inculcated by the successors of the apostles in the age following, who professed their subjection to the civil magistrate, and taught it; says Polycarp, [308] we are commanded to honour magistrates, and the powers that are ordained of God; the same doctrine was taught by Ignatius, [309] Irenaeus, [310] and Justin; [311] and Pliny the heathen bears witness to the Christians of the second century, that they did all things in conformity to the civil laws. [312]

2ndly, to whom these duties are to be performed. These are the “higher powers”; called “powers” because they are invested with the power of government, and have a right to exercise it; higher powers, because they are set in high places, and have a supereminence over others, (Rom. 13:1) sometimes they are called “principalities and powers”, (Titus 3:1) by whom are meant, not angels, to whom men are not put in subjection; on civil accounts; nor ecclesiastical officers, as elders and pastors of churches, whose government is not of a civil, but spiritual nature; they

do not bear the temporal sword, nor are they to make any use of that; but civil magistrates, as the words are explained in the same verse, “Obey magistrates”; rulers or governors, and these include supreme and subordinate ones; “Kings, and all that are in authority” under them, and derive their authority from them, for whom prayer is to be made (1 Tim. 2:1, 2). Every ordinance of man, or every creature of man; that is, every magistrate, who is of man’s creating, is to be submitted to; “Whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent” and appointed “by him”, (1 Peter 2:13, 14) and as heathen magistrates were to be submitted unto, for such were they designed in the above passages, then certainly Christian magistrates; for it is no ways inconsistent with the grace of God, nor for a good man, to be a magistrate; the better man, the better magistrate; such there were under the former dispensation; as Moses, the Judges in Israel, David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others. And under the gospel dispensation, when the Roman empire became Christian, there was a Constantine, the first Christian emperor, thought to be a very good man; and there have been such in after times; though it must be owned they have been rare and few; but there are prophecies of more, and there may be an expectation of more in the latter day glory; when all kings shall fall down before Christ; when kings shall come to the brightness of Zion, or to the church’s rising, and when her gates shall stand open continually for kings to enter in, and become church members; and when kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers: and these are most certainly to be submitted to, and their laws obeyed. I go on,

Secondly, to consider the duties both of magistrates and subjects. And,

1st, of magistrates; for though the duties of subjection and obedience are incompetent to them; yet there are duties incumbent on them, arising from their relation to their people, and covenant with them. And,

1. They are to make and pass such laws as are for the good of their subjects. The government of the people of Israel was very peculiar; it was a Theocracy; God was their King in a civil sense, and made laws for them, which he delivered to them by the hands of Moses; and their kings had no power to make any new

ones; nor did they, not the best and wisest of them, as David, Solomon, &c. but governed according to the laws made to their hands. Our kings have a concern in the making of laws; that is, they have a negative voice, and can put a check upon any laws, and refuse to sign them made by the other branches of the legislature; and it is their duty to refuse to sign such laws as are not salutary to their subjects, or are contrary to the laws of God, and to the fundamental laws of the state.

2. They are to govern according to such righteous and salutary laws, and to execute judgment and justice, as David did, and other good kings do; and then magistrates do their duty, when the king reigns in righteousness, and princes decree judgment (Isa. 32:1).

3. They are to discountenance and suppress impiety and irreligion; and to countenance and encourage religion and virtue; even Aristotle [313] observes in his book of Politics, that the first care of government should be the care of divine things, or what relate to religion. Civil magistrates are appointed for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well; they are to discourage vice, and vicious persons; a king, by his eye, the sternness of his looks, and the frowns of his countenance, should scatter away evil, and evil men; and these being removed from him, his throne will be established in righteousness, (Prov. 20:8; 25:5). Kings are the guardians of the laws of God and man; and Christian kings have a peculiar concern with the laws of the two tables, that they are observed, and the violaters of them punished; as sins against the first table, idolatry, worshipping of more gods than one, and of graven images, blaspheming the name of God, perjury, and false swearing, and profanation of the day of worship: and those against the second table; as disobedience to parents, murder, adultery, theft, bearing false witness, &c. most of which, under the former dispensation, were capital crimes, and punishable with death; and though the punishment of them, at least not all of them, may not be inflicted with that rigour now as then; yet they are punishable in some way or another; which it is the duty of magistrates to take care of.

4. The principal care and concern of a king is the welfare and safety of his people, that they are secured in their lives, liberties, and property; that they live peaceable and quiet lives, unmolested by any; that

they dwell safely, every man under his vine and fig tree, as Israel did in the times of Solomon; the maxim of the Roman orator is a very good one; “Salus populi suprema lex esto;” [314] Let the safety and welfare of the people be the supreme law of government; the safety of a king and his people is closely connected together, and the one is included in the other: it is an observation of an heathen moralist, that “he is mistaken, who thinks that a king is safe, where there is no safety from him; for, “adds he, “security is by compact and covenant, to be established and confirmed through mutual security.” [315] Justice, prudence, and clemency, are virtues highly becoming kings. [316]

2ndly; there are duties to be performed by subjects to magistrates. As,

1. To honour them, and show reverence to them (Rom. 13:7; 1 Peter 2:17). Next to the fear of God, is the honour of the king; yea, the fear or reverence of God and the king is joined together (Prov. 24:21). There is a semblance of divine Majesty in a king, which makes him the object of fear and reverence. Kings are called gods, because they are in God’s stead, his vicegerents, and represent him; “I said, ye are gods”, (Ps. 82:1, 6).

2. As subjects are to think honourably, they are to speak respectfully of rulers; “Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people”; no, not in thought, nor in the bedchamber, in the most secret place, since, sooner or later, it may be discovered, and the person be brought to condign punishment, (Ex. 22:28; Eccl. 10:20) they are reckoned as the vilest and most abandoned among men, and as such described, who “despise government, and are not afraid to speak evil of dignities”, (2 Peter 2:10; Jude 1:8) we should speak evil of no man, particularly of magistrates, and more especially of the king, as supreme; not of his person, nor of his administration; there are “arcana imperii”, secrets of government, which we know nothing of, and it is not proper we should; were they to be known in common, the good designs of government would be defeated by the enemy. The springs of action in government we are not acquainted with, and only judge of them by the success of them; which is a fallacious way of judging. A thing may be well planned, and wisely concerted, at the time it was, all circumstances considered, noticing better; and yet

by one unforeseen accident or another, the design of it is defeated; and because it met not with success, is condemned as a piece of bad policy.

3. Subjects should speak to a king with great reverence and respect; “Is it fit to say to a king, thou art wicked?” (Job 34:18) it is not decent and becoming; no, not to a wicked king. But if a king does wickedly, must he not be told of it, and reprov’d for it? He may, but not by every impertinent and impudent fellow; only by persons of eminence, in things sacred and civil, and that in a respectable manner; and perhaps no instance can be given from the word of God, of a king being reprov’d by any but a prophet, or one sent of God. Herod, a wicked prince, was reprov’d by John the Baptist, and a reason given for it. David, a good prince, was reprov’d by Nathan the prophet, sent of God to him; which reproof he delivered in a decent manner, wrapped up in a parable, and he took the proper opportunity to apply it; which had the desired effect. But such language Shimei used to David, was not fit to be used to a king (2 Sam. 16:7).

4. Civil magistrates, supreme and subordinate, are to be prayed for, (1 Tim. 2:1, 2) for their health, happiness, and prosperity, and the peace of their government, and the continuance of it; for in their peace is the peace of subjects (Jer. 29:10).

5. They are to be submitted to and obeyed in all things, which are not contrary to the laws of God, and the fundamental laws of the kingdom; for otherwise God is to be obeyed, and not men (Acts 4:19; 5:29).

6. They are to be supported in their government, by a payment of all lawful tribute, tax, and custom; “Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom, to whom custom” (Rom. 13:7). This is a doctrine taught not only by the apostle, but by Christ himself, and confirmed by his own example and practice (Matthew 22:21; 17:27). Government cannot be supported without such methods; and without government there is no safety of a man’s life and property; but he must be exposed to a banditti of robbers, plunderers, and levellers, who would strip him at once of all he has: would not any wise man part with some of his substance to secure the rest? without government, as the Roman orator [317] says, “not a family, nor a city, nor a nation, nor all mankind, nor the whole nature of things, nor the world itself, can stand.” And government cannot be maintained

without defraying the expenses of it, which are many and large, by the payment of tribute and taxes, which ought to be done cheerfully; nor should any illicit methods be taken to defeat the payment of them, which is foolishly called, cheating the king, and that is said to be no sin; whereas men hereby cheat themselves, cheat the public, of which they are a part; some individuals may avail themselves by such unlawful practices, but the public suffers, and so does every honest man; and it is the very means of the multiplicity of taxes complained of; for if a duty is laid on one commodity, and it is defeated by such iniquitous practices, either it must be increased on that commodity, or laid upon another.

Thirdly, there are various reasons to be given, why subjection and obedience should be yielded by subjects to magistrates.

1. Because that magistracy is by the ordination and appointment of God; “The powers that be, are ordained of God”, (Rom. 13:1) it is he that sets up one and puts down another (Ps. 75:6, 7; Dan. 2:21). “By me kings reign”, says Wisdom, “and princes decree justice”, (Prov. 8:15) not that it may be that any particular form of government is of God; there are various forms; as “monarchy”, which is the government of one man; “aristocracy”, which is the government of the chief and principal persons in a nation; and “democracy”, which lies in the people: which is the best sort of government I will not take upon me to say; but this I will venture to say, that the worst government is better than none at all; perhaps a mixed government may be best, made up of all three; as our’s is: there is an appearance of monarchy in the “king”, of aristocracy in the “nobles”, and of democracy in the “commons”, chosen by the suffrages of the people. Moreover, it is not this or that particular man in government, that is of God; he may assume that to himself which does not belong to him, and so is not of God, but of himself; or he may abuse the power he is possessed of, which, though by divine permission, and may be for a scourge to a people; yet not of God’s approbation: it is not therefore this or that form of government, or this or that particular person, but government itself that is of God; for there is no power but of him; what Adam had over the creatures, the husband has over the wife, parents over their children, and masters over their servants, it is

of God; and so is the power magistrates have over subjects, (John 19:11) and therefore are to be obeyed.

2. To resist them, is to resist the ordinance of God (Rom. 13:2). Not that magistrates are above the laws; but are to be subject to them, and are liable to the penalty of them, when broken by them; they are under the laws, but over men; so says Cicero; [318] “the laws preside over magistrates, and magistrates over the people; and, “adds he, “the magistrate is a speaking law, and the law a mute magistrate.” So that these have a close connection with each other; the laws are binding on magistrates, and they are to govern according to them; and when they do that which is wrong, or attempt it, they may be resisted; as Saul, when he would have put his son to death, for the breach of an arbitrary law of his own, and which his son was ignorant of; but the people would not suffer him; and they were in the right: so Uzziah, when he went into the temple to offer incense, which to do was a breach of the law of God, then in being; Azariah, and fourscore priests more, followed him, and withstood him, and they had the approbation of God; for before the king could get out of the temple, he was smote with a leprosy. But a king, or a civil magistrate, is not to be resisted in the execution of lawful power and authority.

3. “Such who resist, shall receive to themselves damnation”, or “judgment”; either temporal judgment from men or from God; as did Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; or eternal judgment; for those who despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities, the blackness of darkness is reserved for ever and ever (Jude 1:7, 8, 11, 13). There are other reasons to be gathered from (Rom. 13:1-14), enforcing obedience to civil magistrates; taken from their being the ministers of God for good, for civil good, the protection of men in their lives, liberties, and properties; and for moral good, for the restraint of vice; for if the fence of magistracy was plucked up, vice would issue in like an inundation, and carry all before it; (see Judg. 21:25) and from their being encouragers of good works, and the executors of the wrath of God on evil men; and by good men are to be obeyed, not for wrath’s sake, or for fear of punishment, but for conscience sake; and a good conscience cannot be exercised without obedience to them.

[306] De Cive, c. 1. s. 2.

[307] Politic. 1. 1. c. 2.

[308] Apud Euseb. 1. 4. c. 15.

[309] Ep. ad. Philadelph.

[310] Adv. Haeres. 1. 5. c. 24.

[311] Apolog. 2, p. 64.

[312] Apud Euseb. 1. 3. c. 33.

[313] proton, ten peri to theion epimeleian, en kalousin ierateian, Aristot Politic. 1. 7. c. 8.

[314] Cicero de Legibus, 1. 3. c. 11.

[315] "Errat enim siquis existimet tutum esse ibi regem, ubi nihil a rege tutum est. Securitas securitate mutua paciscenda est", Seneca de Clementia, 1. 1. c. 19.

[316] "Nullum tamen clementia ex omnibus magis quam regem aut principem decet", Seneca de Clementia, 1. 1. c. 3.

[317] Cicero de Legibus, 1. 3. c. 9.

[318] De Legibus, 1. 3. c. 9.

Chapter 5

OF GOOD WORKS IN GENERAL

Good works, or actions, are of various sorts. There are "natural" actions, which respect the physical life; such as eating, drinking, &c. which, when done in moderation, and not to excess, are good, and are necessary for the preservation of health and life. And there are "civil" employments, trades, businesses, and occupations of life, men are called to; and it is good to attend them; and they are necessary for the support of a man and his family, and that he may do good to others, and are for the credit of religion. These, by some, are thought to be meant by good works, in Titus 3:14. There are "relative" duties, or good works to be performed by husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, magistrates and subjects, before treated of. And there are acts of "beneficence" and charity to fellow creatures and Christians; which are called "doing good", and are acceptable and well pleasing to God (Heb. 13:16; Gal. 6:10). There are some good works to be done to men, as men, and are comprehended in that general rule of Christ's, (Matthew 7:12) and others to believers in Christ, who are "by love to serve one another". Some are of a "positive" kind, in obedience to a positive law of God, the effect of his sovereign will and pleasure;

such were the institutions and ordinances of divine service observed under the former dispensation, and baptism and the Lord's Supper under the present. Others are of a "moral" nature, done in agreement to the moral law, and to the law and light of nature, binding upon all, in all ages. And of good works some are "materially", or as to the substance of them, and in appearance good, when they are not "circumstantially" good; or as to the circumstances of them; nor radically, and as to the principle of them: such were the virtues of the heathens Austin calls "splendida peccata", shining sins; and such the works done by Herod, on hearing John; and by the Pharisees, who were and did things outwardly righteous before men, but at heart wicked; hence it is sometimes said, [319] not "nouns", but "adverbs", make good works; it is not barely doing "bonum", a good thing; but doing that good thing "bene", well. The circumstances requisite to a good work, are,

1. That it be according to the command and will of God; as every evil work or sin is a transgression of the law of God, and a want of conformity to that; so every good work is in agreement with it, and a conformity to it. By this rule many works are cut off from being good works, done by the Pharisees of old, and by Papists now, though they may have a great show of religion and holiness, because they are done according to the precepts and traditions of men, and not according to the commands of God.

2. That it spring from love to God, and not influenced by any sinister and selfish motive; "The end of the commandment is charity", or love; love to God is the root and spring of obedience to it, and is the motive inducing to it (1 Tim. 1:5; John 14:15).

3. It must be done in faith, for what is "not of faith is sin", and so no good work; without faith it is impossible to please God; herein lay the difference between Abel's work and Cain's; the one was done in faith, the other not (Rom. 14:23; Heb. 11:4, 6).

4. It must be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). The Pharisees prayed, and fasted, and did alms; but all to be seen of men, and to get glory from them, but sought not the glory of God; and so were not good works; good works are "by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11). Now concerning these may be observed,

First, the springs and causes of them.

1. The efficient cause is God, who works in his people, "both to will and to do"; gives the inclination to a good work, and power to perform it. Every action, as an action, is of God, by whom we move; and a good work is not only of God, as an action, but as a good action, who is the fountain of all goodness; the beginning, progress, and perfection of a good work are of God, and so prayed for (Heb. 13:21).

2. The influential cause is the grace of God; it was by that the apostle Paul did works more abundantly than others, and to that he ascribes them; and through that had his conversation in the world, in simplicity and godly sincerity (1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12). The grace of God, both as a principle and as a doctrine, teaches influentially to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly (Titus 2:11, 12).

3. Good works, that are truly such, are owing to union to Christ; men are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works", (Eph. 2:10) they are first in Christ as branches in the vine, and then bring forth the fruit of good works; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it is in and abides in the vine, so neither can any except they are in and abide in Christ, who is the green fir tree, from whom all their fruit is found (John 15:4; Hosea 14:8).

4. Faith in Christ is productive of them; the heart is purified by faith in the blood of Jesus, which purges the conscience from dead works, whereby men are better fitted to do good works, or to serve the living God; faith without works is dead; and works without faith are dead works: a living faith produces living works; not that the life of faith lies in works; but as Dr. Ames [320] observes, works are second acts, necessarily flowing from the life of faith. Faith, some call it [321] the internal, instrumental cause of works; the external instrumental cause of works is,

4. The word of God; as faith comes by hearing it, so the obedience of faith; the word, written and read, preached and heard, is a means of making the man of God, whether in a public or private character, "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16; see Luke 8:15).

Secondly, the nature and properties of good works.

1. The best of works, which are done by the best of men, and in the best manner, are but imperfect; there is sin in them all; there are none found perfect in the

sight of God, however they may appear before men, (Eccl. 7:20; Rev. 3:2) knowledge of the will of God, the rule of them, is imperfect; and so are faith and love from whence they spring; and there is indwelling sin, that hinders saints from doing the good they would, and in the manner they are desirous of, and which pollutes their best actions.

2. They are not meritorious of anything at the hand of God; the requisites of merit are wanting in them.

(1). To merit, they must be profitable to God; but such they are not; they are no gain to him: men, by their works, give him nothing, nor does he receive anything from them, and therefore he is under no obligation to them for them (Job 22:2; 35:7; Ps. 16:2).

(2). They are due to God; whereas they should not, if expected to merit by them; but in doing them men do but what is their duty; for the doing of which they are debtors, and under obligation to perform them. God has a prior right unto them; could these be given him first, a recompence might be expected; but this is not the case (Luke 17:10; Rom. 8:12; 11:35, 36).

(3). They must be done by men in their own strength, and not in the strength and by the assistance of God, of whom it is expected to merit; whereas without the grace and strength of Christ men can do nothing; but all things through him strengthening them: his strength is made perfect in their weakness, and by his grace they do what they do, and therefore can merit nothing.

(4). There is no proportion between the works of men, and any mercy and favour of God; they are not "worthy" of the "least" of the temporal mercies they enjoy, and still less of spiritual ones, and especially of eternal life and happiness; between which, and the best works of men, there is no manner of proportion; there is between sin, and the wages of it, death; but none between works of righteousness and eternal life; that is the free gift of God (Gen. 32:10; Rom. 6:23, 8:18).

Thirdly, the subjects of them, in whom they are found, and by whom performed. Every man is not capable of performing good works; there is an inaptitude, and an impotence to that which is good; men are naturally to every good work reprobate or unfit; to do good they have no knowledge, and have no inclination nor disposition unto it; have neither will nor power; the bias of their minds is another

way; they mind the things of the flesh, and their carnal minds are enmity to God, and to all that is good; and hence the truth of that observation, “There is none that doth good, no not one!” (Rom. 3:12). Such only are capable of doing good works who,

1. Are made good men; “Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good”; let a man be made a good man, and he will do good works; but it is God that must make him good, [322] none else can; he cannot make himself good; the good work of grace must first be begun in him by the Spirit and grace of God; and then, and not before, will he perform good works; he must be made a new creature in Christ, in order to do good works (Eph. 2:10).

2. They must first be purified and sanctified: Christ gave himself, his life and blood, for the redemption of his people; “That he might purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”, (Titus 2:14 and a man must be sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God, that he may be “meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2:21).

3. They must have the Spirit of Christ, and be strengthened by him, with all might in the inward man, in order to perform them; and for this end is he promised (Ezek. 36:27).

4. They must have faith in God, and strength from Christ; they that have “believed in God”, in his Son, and in his promises, and in his covenant, ought to be “careful to maintain good works”; as they are the only persons capable of them, since faith is requisite to them; and such are under the greatest obligations to perform them: and strength from Christ is necessary; in whom are both “righteousness” to render them acceptable to God, and “strength” to perform duties incumbent on them (Titus 3:8; Isa. 45:24).

5. The apostle says; Let ours learn to “maintain good works” (Titus 3:14). Such who are the chosen generation, a peculiar people, the redeemed of the Lord, and who have drank into the same Spirit, have obtained like precious faith, and are heirs together of the grace of life.

Fourthly, the “necessary uses” for which good works are to be performed.

1st, not to procure salvation, is whole or in part; not to make peace with God, which they cannot effect; nor to make atonement for sin, for which they cannot answer one of a thousand; nor to obtain the

pardon of it, which is only by the blood of Christ; nor to justify in the sight of God, for by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified, (Rom. 3:20, 28) the best works being impure and imperfect. Salvation in general is denied to be of works; this is the current language of scripture (Eph. 2:8, 9; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5). They are not in any rank and class of causes respecting salvation; they are neither efficient, nor moving, nor meritorious, nor adjuvant causes of salvation; nor even conditions of it; they do not go before any part of salvation, but are fruits and effects of it; not of election, which was before the children had done either good or evil; nor of redemption, in consequence of which the redeemed are a peculiar people, zealous of good works; nor of calling, works before calling are not good works, and those that follow after are fruits and effects of calling grace; “Who hath saved us and called us, not according to our works”, &c. (2 Tim. 1:9) nor do they go before, to make and prepare the way to consummate happiness, but they “follow” after (Rev. 14:13). Yet,

2ndly, there are uses for which they are necessary. As,

1. With respect to God, they being of his “ordination”, that his people should walk in them, and according to his command and will, in obedience to which it is necessary to perform them, (Eph. 2:10) as well as to testify our gratitude for mercies temporal and spiritual we receive from him; and they are to be done with a view to his glory; for hereby is our heavenly Father glorified; and we not only glorify him ourselves, but are the means of others glorifying him also (John 15:8; Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:12).

2. With respect to ourselves; as for the ornament of ourselves, to adorn our profession, and the doctrine of God our Saviour, (1 Tim. 2:9, 10; Titus 2:10) and to testify and show forth our faith to others, and to make our calling and election sure; not surer than they are in themselves, nor surer to ourselves, being certified to us by the Spirit and grace of God; but surer to others, by our good works and holy conversation, as fruits of them; which is all the evidence we are capable of giving to the world, or they are capable of receiving from us (James 2:18; 2 Peter 1:10).

3. With respect to others, to whom they are good and profitable, and therefore to be done, (Titus 3:8) both by way of example, and by real benefit received

through them, either in a temporal, or in a spiritual way; and because they serve to recommend religion to others; and may be, without the word, a means of winning them to a liking of it; or, however, may serve to stop the mouth of gainsayers, and make them ashamed who falsely accuse the good conversation of the saints; and so prevent any just offence being given to Jew or Gentile, or to the church of God.

[319] Maccov. Distinct. Theolog. c. 15. s. 10.

[320] Medulla Theolog. l. 2. c. 7. s. 35.

[321] Synops. Purior. Theolog. Disp. 34. s. 9.

[322] “Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est”, Seneca, Ep. 41. “Nulla sine Deo mens bona est”, ibid. Ep. 73.

Chapter 6

A COMPENDIUM OR SUMMARY OF THE DECALOGUE OR TEN COMMANDS

The Commandments of the law are reduced by Christ to two capital ones; Love to God, and Love to the neighbour, (Matthew 22:36-40) and the apostle Paul says; “All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”, (Gal. 5:14) he means the commandments of the second table of the law; and, indeed, love, as it includes both branches of it, love to God and to men, briefly comprehends every other command; and therefore with propriety it is said by him, “Love is the fulfilling of the law”, (Rom. 13:9, 10) and what may serve to epitomize the Decalogue, and to sum up the contents of each command, is a rule or two that may be observed; as, that the prohibition of any sin includes in it a command of the contrary virtue or duty; and so “vice versa”; and that the prohibition of any sin, and the command of any duty, include in them all sins and duties of the same kind or kindred, with all causes, means, and occasions thereof, as may be exemplified in our Lord’s exposition of the “sixth” and “seventh” commands, (Matthew 5:21, 22, 27, 28) by which it appears, that the law is spiritual, and reaches not only to external actions, done in the body, but to inward thoughts, affections, and lusts of the mind.

The preface to the Decalogue contains arguments or motives unto obedience to the commandments in it. As,

1 That it is “the Lord” Jehovah, the author of our

beings, the God of our lives and mercies, the sovereign Lord and Governor of the world, who enjoins it; who has a right to command his creatures what he pleases, and it becomes them to obey him.

2. He that enjoins these precepts is the Lord thy God; not only thy Creator, thy Preserver, and Benefactor, but thy covenant God; as he was peculiarly to the Jews in a national sense, which laid them under great obligation to him; and if he is our God in a special sense, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, the obligation is till the greater.

3. He is farther described, as he “which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage”, which was only literally true of the people of Israel; which shows that the Decalogue, as to the form of it, and as delivered through the hands and ministry of Moses, only concerned that people, and was calculated for their use; though, as to the matter of it, and so far as it is of a moral nature, and agrees with the law and light of nature, it is equally binding on Gentiles; and if the redemption mentioned is considered as typical of spiritual and eternal redemption by Christ, from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law, the obligation to serve the Lord, and obey him, is still more strong and forcible (see Tit 2:14; 1 Cor. 6:20). The Decalogue itself follows.

1. The “first” command is, “Thou shalt have no other gods” before me. The things required in this precept are,

1. That we should know, own, and acknowledge God, the one, only, true God, and none else, (Mark 12:29; Ps. 46:10; Hosea 13:4).

2. That we should worship him, and him only; not any creature with him; nor any more than he; nor, indeed, any besides him (Matthew 4:10; Rom. 1:25).

3. That we should exercise faith and trust in him, hope in him, and love him, (John 14:1; Jer. 17:5; Matthew 22:39). The things forbidden by it are,

4. Atheism; denying there is a God, or any of the perfections essential to Deity, as his omniscience, omnipotence, &c. and his providence in, and government of the world (Ps. 14:1; Ezek. 9:9).

5. Polytheism, or the worshipping of many gods, or more than one; as the sun, moon, and stars, the host of heaven, and a multitude of things on earth; either by Jews or Gentiles (Deut. 4:19; Jer. 2:28; 1 Cor. 8:5, 6).

If. Whatever is trusted in, and loved as God, as wealth and riches, which to do is idolatry, (Job 31:24; Ps. 49:6; Eph. 5:5) or fleshly lusts, as the epicure, whose god is his belly, (Phil. 3:19) or any other lust or idol set up in a man's heart, as self-righteousness, or be it what it may (Ezek. 14:4; 36:25). The phrase "before me", is not to be overlooked; which may either point at the omniscience of God, in whose sight such idolatry must be very displeasing; or the placing of any object of worship by him, which is setting up man's post by his, as Manasseh placed a graven image in the temple itself, (2 King 21:7) or it may be rendered, "Besides me", and so excludes all other objects of worship, there being no God but him (Isa. 44:8; 45:21). I would just propose it, whether the words I phnyg may not be rendered, "Besides my persons", besides the Three persons in the Trinity, who are the one God; I frequently signifies "besides", (Gen. 31:50; Lev. 18:18; Deut. 19:9) and phny may be interpreted, "my faces", or "persons"; see the Body of Doctrinal Divinity; Book 1, Chapter 27.

II. The "second" command is, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, or any likeness-thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them", &c. which respects the mode of worship. And,

1. Requires, that it should be spiritual, suitable to the nature of God, without any carnal imaginations, and external representations of him, (John 4:23, 24; Phil. 3:3) and that the parts of divine worship; as prayer, praise, preaching, hearing the word, and administration of ordinances; be observed just as delivered, without any addition to them, corruption and alteration of them (Deut. 4:2; 1 Cor. 11:2).

2. It forbids all superstition and will worship, human traditions, precepts, and ordinances of men; and the introduction of any thing into the worship of God, which he has not commanded, (Isa. 29:13; Matthew 15:8; Col. 2:20-23) and all images, figures, and representations of the divine Being, and of any of the persons in the Godhead; and, indeed, making the likeness of any creature, in heaven, earth, or sea, in order to be worshipped, and used for that purpose, (Deut. 4:15-18; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:23) and not only images of heathen deities, which were to be broken and burnt, but those of Christ, as a man crucified, of the Virgin Mary, of angels and saints departed, worshipped by Papists (Deut. 7:5; Rev. 19:20).

Though all pictures, paintings, and sculptures, are not forbidden hereby, only such as are made for, and used in, divine worship; but not which are for ornament, or for the use of history; and to perpetuate to posterity the memory of men, and their actions; otherwise there were images of things, of lions, and oxen, and the cherubim, in the tabernacle and temple, by the express order of God (Ex. 25:18; 1 King 6:32, 7:29).

3. The motives inducing to obey this command, are taken from God's being a jealous God, who will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images; and from his severe punishment of the breakers of it, and of their posterity, who tread in their steps; and from his mercy shown to those who, from a principle of love to him, observe it (Isa. 42:8; Deut. 32:21; 4:23, 24; 1 King 19:18).

III. The "third" command is, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain". Which,

1. Requires an holy and reverend use of the name of God; of his titles, perfections, attributes, word, and works, even in common conversation, and especially in religious worship; expressed by walking in his name, invocation of his name, and giving thanks unto it (Ps. 111:9, 89:7; Mic. 4:5; Rom. 10:12; Ps. 103:1).

2. It forbids a vain use of the name of God, and of any of his titles, in common conversation, using them in a light way and manner; all profane swearing and cursing by them, (Rom. 3:13; James 3:9, 10) perjury, or swearing falsely by his name; for though an oath may be taken lawfully, and always by the name of God, and not a creature; yet never to be taken falsely (Deut. 6:13; Heb. 6:16; Zech. 8:17). So likewise blaspheming the name of God is a breach of this precept, (Lev. 24:14; Ps. 74:10).

3. The argument moving to the observation of it, is taken from the guilt incurred by it, and the punishment inflicted for it; "The Lord will not hold such guiltless" (Zech. 5:4; Mal. 3:5).

4. The "fourth" command respects the time of worship; the keeping a day holy to the Lord; and requires that it should be after six days labour, (Ex. 20:9) that it should be observed in religious exercises, (Isa. 58:13; Rom. 14:6) and as a rest from bodily labour, from all secular business and worldly employment, excepting works of necessity and mercy; the example urging to it is taken from God's resting from his works of creation (Ex. 35:2, 3; Neh.

10:31; Gen. 2:1, 2). But this has been treated of in a preceding chapter.

5. The "fifth" command requires honour, reverence, and obedience to be given by inferiors to superiors; as by children to parents, so by scholars to tutors and preceptors, by servants to masters, and by subjects to magistrates; and forbids all disrespect, contempt, irreverence, and disobedience of them; which also has been treated of in some former chapters.

VI. The "sixth" command is, "Thou shalt not kill". Which,

1. Requires all due care in the use of proper means for the preservation of our lives, and the lives of others; life is and ought to be dear to a man; self-preservation is a first principle in nature; and every lawful method should be used to preserve life; as food, physic, sleep, &c. with all just and lawful defence of it; avoiding everything that tends to impair health and endanger life (Job 2:4; 1 Tim. 5:23).

2. It forbids the taking away of life, or murder of every sort; as parricide, fratricide, homicide, and suicide; for this law is "against murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers, and manslayers", and destroyers of themselves, (1 Tim. 1:1) no man has a right to take away his own life, nor the life of another; it is contrary to the authority of God, the sovereign disposer of life, (Deut. 32:39) to the law of nature, (Acts 16:28) to the goodness of God, who gives it, (Job 10:12; Acts 17:28) contrary to the love a man owes to himself, and his neighbour, and is a prejudice to the commonwealth, or public good, thereby deprived of a member, and the king of a subject. Not but that life may be taken away; as in lawful war, which is sometimes of God, who "makes peace and creates evil", the evil of war; and by the hands of the civil magistrate, who bears the sword of justice, and uses it for the punishment of capital crimes; and it is lawful in self-defence (1 Chron. 5:22; Isa. 45:7; Gen. 9:6; Rom. 13:4; Ex. 22:2).

3. All intemperance, immoderate eating and drinking, which tend to destroy life; all sinful anger, undue wrath, inordinate passions, quarrels, blows, contentions, dwellings, &c. which often issue in it, are breaches of this law (Prov. 23:1, 2; Matthew 5:21, 22).

VII. The "seventh" command is, "Thou shalt not commit adultery". Which,

1. Requires chastity, and a preservation of it in ourselves and others; in or out of a state of wedlock; and to abstain from all impurity of flesh and spirit; and to make use of all means to preserve it; as lawful marriage, conjugal love, and cohabitation: it requires to keep the body, and the members of it, in subjection; to mortify inordinate affection; and to avoid every thing that tends to unchastity; as intemperance, in the case of Lot; sloth and idleness, as in Sodom; immodest apparel and ornament, as in Jezebel; keeping ill company, and frequenting places of diversion, which are nurseries of vice; and also reading impure books.

2. It forbids all the species of uncleanness; not only adultery, but simple fornication, rape, incest, and all unnatural lusts (1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Thess. 4:3; Lev. 18:6, 20).

3. All unchaste thoughts and desires, all adulterous looks, obscene words, and filthy actions, rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, are violations of this command (Matthew 5:27, 28; 2 Peter 2:14; Eph. 5:4; Rom. 13:14).

VIII. The "eighth" command is, "Thou shalt not steal". Which,

1. Requires that we should seek to get, preserve, and increase our own wealth, and that of others, in a lawful way; that we should be diligent in our callings, careful to provide for our families; and even things convenient, honest, and reputable in the sight of all; and that we may have somewhat to give to those in need; and that of our own, and not be tempted to steal from others; for God hates robbery for burnt offering (Prov. 22:29; 1 Tim. 5:8; Rom. 12:17; Eph. 4:28; Isa. 61:8).

2. It requires justice, truth, and faithfulness in all dealings with men to owe no man anything, but to give to all their dues; to have and use just weights and measures; to be true to all engagements, promises, and contracts; and to be faithful in whatsoever is committed to our care and trust (Rom. 13:7, 8; Lev. 19:35, 36; 6:2-5; Neh. 5:12).

3. It forbids all unjust ways of increasing our own, and hurting our neighbour's substance, by using false balances, weights, and measures; by over reaching and circumventing in trade and commerce; by taking away by force or fraud the goods, properties, and persons of men; by borrowing and not paying again; and by oppression, extortion, and unlawful usury;

for not all usury is unlawful, only what is exorbitant, and oppressive of the poor; for it is but reasonable, that what one man gains by another man's money, that the other man should have a proportionate share in that gain. Nor was the Israelites borrowing of the Egyptians, without payment, any breach of this law, since it was by the order of God, whose all things are; and the words used may be rendered, the one asked [323] and the other gave; [324] and besides, it was but repaying them what was due to them for their past services (Amos 8:5, 6; 1 Thess. 4:6; Ps. 37:21; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Deut. 23:1, 20; Ex. 11:2, 12:35).

IX. The "ninth" command is, "Thou, shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour". Which,

1. Requires to be careful of our own good name, and that of our neighbour, which is better than precious ointment and that we should speak every man truth to his neighbour, in private conversation, and especially in public judgment (Eccl. 7:1; Zech. 8:16; Eph. 4:25).

2. It forbids all lying, which is speaking contrary to a man's mind and conscience, and with a design to deceive; and so condemns all sorts of lies, whether jocose, officious, or more plainly pernicious, and all equivocations, and mental reservations, perjury, and every false oath, bearing a false witness, and subornation of false witnesses in a court of judicature, (Matthew 26:59, 60; Acts 6:11,12) against all which God will be a swift witness, (Mal. 3:5) it also forbids all slandering, tale bearing, raising, receiving, spreading and encouraging an ill report of others, which is contrary to charity (Ps. 50:19, 20; Lev. 19:16; Jer. 20:10; 1 Cor. 13:7).

XX. The "tenth" command is, "Thou shalt not covet", &c. Which requires,

1. Contentment [325] in every state and condition of life; a lesson the apostle Paul had learnt, and every man should, (Phil. 4:11; Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6, 8) as also love, joy, pleasure, and delight in the happiness of others (Ps. 35:27).

2. It forbids all uneasiness and discontent in our present circumstances, and all fretting and envying at the prosperity of others, (Ps. 37:7, 73:3) and condemns covetousness as an evil thing, and which is idolatry, and unbecoming saints (Isa. 57:17; Col. 3:8; Eph. 5:3).

3. It mentions the particular objects not to be coveted; not a "neighbour's house", and take it away

by force, as some did, (Mic. 2:2) nor a "neighbour's wife", as David coveted Bathsheba, (2 Sam. 11:3) "nor his man servant, nor his maid servant", which a king would do, take at his will, and put to his work, as Samuel suggested, (1 Sam. 8:16) "nor his ox nor his ass", from which evil Samuel exculpated himself, and which was admitted, (1 Sam. 12:3) "nor anything that is thy neighbour's", his gold, silver, apparel, or any goods of his; of which sin the apostle Paul declares himself free (Acts 20:33).

4. It strikes at the root of all sin, evil concupiscence, internal lust, indwelling sin (James 1:13, 14). By this law lust is known to be sin, and is condemned by it as such (Rom. 7:7).

From this view of the law, in all its precepts, it appears how large and extensive it is; that David might well say, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad!" (Ps. 119:96). So that it cannot be perfectly fulfilled by man in this his sinful and fallen state; and therefore he cannot be justified before God by the deeds of it; since it requires a perfect righteousness: and happy for man it is, that there is such a righteousness revealed in the gospel, manifested without the law, though witnessed to by law and prophets, even the righteousness of Christ, consisting of his active and passive obedience; who is the end, the fulfilling end, of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believes (Rom. 3:20-22; 10:4).

[323] vs'lv "Postulaverunt", Vatablus; "Petierunt", Drusius.

[324] vys'lv "et dederunt illis", Cartwright.

[325] Of this see Book 1, Chap. 12.

BOOK V

A DISSERTATION CONCERNING THE BAPTISM OF JEWISH PROSELYTES.

Chapter 1

A DISSERTATION CONCERNING THE BAPTISM OF JEWISH PROSELYTES OF THE VARIOUS SORTS OF PROSELYTES AMONG THE JEWS

Intending to treat of the admission of proselytes

into the Jewish church by baptism, or dipping; it may be proper to consider the different sorts of proselytes among the Jews, and which of them were thus admitted, as is said. The word "proselyte" is originally Greek, and is derived, as Philo [326] observes, apo tou proseleluthenai, "from coming to", that is, from one sect or religion to another, as from heathenism to the Jewish religion; and so Suidas [327] says, proselytes are they oi proselutoi, "who come from" the Gentiles, and live according to the laws of God; and such an one is called by the Septuagint interpreters of (Ex. 12:19; Isa. 14:1) and by the Greek writers following them, geioras, which is rightly interpreted by Hesychius, such of another nation who are called proselytes to Israel; and which word comes near to the Hebrew word gr and nearer still to the Chaldee word gyvr' used for a proselyte; and is, by Eusebius, interpreted epimiktous, [328] such as were mixed with Israelites.

There were two sorts of proselytes with the Jews, some say three; a proselyte of the gate; a mercenary proselyte; and a proselyte of righteousness; the first and last are most usually observed.

First, One sort was called gr sr "a proselyte of the gate"; and in scripture, "the stranger that is in thy gates", (Deut. 14:21; 24:14) being a sojourner, and permitted to dwell there; hence such an one had also the name of gr tsvv "a proselyte inhabitant"; (see Ex. 12:15; Lev. 25:45, 47) one who was allowed to dwell among the Jews on certain conditions; and is generally distinguished from another sort, called a "proselyte of righteousness", of whom more hereafter. Though the Jews, not always consistent with themselves, and so not in this matter, sometimes interpret "the stranger in the gate", of a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte by inhabitation, and sometimes of a proselyte of righteousness. So Nachmanides, [329] having explained the stranger in the gate of a proselyte inhabitant, or one who obliged himself to keep the seven precepts of Noah, according to the usual interpretation of it, observes; "Our doctors interpret it differently, for they say, thy stranger within thy gate', simply denotes, a proselyte of righteousness'." So that according to them, such a stranger may be taken both for the one and for the other, in different respects; but commonly the proselyte inhabitant is only understood; who in general was obliged to promise, that he would not be guilty of idolatry, or worship any idol; [330]

this he was to promise before three witnesses, for it is asked, "who is Ger Toshab; that is, a proselyte allowed to dwell in Israel? (the answer is) Whoever takes upon him, in the presence of three neighbours, that he will not commit idolatry." It follows, "R. Meir, and the wise men say, whoever takes upon him the seven precepts which the sons of Noah obliged themselves to observe." Others say, "these do not come into the general rule of such a proselyte. Who then is one? He is a proselyte who eats what dies of itself; (or) who takes upon him to keep all the commandments in the law, except that which forbids the eating of things which die of themselves;" [331] but the usual account of such a proselyte is, that he agrees to observe the seven precepts enjoined the sons of Noah; [332] six of which were given to Adam, the first man, and the seventh was added to them, and given to Noah, and are as follow: [333] a. Concerning idolatry; by this a son of Noah was forbid to worship the sun, moon, and stars, and images of any sort; nor might he erect a statue, nor plant a grove, nor make any image. b. Concerning blaspheming the name of God. Such an one might not blaspheme, neither the proper name of God, Jehovah; nor any of his surnames, titles, and epithets. c. Concerning shedding of blood, or murder, the breach of which command he was guilty of, if he slew one, though an embryo in his mother's womb; and one who pursued another, when he could have escaped from him with the loss of one of his members, &c. d. Concerning uncleanness, or impure copulations; of which there were six sorts forbidden a son of Noah; as, with an own mother, with a father's wife (or stepmother), with another man's wife, with his sister by the mother's side, with a male, or with mankind, and with a beast. e. Concerning rapine, or robbery and theft; of which such were guilty, whether they robbed a Gentile or an Israelite, or stole money, or men, or suppressed the wages of an hireling; and the like. f. Concerning the member of a living creature, taken from it while alive, and eating it: this is the command, it is said, which was to Noah, and his sons, and of which the Jews interpret Genesis 9:4. g. Concerning judgments or punishments to be inflicted on those who broke the above laws: this command obliged them to regard the directions, judgment, and sentence of the judges appointed to see the said laws put into execution, and to punish delinquents.

Now such Gentiles, who laid themselves under obligation to observe these commands, had leave to dwell among the Israelites, though not in everyone of their cities; not in Jerusalem particularly; [334] wherefore those devout men and proselytes said to dwell in Jerusalem, (Acts 2:5, 10) were not proselytes of the gate, but proselytes of righteousness. Nor are such sort of proselytes now received, only while the Jews lived in their own land, and were not under the jurisdiction of another people; or as they express it, while jubilees were in use and observed. [335] This sort of proselytes, though they did not enjoy the privileges the proselytes of righteousness did, yet some they had; they might worship and pray in the court of the Gentiles, though not in the temple; they might offer burnt offerings, though not other sacrifices; their poor were fed with the poor of Israel, their sick were visited by Israelites, and their dead were buried with them. [336] Such proselytes as these, as they were not obliged to circumcision, nor to other commands peculiar to the Jews; none but those before observed; so neither were they baptized, or dipped, when made proselytes, which is said of others. Maimonides [337] affirms of such a proselyte, that he is neither circumcised nor dipped. Bishop Kidder [338] is therefore mistaken in saying, that proselytes of the gate were baptized, but not circumcised.

Secondly, there was another sort of proselytes, which are taken notice of, at least, by some as such; who were called skrym “mercenary” ones, and are reckoned as between proselytes of the gate and Gentiles. In Exodus 12:44, 45, a mercenary, or “hired servant”, is distinguished from a servant bought with money; he being hired only for a certain time, as for six years; and also from a foreigner, a stranger in the gate, a proselyte of the gate; and both of them are distinguished from the servant bought with money, who was circumcised, and might eat of the passover, when neither of the other might, being both uncircumcised; and therefore R. Levi Barzelonita [339] is thought to be mistaken when he says, “a mercenary is a proselyte, who is circumcised, but not dipped; for so the wise men explain it:” but if a stranger or proselyte of the gate was not circumcised, much less a mercenary, who was far below him; besides, if he was circumcised, he might eat of the passover; which is denied him: and so Ben Melech observes [340] of these two, the

foreigner and the hired servant; they are Gentiles, and uncircumcised: and Abendana, in his notes upon him, from the Rabbins, says, the former is a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte of the gate, who takes upon him the seven precepts of the sons of Noah; the latter is a servant whose body is not possessed, that is, is not in the possession of his master, not being bought with his money, is only an hired servant, and so not circumcised. But perhaps Jarchi’s note will reconcile this to what Barzelonita says; “Toshab, a foreigner, this is a proselyte inhabitant; and Shacir, or hired servant, this is a Gentile;” but what is the meaning? are they not uncircumcised? (that is, both of them) and it is said, “No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof”: but they are as a circumcised Arabian, and a circumcised Gabnunit, or Gabonite, [341] though circumcised yet not by Israelites, but by Gentiles, which gave no right to the passover. Hottinger [342] thinks these mercenary proselytes, and with him Leusden [343] seems to agree, were mechanic strangers, who left their own country, and came among the Jews for the sake of learning some mechanic art; and who, conforming to certain laws and conditions, prescribed by the Jews, were permitted to sojourn with them until they had learnt the art. There are but few writers who speak of this sort of proselytes. However, it seems agreed on all hands, that whether circumcised or not, they were not baptized, or dipped.

Thirdly, There was another sort of proselyte, called gr tsdq a “proselyte of righteousness” [344] (see Deut. 16:20) a stranger circumcised, and who is so called when he is circumcised; and sometimes gr vn vryt “a proselyte, the son of the covenant,” [345] the same as an Israelite (see Acts 3:25). This sort of proselytes were the highest, and had in greatest esteem; who not only submitted to circumcision, but embraced all the laws, religion, and worship of the Jews; and were in all respects as they, and enjoyed equally all privileges and immunities, civil and religious, as they did; except being made a king, though one might if his mother was of Israel; [346] and being members of the great Sanhedrim, yet might be of the lesser, provided they were born of an Israelitish woman; [347] nay, even such have been in the great Sanhedrim, as Shemaiah and Abtalion, who were of the posterity of Sennacherib; [348] but their mothers being Israelites, it was lawful for them to judge, that

is, in the great Sanhedrim; for one was the prince, and the other the father of that court. [349] So the Jews say, [350] the posterity of Jethro sat in Lishcat Gazith, that is, in the great Sanhedrim, which sat in that room; and for which they quote 1 Chronicles 2:55) yet it has been a question, whether a proselyte should be made a public minister, or president of the congregation, called slych tsvvr; but the common opinion was, that he might be one: [351] of this sort of proselytes, of whom they boast, some were persons of note for learning, or wealth, or worldly grandeur; [352] but without sufficient ground. Some, they own, were not sincere who became proselytes, either through fear, or to gratify some sensual lust, or for some sinister end or another. Some were called “proselytes of lions,” [353] who became so through fear; as the Samaritans, because of the lions sent among them, and that they might be freed from them, embraced the worship of God, though they retained also the worship of their idols. Others were called “proselytes of dreams”; who were directed and encouraged to become proselytes by such who pretended to skill in dreams, as being omens of good things to them. Though some, in the place referred to, instead of chlmvt “dreams”, read “windows”, and render the words “proselytes of windows”, so Alting, [354] meaning the windows of their eyes, who, to gratify the lust of the eyes, became proselytes; as Shechem, being taken with the sight of Dinah, submitted to circumcision for the sake of her; and others were called “proselytes of Mordecai and Esther”, who were like those who became Jews in their times, (Esther 8:17) through fear of the Jews, as there expressed. Others were true and sincere proselytes, who cordially embraced the Jewish religion, and from the heart submitted to the laws and rules of it; these were called vrym grvrym “drawn proselytes,” [355] who were moved of themselves, and of their own good will, without any sinister bias, and out of real love and affection to the Jewish religion, embraced it. Compare the phrase with John 6:44. And such, they say, [356] all proselytes will be in the time to come, or in the days of the Messiah; and yet sometimes they say, that then none will be received: [357] and when persons propose to be proselytes, the Jews are very careful to ask many questions, in order to try whether they are sincere or not; and such as they take to be sincere they speak very highly of; they say, [358] “Greater are the

proselytes at this time, than the Israelites when they stood on mount Sinai; because they saw the lightning, heard the thunder, and the sound of the trumpet; but these saw and heard none of these things, and yet have taken upon them the yoke of the kingdom, and are come under the wings of the Shechinah” though elsewhere, and in common, they speak but slightly of them, and say; “They are as grievous to Israel as a scab in the skin, or as a razor to it, [359] because they often turn back again, and seduce the Israelites, and carry them off with them; yea, they say they stop the coming of the Messiah.” [360] However, they have a saying [361] which shows some regard to them; “A proselyte, even to the tenth generation, do not despise a Syrian, or an heathen before him, he being present, or to his face; because till that time their minds are supposed to incline towards their own people;” and so it is said, [362] the daughter of a proselyte may not be married to a priest, unless her mother is an Israelitess, even unto the tenth generation. And there is another saying [363] of theirs, Do not trust a proselyte until the twenty fourth generation, that is, never; not only priests, Levites, and Israelites, but even bastards, and the Nethinim, or Gibeonites, were preferred to proselytes. [364] Some of these sayings do not seem so well to agree with the words of Christ, (Matthew 23:15) to reconcile which, it is thought, [365] that while the temple was standing, the desire of making proselytes was stronger than after it was destroyed by the Romans; resenting that, they became indifferent about making proselytes, and were unconcerned about the salvation of the Gentiles, and contented themselves with receiving such only who freely came over to them. It never was deemed so honourable to be the descendants of proselytes, as of original Hebrews. Hence the apostle Paul gloried that he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, both his parents being Hebrews. A Rabbi of note among the Jews, whose parents were both proselytes, or Gentiles, is called not by his proper name, Jochanan, but Ben Bag-Bag; that is, the son of a Gentile man, and the son of a Gentile woman; and for the same reason he is called in a following paragraph, Ben He-He, numerically He being the same with Bag; though it is said, these abbreviations were used from reverence to him, and a regard for him; [366] and, indeed, the Jews were not to reproach and upbraid proselytes with what they and their ancestors had

been, or had done; they were not to say to a proselyte, Remember thy former works; nor were they to say to the sons of proselytes, Remember the works of your fathers; [367] for this is the affliction and oppression of them, as they understand it, they are cautioned against, (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33) nay, they were to love them as themselves, because the Lord God loved the stranger, (Lev. 19:34; Deut. 10:18) for of proselytes of righteousness they interpret these passages. [368]

Now it is of this sort of proselytes, proselytes of righteousness, that it is said, they were admitted into covenant, and into the Jewish church, as the Israelites were; the males by circumcision, by tyylt "baptism", or dipping, and by sacrifice; and the females by baptism, or dipping, and by sacrifice; and it is the baptism or dipping of these proselytes, that will be inquired into, and be the subject of the following Dissertation.

- [326] Deut. Monarchia, l. 1. p. 818.
 [327] In voce proselutoi
 [328] Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 7.
 [329] Apud Frischmuth. Dissert. de 7. Noach. Praecept. s. 20, 21.
 [330] R. Nathan, Sepher Aruch, R. D. Kimchi, Sepher Shorash. & Elias Levita, Sepher Tishbi in voce gvr.
 [331] T. Bab. Avodah Zarah, fol. 64. 2.
 [332] Philip. Aquinat. Maaric in voce gvr.
 [333] Maimon. Hilchot Melacim, c. 9. s. 1. &c.
 [334] Maimon. Hilchot Beth Habechirah, c. 7. s. 14.
 [335] T. Bab. Eracin, fol. 29. 1. Maimon. Obede Cochabim, c. 10. s. 6. Milah, c. 1. s. 6.
 [336] Maimon. Melacim, c. 10. s. 12.
 [337] Isure Biab, c. 14. s. 7.
 [338] Demonstration of the Messiah, part 2. p. 176.
 [339] Chinnuch, p. 17.
 [340] Miclol Yophi in loc.
 [341] Vid. T. Bab. Avodah Zarah, c. 2. fol. 27. 1. & Edzard. not. in ib. p. 292.
 [342] Thesaur. Philolog. l. 1. p. 18.
 [343] Philolog. Heb. Mixt. Dissert. 21. vid. Carpzov. not. ad Schickard. Jus Regium, p. 323.
 [344] Zohar in Exod. fol. 36. 1. & in Num. fol. 69. 4.
 [345] R. Levi Ben Gersom, in Exod. xxii. 21. fol.

95. 2.
 [346] Maimon. Melacim. c. 1. s. 4.
 [347] Ibid. Sanhedrin, c. 2. s. 1. 9.
 [348] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 2.
 [349] Juchasin, fol. 17. 2. & 18. 1.
 [350] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 104. 1. & 106. 1. & Sotah, fol. 11. 1.
 [351] Vid. Vitrinam de Synagoga vet. par. 2. l. 3. c. 6. p. 943.
 [352] As Aristotle, Meor Enayim, c. 22. fol. 91. 2. Izates and Monbaz, the sons of queen Helena, both kings, ibid. c. 51. fol. 161. 2. & c. 52. fol. 164. 2. 166, 167. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 26. 1. & par. 2. fol. 15. 2. Nebuzaradan, the general of Nebuchadnezzar, T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 96. 2. Antoninus Pius, the Roman emperor, T. Hieros. Megillah, fol. 72. 1. & 74. 1. Ketiah, a prince in Caesar's court, Avodah Zarah, fol. 10. 2. Juchasin, fol. 66. 2. Nero, a general of Caesar's army, from whom sprung R. Meir, T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 1. Juchasin, fol. 41. 1. & 63. 2. Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 16. 1, 2. Of the circumcision of these the Jews speak, but say nothing of their baptism.
 [353] R. Nehemiah in T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 24. 2.
 [354] Heptas Dissertat. par. 2. Diss. 7. de Proselytis, s. 20.
 [355] T. Bab. Avodah Zarah, fol. 3. 2.
 [356] Ibid. fol. 34. 1.
 [357] Zohar in Gen. fol. 33. 1. & 40. 2.
 [358] Medrash. apud Buxtorf. Lexic. Talmud. Col. 411.
 [359] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 2. & 109. 2. Kiddushin, fol. 70. 2.
 [360] Niddah, fol. 13. 2.
 [361] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1. Jarchi in Exod. xviii. 9.
 [362] Misnah Bicurim, c. 1. s. 5.
 [363] Yalkut in Ruth, fol. 163. 4.
 [364] T. Hieros. Horaiot, fol. 48. 2.
 [365] Vid. Wagenseil. not. in Sotah, p. 754.
 [366] Pirke Abot, c. 5. s. 22, 23. Vid. Fagium & Leusden. in ibid.
 [367] Vid. R. David Kimchi, Sepher Shorash. rad. ynh.
 [368] R. Levi Ben. Gersom, in Lev. xiv. 33, 34. fol. 163. 3. Ez Hechayim M. S. apud Wagenseil, not. in Sotah, p. 205.

Chapter 2

THE OCCASION OF THIS DISSERTATION

Several learned men, and some of our own nation, whom I shall chiefly take notice of, have asserted, that it was a custom or rite used by the Jews before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, to receive proselytes into their church by baptism, or dipping, as well as by circumcision; and these both adult and infants; and that John and Christ took up the rite of baptizing from thence, and practised, and directed to the practice of it, as they found it; and which, they think, accounts for the silence about infant baptism in the New Testament, it being no new nor strange practice. The writers among us of most note, who make mention of it are, Broughton, Ainsworth, Selden, Hammond, and Lightfoot; men justly esteemed for their learning and knowledge in Jewish affairs. Mr. Hugh Broughton is the first of our nation I have met with who speaks of it. He says, [369] "The Babylonian Talmud, and Rambam (Maimonides) record, that in the days of David and Solomon, when many thousands of heathens became proselytes, they were admitted only by baptism, without circumcision. So now, when the New Testament was to be made for the many, that is, for all nations, baptism was not strange; neither is John an astonishment for that; but demanded whether he be Elijah or Christ, or that special prophet named in Deuteronomy." A little after he observes, that "Christ from baptism used of them (the Jews) without commandment, and of small authority", authorizes a seal of entering into the rest of Christ, using the Jews' weakness' as an allurements thither." Where, by the way, he makes this usage to be "without commandment", that is, of God, and to be but of "small authority", even from men, and a piece of "weakness" of the Jews, and yet authorized by Christ; which seems incredible. Mr. Henry Ainsworth is the next I shall mention, who takes notice of this custom. His words are, [370] "That we may the better know how they (the Jews) were wont to receive heathens into the church of Israel; I will note it from the Hebrew doctors:" and then gives a large quotation from Maimonides; the substance of which is, that as by

three things Israel entered into the covenant, by circumcision, and baptism, and sacrifice; in like manner heathen proselytes were admitted; on which he makes this remark: "Whereupon baptism was nothing strange unto the Jews when John the Baptist began his ministry, (Matthew 3:5, 6) they made a question of his person that did it, but not of the thing itself, (John 1:25)." Dr. Hammond, another learned man, speaks of this same custom or rite with the Jews: he says, [371] that "proselytes born of heathen parents, and become proselytes of justice, were admitted by the Jews, not only by circumcision, (and while the temple stood) by sacrifice; but also with the ceremony or solemnity of washing, that is, ablution of the whole body, done solemnly in a river, or other such great place or receptacle of water." So he says, Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, was made a proselyte in this way; and that this ceremony of initiation belonged not only to those, which being of years, came over from heathenism to the Jews' religion, but also to their children infants, if their parents, or the consessus (the sanhedrim) under which they were, did in the behalf of their children desire it; and on condition that the children, when they came to age, should not renounce the Jewish religion; nay, he says, the native Jews themselves were thus baptized; for all which he refers to the Talmud, Tr. Repud. by which I suppose he means the tract Gittin, concerning divorces. But I have not met with anything relating thereunto in that treatise. For the same purposes it is quoted by Dr. Wall, who, I suppose, goes upon the authority of Dr. Hammond, since he acknowledges he was not so well acquainted with the books to be searched for such quotations. Now Dr. Hammond observes, that "having said thus much of the custom among the Jews, it is now most easy to apply it to the practice of John, and after of Christ, who certainly took this ceremony from them;" and further observes, that by this it appears, how little needful it will be to defend the baptism of Christian infants from the law of circumcising the infants among the Jews; "the foundation being far more fitly laid" in that other of Jewish baptism. Yea, in another of his works he suggests that this custom is the "true basis of infant baptism." [372] The very learned Mr. Selden is more large in his quotations in various parts of his works, [373] from both Talmuds and other Jewish writers, concerning this rite and

custom; which authorities produced by him, and others, will be given and considered hereafter. At the close of which he makes these remarks; [374] that the Jewish baptism was as it were a “transition” into Christianity, or however, a shadow of a transition, not to be passed over in silence; and that it should be adverted to, that the rite or sacrament of baptism, used at the beginning of Christianity, and of the gospel by John, and by the apostles, was not introduced as a “new action”, and as not before heard of, “even as a religious action”, but as well known to the Hebrews, as a rite of initiation, from the use and discipline of their ancestors, and as joined with circumcision. Dr. Lightfoot, who must be allowed to be well versed in Jewish literature, has produced the same authorities Selden has, if not more, in support of the said rite or custom, as in early use with the Jews, and exults and triumphs abundantly over the Antipaedobaptists in favour of infant baptism, on account thereof: he asserts, that “baptism had been in long and common use’ among them (the Jews) many generations before John the Baptist came; they using this for admission of proselytes into the church, and baptizing men, women, and children for that end:--hence a ready reason may be given why there is so little mention’ (no mention at all) of baptizing infants in the New Testament; and that there is neither plain precept’ nor example’ for it, as some ordinarily plead; the reason is, because there needed none, baptizing infants having been as ordinarily used’ in the church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in the Christian church:--that baptism was no strange thing when John came baptizing; but the rite was known so well by everyone, that nothing was better known what baptism was, and therefore there needed not such punctual and exact rules about the manner and object of it, as there had needed, if it had never been seen before:--that Christ took up baptism as it was in common and known use’, and in ordinary and familiar practice’ among that nation; and therefore gave no rules for the manner of baptizing, nor for the age and sex of persons to be baptized, which was well enough known already, and needed no rule’ to be prescribed: --observing how very known and frequent the use of baptism was among the Jews, the reason appears very easy, why the Sanhedrim, by their messengers, inquired not of John, concerning the reason of baptism, but concerning

the authority of the baptizer; not what baptism meant; but whence he had a licence so to baptize (John 1:25). Hence also the reason appears why the New Testament does not prescribe’, by some more accurate rule’, who the persons are to be baptized:--the whole nation knew well enough that little children used to be baptized; there was no need for a precept for that, which had ever by common use prevailed.” [375] Dr. Wall, upon these authorities, has thought fit to premise an account of this Jewish baptism, to his history of infant baptism, as serving greatly the cause of it, and as throwing light upon the words of Christ and his apostles, concerning it, and the primitive practice of it; and, animated by such authorities, every puny writer, who does not know his right hand from his left in this matter, takes it up, and swaggers with it. And, indeed, scarce any will now venture in the defence of infant baptism without it. This is the last refuge and dernier resort of the Paedobaptists; and, indeed, a learned baronet [376] of our nation says, he knows not of any stronger argument in proof of infant baptism than this is.

Now since so great a stress is laid upon it, and it is made a matter of such great importance, as to be a “transition” into Christianity, and to be “closely connected” with Christian baptism; that from whence it is taken, and is the “rule” to direct how to proceed, both with respect to the manner and objects of it; yea, is the “basis and foundation” of infant baptism, and the “strongest argument” in proof of it; and which makes other arguments, heretofore thought of great weight, now “unnecessary”: it is highly proper to inquire what proof can be given of such a rite and custom being in use among the Jews, before the times of John Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; and if so, what force and influence such a custom can and ought to have on the faith and practice of Christians. The proof of which will next be considered.

[369] Works, p. 201, 203.

[370] Annotat. on Gen. xvii. 12.

[371] Annotat. in Matt. iii. 1.

[372] Six Queries, p. 191, 195.

[373] De Success. ad Leg. Ebr. c. 26. de Jure Natur. et Gent. l. 2. c. 2.

[374] De Synedriis, l. 1. c. 2. p. 27, 31.

[375] Lightfoot’s Works, vol. 1. Harmony and

Chronicle of the New Testament, p. 9, 10, 17. Harmony of the Four Evangelists, part 1. p. 465, 466. part 2. p. 526, 527. and part 3. p. 583, 584. Vol. 2. Hor. Heb. in Matt. iii. 6.

[376] Sir Richard Ellys, Fortuita Sacra, p. 67.

Chapter 3

THE PROOF OF THE BAPTISM OF JEWISH PROSELYTES INQUIRED INTO; WHETHER THERE IS ANY PROOF OF IT BEFORE, AT, OR QUICKLY AFTER THE TIMES OF JOHN AND CHRIST.

The inquiry to be made is, whether there are writings or records before the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, or at or near those times, or in the third and fourth century from the birth of Christ, or before the Talmuds were written; which make any mention of, or refer to any such rite and custom in use among the Jews, as to admit proselytes to their religion by baptism, or dipping, along with other things. Now upon search it will be found,

First, That nothing of this kind appears in the writings of the Old Testament, which chiefly concern the Jewish nation. We read of many who either were, or are supposed and said to be made proselytes; as the Shechemites in Jacob’s time, the multitude that came out of Egypt with the Israelites, [377] Jethro, Moses’s father in law, [378] Shuah, [379] Tamar, [380] Rahab, [381] and Ruth; [382] and many in the times of Mordecai and Esther, who became Jews, [383] (Esther 8:17) but not a word of their being admitted proselytes by baptism. Dr. Lightfoot indeed says, [384] that Jacob admitted the proselytes of Shechem and Syria into his religion by baptism, but offers no proof of it; the Jews [385] pretend, that Pharaoh’s daughter was a proselytess, and the Babylonian Talmud, [386] quoting the passage in Exodus 2:5, “And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself”; R. Jochanan says, she came down to wash herself from the idols of her father’s house, and the Gloss on the place is, “to dip on account of proselytism;” but then the Gloss is the work of Jarchi, a writer in the twelfth century; and was it so said in the Talmud itself, it would be no sufficient proof the fact. Dr. Hammond says, that Jethro was made a proselyte this way; but produces no scripture for it; but refers to the Talmud, Tr. Repud; but there it is not to be found, as before observed:

and Schindler [387] asserts the same, as said by the Jews, and seems to refer to the same Tract in general, without directing to any particular place: and from him Hammond seems to have taken it upon trust, and some other writers also, without examination; since no such passage is to be found in that Tract. Pfeiffer, [388] in proof of it, refers to a book called Zennorena, a commentary on the law, written in Hebrew-German, in the seventeenth century, by R. Jacob Ben Isaac, a German Jew. [389] Indeed, in the Talmud, [390] Jethro is said to become a proselyte, but no mention is made in what manner he was made one; and elsewhere [391] explaining these words, vychd “and Jethro rejoiced”, says Rab, he made a sharp sword to pass over his flesh; that is, according to the Gloss, he circumcised himself, and became a proselyte; but not a word of his baptism, or dipping; and so the Targum on Exodus 18:6, 7 is, “And he said to Moses, I Jethro, thy father-in-law, am come unto thee to be made a proselyte’; but if thou wilt not receive me for myself, receive me for the sake of thy wife, and her two children, who are with her; and Moses went out from under the clouds of glory to meet his father-in-law, and bowing himself, kissed him, and he made him a proselyte; but nothing is said of the manner of doing it.” Mr. Broughton also, as before quoted, says, that the Babylonian Talmud, and Rambam record, that in the days of David and Solomon, many thousands of heathens were made proselytes, and admitted by baptism only; but this instance is not to be met with in the Babylonian Talmud; yea, that expressly denies it in two different places; [392] and in which it is asserted that they did not receive proselytes neither in the days of David, nor in the days of Solomon; Solomon’s wife, Pharaoh’s daughter, is indeed excepted; because the reason for which they say, proselytes were not then received; namely, because they might be desirous of being made proselytes, that they might be admitted to the king’s table, could have no influence on her, since she was the daughter of a mighty king; and yet it is said [393] by some, that though it was Solomon’s intention to make her a proselyte, yet he was not able to do it; and she became one of his troublers; and by what is said of her, in 2 Chronicles 8:11 it looks as if she did not become a proselyte; Rambam, or Maimonides, indeed, to reconcile what later writers have said, with those words of the Talmudists, have

contrived a distinction between the Sanhedrim and private persons; as if proselytes, though not received in those times by the former, were by the latter. He says, [394] there were many proselytes in those times who were made so before private persons, but not before the Sanhedrim; he owns the Sanhedrim did not receive them, and though they were dipped, yet not by their order, and with their consent; but he produces no passage of scripture to support this private dipping; nor do the scriptures any where speak of such numbers of proselytes in those days, and much less of their baptism; and the strangers, who in the Greek version are called proselytes, whom Solomon numbered and employed at the building of the temple, (2 Chron. 2:17) at most could only be proselytes of the gate, not of righteousness, and so there can be no pretence for their admission by baptism, or dipping; nor is there anything of this kind with respect to any persons to be found in the writings of the Old Testament. There is a plain and express law for the admission of proselytes to the Jewish religion, and for what, as a qualification, to partake of the ordinances and privileges of it; particularly to eat of the passover; and that is the circumcision of them, with all their males; and on this condition, and on this only, they and theirs were admitted without any other rite annexed unto it, they were obliged unto; nor does it appear that ever any other was used; no, not this of baptism; there was but one law to the stranger or proselyte, and to the home born Israelite (see Ex 12:48, 49). There were proselytes in the times of Hezekiah, (2 Chron. 30:25) who came out of the land of Israel, to eat the passover at Jerusalem, who therefore must be circumcised, according to the said law; but there is no reason to believe they were baptized. There was a law concerning the marriage of a captive woman taken in war, (Deut. 21:10-14) previous to which she must become a proselytess; and the law enjoins various particular rites to be observed in order to it, as shaving her head, paring her nails, and putting off the raiment of her captivity; but not a word of her baptism; which one would think could never be omitted, had such a custom prevailed as early as the times of Moses and Jacob, as is pretended. There were various bathings, baptisms, or dippings incumbent on the Israelites, and so upon such proselytes who were upon an equal footing with them, and equally under obligation to

obey the ceremonial law; which consisted of various washings, baptisms, or dippings, yet none of them for proselytism; but for purification from one uncleanness or another, in a ceremonial sense: these seem to be what a learned writer [395] calls “aquilustria”, “lustrations by water”; which he thinks it is clear the captive Jews in Babylon observed, from having their solemn meetings by rivers, (Ezek. 3:15; Ezra 8:15, 21) but it is not so clear they had their abode in such places, whether for a longer or shorter time, on account of them; and it is still less clear what he further says, that these lustrations had a promise of grace annexed to them, were sacraments of the Old Testament, and a type of our baptism. However, though he supposes the returning Jews and proselytes were circumcised, he does not pretend they were baptized; nor does he attempt to prove proselyte baptism from hence. Among the ten families said [396] by the Jews to come out of Babylon, the proselytes are one sort; but they say nothing of their baptism (see Ezra 6:21). As for those scriptures of the Old Testament the Rabbins make use of to justify this custom of theirs, they will be considered hereafter.

Secondly, whereas there are several books called Apocrypha, supposed to be written between the writing of the books of the Old Testament and those of the New, and are generally thought to be written by Jews, and to contain things which chiefly have respect to them; and though there is sometimes mention made in them of proselytes to the Jewish religion, yet not a syllable of any such rite or custom, as of baptism or dipping at the admission of them; particularly of Achior the Ammonite, in the times of Judith; upon her cutting off the head of Olophernes it is said, that “he, seeing all that the God of Israel did, strongly believed in God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was added to the house of Israel unto this day;” that is, he and his posterity continued in the Jewish religion. Now here is mention made of his being circumcised, previous to his addition, or his being proselyted to the Jewish church; but not a word of baptism, or dipping, in order to it; see Judith 14:6 in the Apocrypha.

Thirdly, mention is made of proselytes in the New Testament, (Matthew 23:15; Acts 2:10; 6:5, 13:43) but nothing is said concerning their admission, and the manner of it. Indeed, in the Ethiopic version of (Matthew 23:15) the words are rendered, “They

baptize one proselyte”; which seems to have respect to the custom under consideration; but then this is but a translation, and not a just one. The Ethiopic version is not only reckoned not very good, but of no great antiquity. Ernestus Gerhard says [397] of the antiquity of it, he dare not affirm anything certain. And Ludolph, in his history of Ethiopia, relates, [398] that he could find nothing certain concerning the author and time of this version but thinks it probable it was made at the time of the conversion of the Habessines, or a little after, but not in the times of the apostles, as some have affirmed; and in the margin, a little after, he observes, that in an Ethiopic martyrology, St. Frumentius, called abbot of Salama, is said to be the author of it; who, according to another place in the said history, [399] seems to have lived in the fourth century, in the times of Athanasius, and is thought to be the first founder of the Christian religion in Ethiopia, and the first bishop in it. Scaliger takes the Ethiopic version to be a recent one; and De Dieu, [400] from what the author or authors of the version of the evangelist Matthew, add at the end of it, suspects that they were of the Maronites, who became subject to the pope of Rome A. D. 1182, and so this version is too late a testimony for the antiquity of such a custom; and the closing the translation of some of the epistles with desiring the prayers of Peter and others, shows what sort of persons they were who translated them, and in what times they lived. The title of the book of the Revelation in this version, is, “The vision of John, which John was bishop of the metropolis of Constantinople, when he suffered persecution;” by which it appears not to be ancient. Hence Dr. Owen [401] calls it a “novel” endeavour of an illiterate person; and the translation of the clause itself in (Matthew 23:15) is censured by Ludolphus [402] as ridiculous; the word by which it is rendered being used in the Ethiopic language to convert a man to Christianity, or to make a man a Christian; which is by it absurdly attributed to the Scribes and Pharisees.

Fourthly, as there are no traces of this custom in the writings before, at, or about the times of John, Christ, and his apostles; so neither are there any in those which were written in any short time after; as, not in Philo the Jew, who lived in the first century; who, though he is said by some to be ignorant of Jewish customs, yet one would think he could not

be ignorant of such as were used at the admission of proselytes; since he lived at Alexandria, where it may be supposed many proselytes were, more than in Judea, and of the manner of their admission he could not but have knowledge, both then and in former times; and he makes mention of proselytes, and of them as equally partakers of the same privileges, and to be treated with the same honour and respect as home born citizens, [403] and as they were admitted by Moses; but is altogether silent about this custom of baptizing, or dipping them; nor is there the least trace or hint of this custom in any Rabbinical books, said by the Jews to be written a little before, or after; such as the books of Bahir, Zohar, the Targums of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, and of Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the prophets.

Fifthly, Josephus, the Jewish historian, lived in the same age, a little after Philo, was well versed in the affairs of the Jews, even in their religious rites and ceremonies, having been a priest among them. He not only observes, that many of the Gentiles came over to their religion, [404] but even speaks of whole nations who became Jews, and that they were made so by circumcision; as of the Idumaeans, whom Hyrcanus conquered, and suffered to remain in their own land, on condition that they would be circumcised, and conform to the laws of the Jews; and who, out of love to their country, did comply with circumcision, and so became Jews, [405] and of the Ituraeans, whom Aristobulus fought against, and added part of their country to Judaea, and obliged the inhabitants, if they would remain in their country, to be circumcised, and live after the laws of the Jews; and quotes Strabo, who, upon the authority of Timogenes, says, that he enlarged the country of the Jews, and made part of the country of Ituraea theirs, joining them to them by the bond of circumcision. [406] By which accounts it appears, that both these people were made Jews, or were proselyted to them by circumcision; but not a word is said of their baptism, or dipping; which, according to this custom, as is said, must have been of men, women, and children, which, had it been practised, could not have been well omitted by the historian. He also speaks [407] of Helena, queen of Adiabene, and of her son Izates, embracing the Jewish religion; and relates how desirous Izates was of being circumcised, that he might be a perfect Jew,

without which he could not; but for a time he was dissuaded from it by his mother, and a Jew merchant, who instructed them; but afterwards, being exhorted to perfect the work by one Eleazer, who was more skilful in Jewish affairs, he submitted to circumcision: but neither Josephus nor Eleazer say a word about his baptism, or dipping; which yet, according to the pretended custom as then prevailing, was necessary, as well as circumcision, to make him a complete proselyte. Nor is any mention made of the baptism or dipping of Helena; which, had it been at this time, would not have been omitted by the historian; since it was by that only, according to this notion, that females were then made proselytes. He also speaks [408] of another son of Helena, Monbaz, embracing the Jewish religion; but says nothing of his baptism.

Sixthly, it may be inquired, whether or no any mention is made of this custom of receiving proselytes among the Jews by baptism, or dipping, in the Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases. The most ancient ones extant are those of Jonathan Ben Uzziel of the prophets, and of Onkelos of the Pentateuch; the one at the beginning, the other toward the end of the first century; in which nothing is met with concerning the admission of Jewish proselytes by dipping. The other paraphrases are by uncertain authors, and of an uncertain age. The Targum of the Megillot, or five books of Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, and Esther, is written by an unknown author; it is the latest of all the Targums. In that of Esther only the phrase became Jews, (Esther 8:17) is rendered, became proselytes; but nothing is said of their manner of becoming such. In that of (Ruth 1:16) the requisites of a proselyte are particularly observed; where Ruth is introduced, saying, that she desired to be made a proselyte; when Naomi informs her what commands the Jews were obliged to observe; as to keep the Sabbaths and festivals, and not to walk beyond two thousand cubits (on the Sabbath day); not to lodge with Gentiles; to observe the three hundred and thirteen commands; not to worship an idol, &c. to all which Ruth is made to agree; but not a syllable is said about baptism, or dipping; whereas, that, with a sacrifice along with it, before the building of the temple, and while the temple stood, and since, without it, is the only thing, according to this notion, by which females were admitted proselytes. In the Targum of Jonathan

of Genesis 9:27 the sons of Japheth are said to be made and to dwell in the school of Shem. In the Jerusalem Targum, and in that of Pseudo-Jonathan, the souls that Abraham and Sarah got in Haran, (Gen. 12:5) are said to be the souls who were made proselytes by them; and in the same Targum of Genesis 21:33 at Beersheba, where Abraham planted a grove, he is said to make proselytes, and teach them the way of the world, of the world to come; but nothing more is said of the way and manner in which they were made such. In the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan of Genesis 38:2, Judah is said to make the daughter of a Canaanite a proselytess, and then married her; and in the same Targum of Numbers 11:4, the mixed multitude who came with the Israelites out of Egypt, are interpreted proselytes; and no doubt but many of them were such; and Jarchi thinks the son of the Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, was a proselyte, since he was among the children of Israel (Lev. 24:10). And Africanus affirms, [409] that the Jews genealogical tables, in which an account was kept of original Jews and of proselytes; as of Achior the Ammonite, and Ruth the Moabitess, and those who came out of Egypt mixed with the Israelites; and which continued to the times of Herod, who burnt them, that his family might not be known. But to return to the Targums; in the Pseudo-Jonathan's of Exodus 18:6, 7, Jethro is made to say to Moses, as before observed, that he was come to be made a proselyte; and Moses is said to make him one; but in what manner it is not said; and so the rest before mentioned; indeed, the same Targum of Exodus 12:44 is, "And every stranger who is sold for a servant to an Israelite, bought with money, then thou shalt circumcise him, and thou shalt dip him", and so shall he eat of it," the passover. Now in this Targum of Exodus 26:9, not only mention is made of the Misnah, but it abounds with Talmudic fables and traditions, and so must be written after both the Misnah and Talmud; and in the Targum of Numbers 24:19 mention is made of the city of Constantinople, which shows it to be not ancient, and that it is not the work of the true Jonathan. And besides all this, the case of the servant refers not to a proselyte, who became so of choice, but to a bought servant, who, according to the original law in Genesis 17:12, 13 was obliged to be circumcised; and so, according to the Rabbinic custom, to be dipped; but then, according

to these writers, baptism, or dipping for servitude, was a different thing from baptism, or dipping for proselytism; the one was on a civil, the other on a religious account; the one was repeated when a servant was made a free man, and the other never. [410] The same Pseudo-Jonathan in his Targum of Deuteronomy 21:13 to the conditions required of a beautiful captive, in order to be married to an Israelite, this is added, that she should dip herself, and become a proselytess in his house; but the text has nothing of it, nor the Targum of Onkelos; nor is this custom to be met with in the paraphrases of the true Jonathan; only in this, which was written after the Talmud, and does not come within the time under consideration.

Seventhly, nor is there any mention of such a custom in the Jew's Misnah, or Book of Traditions; which is a collection of all the traditions among the Jews, which had been handed down from age to age, and were collected together from all parts, and written in a book of this name, in order to be preserved. This was written by R. Judah Hakkadosh, in the middle of the second century, A. D. 150 or as others in the beginning of the third century, reckoning the date of it one hundred and fifty years from the destruction of the temple; which brings it to the year 220 and here, if anywhere, one might expect to meet with this rite or custom; but no mention is made of it. Dr. Gale [411] seems to allow it upon what Dr. Wall has transcribed from Selden, which he granted without examination. The doctor says, [412] It is not only mentioned in the Gemara, but in the text of the Misnah itself; which, as he suggests, speaks of a child becoming a proselyte by baptism, or dipping; but the passage he has from Selden [413] says no such thing; which runs thus; [414] "A she stranger, a captive, and a maiden, who are redeemed and become proselytes, and are made free, being under' (or, as in the following section, above) three years and one day old, are allowed the matrimonial dowry;" that is, when they come to age, and are married; but not a word is here of their being made proselytes by baptism, or dipping; indeed, the tradition shows, that minors may be proselyted, and that a man's sons and daughters may become proselytes with him; but there is no need to have recourse to a tradition for this; the law is express, that a stranger who desires to be a proselyte to the Jewish religion, and to eat of the passover, must be

circumcised, and all his males, and then he and all his children, males and females, may be admitted to eat of it, (Ex. 12:48, 49) only the circumcision of the males is required, but no baptism, or dipping of any. There is a passage in the Misnah, [415] which perhaps some may think countenances this custom; which is this, "A stranger who is made a proselyte, on the evening of the passover, the house of Shammai say, he dips' and eats his passover in the evening; but the house of Hillell say, he that separates from uncircumcision, is as he that separates from a grave." Now it should be observed,

1. That here is a division about this matter, be it what it may; Shammai, and his party, assert, that a proselyte newly made, might dip and eat his passover that evening; but Hillell, and his party, dissent, for a reason given; and the determination, in all cases, was generally according to Hillell, as it was in this; so we learn from Maimonides. [416]

2. This baptism, or dipping, was not on account of proselytism, but for ceremonial uncleanness; for it goes along with cases of that kind, instanced in before. The canon begins thus, "A mourner (who was unclean according to the ceremonial law) dips and eats his passover in the evening; but eats not of the holy things: he that hears tidings of the death of his (friend or relation), and who gathers to him bones, dips, and eats of the holy things:" and then it follows, "A stranger who is made a proselyte, &c."

3. This rule, according to Shammai, was concerning one already made a proselyte, and therefore the dipping, or baptism, he prescribes to him, in order to his eating the passover that evening, was not to make him a proselyte; but for some other reason. Wherefore,

4. This strongly makes against admission of proselytes by baptism, or dipping, at that time; for if he had been made a proselyte that way, there would have been no reason for a second dipping to qualify him for the passover.

5. The case of such an one, according to Hillell, is, that being just come out of heathenism, he was unclean, as one that touched a dead man, a bone, or a grave; and therefore could not eat of the passover that evening, but must wait seven days, until he was purified according to the law in Numbers 19:11-19.

6. After all, the view of Hillell, in putting such a person off from eating the passover the evening he

became a proselyte for the reason given, was with respect to the next year, and by way of caution; fearing that should he be then in any uncleanness, which required purification, he would say, Last year I did not dip, or purify myself from any uncleanness, and yet I eat, and now I must dip and eat; not considering that the last year he was an heathen, and incapable of uncleanness, according to the law, but now he was an Israelite, and capable of it; and so it is explained in the Gemara [417] and Gloss on it, and by other interpreters. [418] Besides, this baptism, or dipping, was not on account of proselytism, but was common to, and obligatory upon, a circumcised Israelite, in order to eat of the passover; as is acknowledged by all. There were several in the times of the Misnic doctors, and before the Misnah was compiled, who were persons of eminence, and said to become proselytes; as Onkelos the Targumist, who, it is said, was made a proselyte in the days of Hillel and Shammai, [419] hence he is called Onkelos the proselyte; [420] some say [421] he was a sister's son of Titus the emperor, and by whom three Roman troops, sent one after another, to take him, were made proselytes also; [422] and Aquila, the author of the Greek version of the Bible, became, as is said, [423] a proselyte in the times of Adrian and so the emperor Antoninus Pius, and Ketiah, a nobleman in Caesar's court, as before observed: yea, the famous R. Akiba, a Misnic doctor, was a proselyte; [424] and so was R. Meir. [425] And of the circumcision of most of these we read; but nothing of their baptism; neither in the Misnah, nor in any other Jewish writings. Not to take notice of those very early masters of tradition Shemaia and Abtalion, before observed, who were proselytes of righteousness; [426] there were also women of note within this time, who became proselytes; as queen Helena, [427] with her two sons, of whom mention is made in the Misnah; [428] and Beluria, the proselytess, who had a discourse with R. Gamaliel; [429] and the wife of Turnus Rufus, whom R. Akiba married, after she was proselyted. [430] Now though female proselytes were admitted by baptism only, as is pretended, yet nothing is said of the baptism of these women. And as there is no mention of this custom in the Misnah, so neither have I observed any notice taken of it in the Rabbot, which are commentaries on the Pentateuch and five Megillot, before named; and

which were written by R. Bar Nachmoni, about A. D. 300, according to Buxtorf [431] in one of which the text in Genesis 12:5 is commented on; "And the souls they had gotten in Haran"; which the Targums of Pseudo-Jonathan and Jerusalem, interpret of the souls they proselyted, before observed; and here it is said, [432] "These are the proselytes which they made:--R. Hona said, Abraham proselyted the men, and Sarah proselyted the women;" but not a word is said about the baptism or dipping of either. Yea, Abraham and Sarah are said to be proselytes [433] themselves; but it is not suggested that they were baptized. In these commentaries mention is made of the circumcision of proselytes, particularly of king Monbaz, and his brother, said to be the sons of king Ptolemy; [434] and of Aquila, the Greek translator; [435] but nothing is said of their baptism.

Eighthly, nor is this rite or custom of receiving Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, once spoken of by any of the Christian fathers of the first three or four centuries; which they could not be ignorant of, if from hence Christian baptism was taken, and especially such who were Jews, or had any connection with them, or were acquainted with them, and with their affairs, as some of them were. Barnabas was a Jew, and an apostolic man, contemporary with the apostles; there is an epistle of his still extant, in which he treats chiefly of Jewish rites, and of their being typical of evangelic things, and of their having their fulfilment in them; and yet says not a word of this initiating baptism, which he could not have failed making mention of had he known anything of it; yea, he sets himself to find out what was beforehand said concerning the ordinance of baptism; he says, [436]

"Let us inquire whether the Lord has taken any care to make manifest beforehand anything concerning the water;" that is, concerning baptism: and then he adds, "Concerning the water, it is written to Israel, how the baptism that leads to the remission of sins, they would not; but appointed for themselves;" meaning their superstitious worship, our Lord inveighs against; but says not a word here, nor elsewhere, of the baptism of proselytes, for which he had a fair opportunity, had he known anything of it. Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, was a Samaritan, and had knowledge of Jewish affairs; and had a dispute with Trypho the Jew, the same with Tarphon, a Jewish doctor,

frequently mentioned in the Misnah; yet neither he nor Trypho say anything of this custom. In answer to a question put by Justin, what was necessary to be observed; Trypho replies, [437] "To keep the Sabbath; to be circumcised; to observe the new moons; to be baptized, or dipped, whoever touches any of these things forbidden by Moses;" meaning, that such should be baptized, or dipped, who touched a dead body, or bone, or grave, &c. but not a syllable is here of the baptism, or dipping of proselytes. And Justin himself makes mention of Jewish proselytes, and calls them circumcised proselytes, [438] but not baptized; by which it seems he knew nothing of any such custom, as to baptize them; yea, he does, in effect, deny there was any such custom of baptizing any, that universally obtained among the Jews, since he speaks of a certain sect, whom he will not allow to be truly Jews, called by him Baptists. [439] Whereas, if it was the practice of the whole nation to receive proselytes by baptism, or dipping, a particular sect among them, would not be stigmatized with such a name, since they must be all Baptists, both original Jews and proselytes, if they were all admitted into the Jewish church by baptism, as is affirmed. Origen, who lived in the beginning of the third century, in the city of Alexandria, where were great numbers of Jews, with whom he was acquainted, and must know their customs, says of Heracleon, an heretic, he opposes, [440] "That he was not able to show that ever any prophet baptized;" meaning, a common and ordinary one; and if none of these ever baptized, what foundation could there be for the baptism of proselytes before the times of Christ? Epiphanius, in the fourth century, was born in Palestine, lived some time in Egypt, had great knowledge of the Jews, and of their affairs; but seems to know nothing of this custom, as used neither in former nor in later times: he says, [441] neither had Abraham baptism, nor Isaac, nor Elias, nor Moses, not any before Noah and Enoch, nor the prophet Isaiah; nor those who were after him and he speaks of the Samaritans, that when they came over to the Jews, they were circumcised again; and gives an instance in Symmachus, who, when he became a proselyte, was circumcised again. So likewise he speaks of Theodotion being proselyted to Judaism, [442] and of his being circumcised; but not a word of the baptism, or dipping, of either of them. He also speaks

of Antipater, [443] the father of Herod the king, that when he became procurator of Judaea, he was made a proselyte, and was circumcised, both he and Herod his son; but says nothing of their baptism, or dipping; so Herod is called by the Jews a proselyte; [444] and his reign, and that of his posterity, mlkvt hgrym "the reign of the proselytes," [445] who became so by circumcision, and that only, for ought appears. And of him, as a proselyte, but not of his baptism, speaks Jerome; [446] he lived in the same century, and great part of his time in Judaea, was acquainted with several Jews he had for his teachers, and with their traditions, of many of which he makes mention, but never of this of admitting proselytes by baptism, or dipping. He speaks of proselytes, and of their circumcision; and says [447], that "if strangers received by the law of the Lord, and were circumcised, and were eunuchs, as was he of the queen of Candace, they are not foreign from the salvation of God;" but not a word of their baptism or dipping. The instances given by Dr. Wall, [448] from Tertullian, Cyprian, Gregory Nazianzen, and Basil, only respect either the figurative baptism of the Israelites at the Red Sea; or their baptisms and bathings by immersion, for their purification from ceremonial uncleanness; but not for proselytism. So when the same writer [449] quotes Arrianus, an heathen Stoic philosopher of the second century, as speaking of tou bebammenou, "a baptized Jew," [450] or one that was dipped; by whom the doctor thinks is meant one made a proselyte by baptism; no other may be designed than either a Jew who bathed his whole body, to purify himself from legal pollutions; or an Hemero-baptist, a sect of the Jews, who bathed themselves every day; or rather a Christian, as many learned men are of opinion; [451] since it was not unusual with heathen writers to call Christians, who were baptized, Jews; because the first Christians were Jews, and came from Judaea, into other parts of the world, and were reckoned by the heathens a sect of the Jews, [452] and were often confounded with them. Now since it appears there is no mention made of any such rite or custom of admitting Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the Jewish religion in any writings and records before the times of John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; nor in any age after them, for the first three or four hundred years; or, however, before the writing of the Talmuds;

it may be safely concluded there was no such custom, which had obtained in that interval of time. It remains therefore to be considered, what is the true ground and foundation of such a notion and from whence it sprung, which will be done in the following chapter.

- [377] Targum Jon. in Numb. xi. 4.
 [378] Ibid. in Exod. xviii. 6, 7.
 [379] Ibid. in Gen. xxxviii. 2.
 [380] T. Bab. Sotah, fol. 10. 1.
 [381] Ibid. Megillah, fol. 14. 2.
 [382] Targum in Ruth i. 16.
 [383] Targum in Esther.
 [384] Chronicle, p. 18.
 [385] Targum in 1 Chron. iv. 18.
 [386] F. Megillah, fol. 23. 1. Sotah, fol. 12. 1.
 [387] Lexic. in voce tvl col. 686. vid. de Dieu, append. ad Matt. xxiii. 15.
 [388] Antiqu. Ebr. c. 1. s. 5.
 [389] Wolfii Bibliothec. Heb. p. 598.
 [390] Zebachim, fol. 16. 1. vid. Shemot Rabba, s. 27. fol. 30. 2, 3.
 [391] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 94. 1.
 [392] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 76. 1. Avodah Zara. fol. 3. 2.
 [393] Yalkut Chadasha tit. de David, n. 89. Apud Beckii, not. in Targ. 2 Chron. viii. 11.
 [394] Issure Biah, c. 13. s. 15.
 [395] Eric. Phaletran. de ablatione Scept. Jud. c. 9. p. 431.
 [396] Misnah, Kiddushin, c. 4. s. 1.
 [397] pentan Positionum ex Ling. Heb. Chald. Syr. At. & Ethiopic Pos. 5.
 [398] Hist. Ethiop. l. 3. c. 4.
 [399] Ibid. l. 3. c. 2.
 [400] In Append. ad Matt. p. 584.
 [401] Of the divine Original, &c. of the Scriptures, p. 343. vid. Theologoumen. l. 1. c. 1. p. 4.
 [402] Lexic. Ethiop. Col. 414.
 [403] De Vita Mosis, l. 1. p. 625. De Monarchia, l. 1. p. 818. De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1022.
 [404] Contra Apion. l. 2. s. 10.
 [405] Antiqu. l. 13. c. 9. s. 1. So Josippon Ben Gorion, Hist. Heb. l. 2. c. 9. & l. 4. c. 4. & l. 5. c. 23. & l. 6. c. 13.
 [406] Antiqu. ib. c. 11. s. 3. so Josippon, ibid. l. 4. c. 9.

- [407] Antiqu. ibid. l. 20. c. 2. s. 1. 5.
 [408] Antiqu. c. 3. s. 1. These became proselytes in the times of Claudius Caesar, Ganz Tzemach David, par. 2. fol. 15. 2. & Juchasin, fol. 141. 1. Of king Izates, see Tacit. Annul. l. 12. c. 13, 14.
 [409] Apud Enseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 1. c. 7.
 [410] Vid. Maimon. Issure Biah, c. 13. s. 11, 12, & Schulchan Aruch, par. 2. c. 267. s. 9.
 [411] Reflections on Wall's History of Infant Baptism, p. 327.
 [412] History, Introduction, p. 49.
 [413] De Synedriis, l. 1. c. 3.
 [414] Misn. Cetubot. c. 1. s. 2. 4.
 [415] Ib. Pesachim, c. 8. s. 8. the same in Misn. Ediot, c. 5. s. 2.
 [416] Hilchot Korban Pesach, c. 6. s. 7.
 [417] T. Bab. Pesachim. fol. 92. 1.
 [418] Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. ut supra.
 [419] Meor Enayim, c. 45. Ganz Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 2.
 [420] T. Bab. Bava Bathra, fol. 99. 1. Megillah, fol. 3. 1. & Avodah Zarah, fol. 11. 1.
 [421] Juchasin, fol. 52. 2. T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 56. 2.
 [422] Avodah Zarah, ut supra.
 [423] Shemot Rabba, s. 30. fol. 131. 3.
 [424] Zohar in Gen. fol. 28. 4. Tzemach David, ut supra, fol. 28. 1.
 [425] Juchasin, fol. 41. 1. Ganz. fol. 29. 1.
 [426] Juchasin, fol. 18. 1.
 [427] Juchasin, fol. 141. 1.
 [428] Yoma, c. 3. s. 10.
 [429] Roshashanah, fol. 17. 2.
 [430] T. Bab. Nedarim, fol. 50. 2. & Gloss in ibid. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 28. 1.
 [431] Biblioth. Rab. p. 326.
 [432] Bereshit Rabba, s. 39. fol. 35. 1.
 [433] Bemidbar Rabba, s. 8. fol. 190. 4.
 [434] Bereshit Rabba, s. 46. fol. 41. 3.
 [435] Shemot Rabba, ut supra.
 [436] Barnabae Epist. c. 9. Ed. Voss.
 [437] Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 264.
 [438] Dialog. ibid. p. 350, 351.
 [439] Ibid. p. 307.
 [440] Comment. in Joannem, p. 117.
 [441] Contr. Haeres. l. 3. Haer. 70.
 [442] De Mensur. et Ponder.
 [443] Contr. Haeres. l. 1. Haer. 20.

- [444] Juchasin, fol. 18. 1.
 [445] Seder Olam Zuta, p. 111. Ed. Meyer.
 [446] Comment. in Matt. xxii. fol. 30. I.
 [447] Comment. in Esaiam, e. 56. fol. 96. B.
 [448] History ut supra, p. 47.
 [449] Ibid. p. 45.
 [450] Epictet. l. 2. c. 9.
 [451] "Quem locum frustra quidam adducunt, ut probent Judaeos ritu baptismi uti solitos fuisse, cum apertissime de christianis loquatur philosophus", Oweni Theologoumen. l. 1. c. 9. p. 109. And with Dr. Owen agrees Dr. Jennings; "It is most likely," says he, "that Arrian meant Christians, in the place alledged; because in his time many persons became proselytes to Christianity, but few or none to Judaism.--Besides, if he had spoke of proselytes to Judaism, it is highly probable he would have mentioned their circumcision, for which the heathens derided them, rather than their baptism, which was not so very foreign to some of the heathen rites of purification." Jewish Antiquities, vol. 1. c. 3. p. 138.
 [452] See Gale's Reflections on Wall's History, Letter 10. p. 355-362.

Chapter 4

THE PROOF OF THIS CUSTOM ONLY FROM THE TALMUDS AND TALMUDICAL WRITERS

Seeing the rite of receiving proselytes by baptism, or dipping among the Jews, is nowhere mentioned in any writings before the times of John and Christ, nor in any after, nearer than the third and fourth centuries; it is next to be inquired, when and where we first hear of it; and upon inquiry it will be found, that the first mention of it, for ought as yet appears, is in the Jewish Talmuds. The testimonies from thence concerning it, and the whole evidence, as there given of it, will now be laid before the reader. There are two Talmuds, the one called Jerusalem, the other Babylonian; the one written for the Jews at Jerusalem, and in Judaea, after the destruction of the city and temple, and in the Jerusalem dialect. The other for the use of the Jews in Babylon, and in those parts, and in their style. The former is the most ancient, and therefore I shall begin with it, being finished, as generally supposed, in the year 230; but if the Misnah was not compiled

till the year 220, being one hundred and fifty from the destruction of Jerusalem, there must be a longer space of time than that of ten years between the one and the other. David Nieto, lately belonging to a Jewish synagogue here in London, says, [453] the Jerusalem Talmud was written near a hundred years after the Misnah; but other Jews make it later still, and make a difference of two hundred and thirty three years between the finishing of the one and the other; the one being finished in 189, and the other in 422 [454], which is much more probable; and so this Talmud was not earlier than the beginning of the fifth century; nay, sometimes they place it in the year 469, the latter end of that century. [455] Scaliger places [456] it in the year 370. Mr. Whiston [457] in 369. And so Elias Levita [458] writes, that R. Jochanan compiled it three hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem; but Morinus [459] will have it to be after the year 600, which is carrying it down too low. The passages I have met with in it any way relating to the case under consideration; for it will be allowed there are some; and therefore it will be owned, that Mr. Rees [460] was mistaken in saying it was not pretended to be found in it. The passages are as follow. In one place, [461] a certain Rabbi is represented as saying to another, "Wait, and we will dip' this proselytess tomorrow. R. Zera asked R. Isaac Bar Nachman, Wherefore? because of the glory of that old man, or because they do not dip a proselyte in the night. He replied to him, Why do not they dip a proselyte in the night? Abda came before R. Jose (and said), What is the meaning then of not dipping a proselyte in the night?" And a little after, in the same column, a saying of R. Hezekiah is reported; "A man finds an infant cast out (an exposed infant), and he dips it in the name of a servant;" or for a servant, on account of servitude; but then dipping for servitude, and dipping for proselytism, were two different things with the Jews, as before observed; and yet this is the only clause produced by Dr. Lightfoot out of this Talmud, for the above purpose; or by any other that I have seen. However, there are others which speak of the dipping of adult proselytes; which became a matter of controversy. In another treatise, in the same Talmud, [462] mention is made of a proselyte circumcised, but not dipped; (and it is added) all goes after circumcision; that is, that denominates

a proselyte. "R. Joshua says, yea, dipping stays (or retards) it; and Bar Kaphra teaches, that he who is not dipped, this is right (a true proselyte); for there is no proselyte but dips for accidents;" that is, for accidental and nocturnal pollutions; and it seems such a dipping sufficed for proselytism. Of so little account did these Rabbins make of dipping for proselytism, who first mention it, not only make it insignificant, but as a delay of it, and what was an obstruction and hindrance of it: and further on it is said, [463] "A proselytess less than three years of age and one day, she has not knowledge for dipping (or when she is dipped); and afterwards returns and is dipped for the name of the Holy One of Israel; every one is a proselytess, and she is a proselytess." This looks like Anabaptism, or rebaptization for want of knowledge when first dipped. And a little further still, [464] "A stranger or a proselyte who has children, and says, I am circumcised, but I am not dipped; he is to be believed, and they dip him on the Sabbath." In another treatise, [465] a mention is made of a proselyte who dipped after the illumination of the East, that is, after sunrise. These are all the places I have met with in the Jerusalem Talmud any way relating to this custom. Dr. Wall [466] refers to two or three other passages in this Talmud, through mistake for the Babylonian Talmud; in which he may be excused, because, as he himself says, he was not well acquainted with these books; but he cannot be excused of inadvertency in transcribing from his authors, unless they have led him wrong.

The Babylonian Talmud is next to be considered; from whence testimonies may be brought relating to the custom under consideration. This Talmud was finished, as is usually said, about A. D. 500; according to the account of the Jews it was finished three hundred and sixteen years after the Misnah, and eighty three after the Jerusalem Talmud. [467] Though Morinus thinks it did not appear until the seventh or eighth century. According to the Jewish doctors, as related in this Talmud, the Israelites, and the proselytes, were admitted into covenant in the same way and manner; and which they conclude from Numbers 15:15, "As ye are, so shall the stranger be, before the Lord": on which they thus descant: [468] "As your fathers entered not into covenant but by circumcision and dipping, and acceptance of blood or sacrifice; so

they (the proselytes) enter not into covenant, but by circumcision, and dipping, and through acceptance of blood," or sprinkling of blood, as the Gloss is; or by sacrifice, as it is sometimes expressed, which is favourably accepted of God; and without both circumcision and dipping, none were reckoned proper proselytes; this is said two or three times in one leaf; [469] "A man is not a proselyte unless both circumcised and dipped." R. Chiyah Bar Abba went to Gabla, it is said, and he saw the daughters of Israel pregnant by proselytes, who were circumcised but not dipped; he went and told R. Jochanan, who declared their issue bastards, and not children of the law, or legitimate: about this a controversy was raised, related in the same place; "A stranger that is circumcised and not dipped, R. Eliezer says, lo, this is a proselyte; for so we find by our fathers, that they were circumcised, but not dipped; one that is dipped, and not circumcised, R. Joshua says, lo, this is a proselyte; for so we find by our mothers (not maids, or maidservants, as Dr. Lightfoot [470] translates it) that they were dipped and not circumcised." Had the account stopped here, the decision must have been against dipping: for it is a rule with the Jews, that when R. Eliezer and R. Joshua dissent, the decision is according to R. Eliezer, [471] whom they often call Eliezer the Great, [472] and say many extravagant things of him; particularly, that if all the wise men of Israel were put into one scale, and Eliezer the son of Hyrcanus, into the other, he would weigh them all down; [473] yet here the wise men interpose, and say, "He that is dipped and not circumcised, circumcised and not dipped, is no proselyte, until he is both circumcised and dipped; for R. Joshua may learn from the fathers, and R. Eliezer from the mothers." And so in this way they reconciled both; but R. Eliezer continued in the same sentiments, which he afterwards declared for, and affirms, that a proselyte that is circumcised, and not dipped, *gr mly' hv* "he is an honourable proselyte;" [474] so that according to him, dipping was not necessary to one's being a proselyte; and R. Barzelonita [475] says, of a sort of proselytes which have been taken notice of, he is a proselyte who is circumcised and not dipped. So that the Jews are not agreed among themselves about this point. The manner of receiving a proselyte, and dipping him, when circumcised and healed of his wound, and of the dipping of women

also, is related in the same treatise of the Babylonian Talmud; [476] "A stranger when he comes to be made proselyte, "at this time", they say unto him, What dost thou see, to become a proselyte? dost thou not know that the Israelites "at this time" are in distress, and in sorrowful circumstances, driven about and scattered, and are reproached, and chastisements come upon them? If he says, I know this, and I am not worthy (to be joined with them), they receive him immediately; and make known unto him some of the light, and some of the heavy commands (the particulars of which follow); if he receives them, they immediately circumcise him; and if there be anything remains, which hinders circumcision, they return and circumcise him a second time, and when he is healed, they dip him immediately, and two disciples of the wise men stand by him, and make known to him some of the light and some of the heavy commands; then he dips, and goes up, and he is an Israelite. If a woman, the women set her in water up to her neck, and two disciples of the wise men stand by her without, and make known some of the light and some of the heavy commands." Maimonides [477] adds, "After that she dips' herself before them, and they turn away their faces, and go out, so that they do not see her when she goes up out of the water'." Of a woman big with child when she is dipped they have this rule, [478] "A stranger pregnant, who is made a proselytess, her child has no need of dipping, that is, for proselytism, as the Gloss; is because sufficient for it is the dipping of its mother; and a woman that is dipped as unclean, according to the doctors, that is sufficient to make her a proselytess." Says R. Chiyah Bar Ame, "I will dip this heathen woman, in the name or on account of a woman;" that is, as the Gloss is, for the dipping of uncleanness, she being a menstruous woman, and not for the dipping of proselytism. Says R. Joseph, "I will make it right;" that is, pronounce that she is a perfect proselytess; for though she is not dipped for proselytism, yet being dipped for uncleanness, it serves for proselytism; for a stranger or a heathen is not dipped for uncleanness [479]

There are various circumstances observed in the same treatise concerning the dipping of proselytes; as the place where they are dipped; "In a place it is said [480] where a menstruous woman dips, there a proselyte and a freed servant dip;" that is, as the Gloss

is, in a quantity of forty seahs of water: the time of its being done is also signified; as that they do not dip in the night; and it is disputed whether it should be done on the Sabbath day: three witnesses also were required to be present; and where there are three, he (the proselyte) "dips" and goes up, and lo, he is as an Israelite [481] It is said, [482] "It happened in the house of R. Chiya Bar Rabbi, where were present R. Oschaia Bar Rabbi, and R. Oschaia Bar Chiya, that there came a proselyte before him who was circumcised, but not dipped; he said unto him, Wait here till tomorrow, and we will dip thee. Three things are to be learnt from hence. 1. That three persons are required (at the dipping of a proselyte). 2. That he is not a proselyte unless he is circumcised and dipped. 3. That they do not dip a proselyte in the night;" to which may be added, 4. That they must be three Rabbins who are promoted, that is, are famous and eminent ones, who are witnesses, as it seems these three were. There is but one instance in this Talmud, that I have met with, of the dipping of a child or a minor, made a proselyte; and a male is so called until he is thirteen years of age and one day; of such an one it is said, [483] "A proselyte, a little one (a minor), they dip him by the decree of the Sanhedrim;" that is, as the Gloss is, one that has no father, and his mother brings him to the Sanhedrim, to be made a proselyte, and there are three at his dipping; and they are a father to him, and by their means he is made a proselyte. And in the same place it is observed of a stranger, whose sons and daughters are made proselytes with him, and acquiesce in what their father has done, when they are grown up, they may make it void. There is another instance of the dipping of a minor; but not for proselytism, but for eating the Trumah, or the oblation of the fruits of the earth. So a certain one says, [484] "I remember when I was a child, and was carried on my father's shoulders, that they took me from school, and stripped me of my coat, and dipped me, that I might eat of the Trumah in the evening;" but this was not a proselyte, but an Israelite, the son of a priest, who, it seems, was not qualified to eat of the oblation without dipping. This was one of their various baptisms, or dippings.

This now is the whole compass of the evidence from the Talmuds for the rite of admitting proselytes among the Jews by baptism, or dipping. I have not

omitted anything relating to it in them that has fallen under my observation. As for the quotations usually made from Maimonides, who lived in the twelfth century, in proof of this custom; whatever may be said for him as an industrious and judicious compiler of things, out of the Talmud, which he has expressed in purer language, and digested in better order; he cannot be thought to be of greater and higher authority than those writings from whence he has derived them; for his work is only a stream from the Talmudic fountain. And as for later writers; as the authors of *Lebush*, *Schulchan Aruch*, and others, they derive from him. So that the Talmuds appear to be the spring and source of what is said of this custom, and from whence the proof and evidence of it is to be fetched; but whether the reasonings, decisions, and determinations therein concerning it, can be judged a sufficient proof of it, without better testimonies, especially from the scriptures, deserves consideration.

It must not be concealed, that it is pretended there is proof of it from scripture; which I shall attend unto. The proof of the Jewish fathers entering into covenant by baptism, or dipping, is fetched from Exodus 19:10, where, two or three days before the giving of the law, the Israelites were ordered to “wash” their clothes; hence it is said in the Talmud, [485] to prove that dipping was used at the entrance of the Israelites into covenant, according to which the baptism, or dipping of proselytes, is said to be; “From whence is it (or a proof of it?) From what is written (Ex. 19:10) where there is an obligation to wash clothes, there is an obligation to dip.” And again, (Ex. 24:8) “Moses took it (the blood) and sprinkled it on the people”; and there is no sprinkling without dipping.” And in another place, [486] “Sprinkling of blood (or sacrifice, by which also the Israelites, it is said, were admitted into covenant) of it, it is written, And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings’, &c. But dipping, from whence is it? From what is written; And Moses took half of the blood, and sprinkled it on the people”; and there is no sprinkling without dipping.” This is the proof, which surely cannot be satisfactory to a judicious mind; dipping is inferred from sprinkling; but though the blood was sprinkled upon the people, they were not dipped into it surely; nor even into water, from what appears; and though dipping and sprinkling are

sometimes used together, as in the cleansing of the leper, and in the purification of one unclean, by the touch of an unclean bone, &c. (Lev. 14:7; Num. 19:19) yet the one was not the other. From washing of clothes dipping is also inferred, without any reason; for these two, in the above places, and in others, are spoken of as two distinct acts, and are expressed by different words; and yet it is upon this single circumstance the proof depends. Now, as Dr. Owen [487] observes, “this washing of clothes served that single occasion only of showing reverence of the divine presence, at the peculiar giving of the law; nor did it belong to the stated worship of God; so that the necessity of the baptism of bodies, by a stated and solemn rite for ever, should arise from the single washing of garments, and that depending upon a reason, that would never more recur; of the observation of which no mention is made, nor any trace is extant in the whole Old Testament, and which is not confirmed by any divine command, institution, or direction, seems altogether improbable” And he elsewhere [488] says, “From this latter temporary occasional institution (ceremonial washing at Sinai) such as they (the Jews) had many granted to them, while they were in the wilderness, before the giving of the law, the Rabbins have framed a baptism for those who enter into their synagogue; a fancy too greedily embraced by some Christian writers, who would have the holy ordinance of the church’s baptism to be derived from thence. But this “washing of their clothes”, not of their bodies, was temporary, never repeated; neither is there anything of any such baptism or washing required in any proselytes, either men or women, where the laws of their admission are strictly set down.” And it may be further observed, that the Talmudists give this only as a proof of the admission of Israelites into covenant; whereas, the solemn admission of them into it, even of the whole body of them, men, women, and children, and also of the proselytes who were in their camp, as all the Targums and the Greek version have it, when on the plains of Moab, at Horeb, before their entrance into the land of Canaan, (Deut. 29:10-12) was not by “any” of the “three” things they say the admission was, that is, by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice; of the two latter not the least hint is given, and the former was not practised while the Israelites were in the wilderness, not till Joshua had introduced them into

the land of Canaan. The Jews seem to be conscious themselves that the baptism or dipping of proselytes, is no command of God; since at the circumcision of them, in the form of blessing they then use, they take no notice of it, which runs thus. [489] “Blessed art thou, O Lord God, the King of the world, who has sanctified us by his precepts, and has commanded’ us to circumcise proselytes’, and to fetch out of them the blood of the covenant; for if it was not for the blood of the covenant the heaven and earth would not be established; as it is said, If my covenant with day and night’, &c. Jeremiah 33:25.”

Dr. Lightfoot [490] carries this custom of admitting proselytes by baptism, or dipping, higher than the Jews themselves do. He ascribes the first institution and use of it to Jacob, when he was going to Bethel to worship, after the murder of the Sechemites by his sons; when, the doctor says, he chose into his family and church, some of the Sechemites and other heathens. But some learned men of the Paedobaptist persuasion, have thought the notion is indefensible, and judged it most prudent to leave it to himself to defend it, or whomsoever may choose to undertake it; [491] and he himself was in doubt about the first institution of this sort of baptism; for he afterwards says, “We acknowledge that circumcision was of divine institution; but by whom baptism, that was inseparable from it, was instituted, is doubtful.” Certain it is, it has no foundation in what Jacob did, or ordered to be done, when he was about to go to Bethel, and worship there; previous to which he ordered his family to “put away the strange gods” that were among them, which they had brought with them from Shechem; and he likewise ordered them to be “clean”, and “change their garments”; which cleanness, whether to be understood of abstaining from their wives, as some interpret it; or of washing of their bodies, as Aben Ezra, as a purification of them from the pollutions of the slain, as the Targum paraphrases it, and after that Jarchi: and which change of garments, whether understood of the garments of idolaters, which the sons of Jacob had taken and put on, when they stripped them; or of their own garments, defiled with the blood of the slain; or of their meaner or more sordid garments, for more pure and splendid ones. All that can be concluded from hence is, and is by the Jews concluded, that when men come before

God, they should come with clean bodies, and with clean garments; as an emblem of the more inward purity of their minds, which is necessary to every religious service and act of devotion, such as Jacob and his family were now about to perform, and which the very heathens themselves had a notion of; “Casta placent superis, pura cum veste venito.” [492] But not a word is here of any covenant Jacob and his family entered into, and much less of any proselytes from Shechem and Syria being brought into it with them, by baptism, or dipping, as is pretended.

I have met with another learned man, [493] who carries up this custom higher still; and asserts, that Jacob did not feign out of his own brain this practice of washing the body, and of change of garments; but took it from the history of Adam, and from his example; and he supposes that Adam, at the solemn making the covenant with him, was washed in water, before he put on the garments given him of God; and that as he was the first who sacrificed, he was the first who was baptized by the command of God; and so baptism was the most ancient of all the sacred rites. But let the history of Adam be carefully read over by any man, and he will never find the least hint of this, nor observe the least shadow or appearance of it; but what is it that the imagination of man will not admit and receive, when once a loose is given to it? Pray, who baptized Adam, if he was baptized? Did God baptize him? Or did an angel baptize him? Or did Eve baptize him? Or did he baptize himself?

Since then this rite or custom of admitting into covenant, whether Israelites or proselytes, by baptism or dipping, has no foundation but in the Talmuds; and the proof of it there so miserably supported from scripture, surely it can never be thought that Christian baptism was borrowed from thence; or that it is no other which is continued in the Christian church, being taken up as it was found by John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles; the folly and falsehood of which will be evinced in the following chapter.

[453] Metteh Dan, sive Cosri, par. 2. fol. 18. 1.

[454] Vid. Wolfii Praefat. ad Bibliothec. Heb. p. 28.

[455] Fabricii Bibliograph. Antiquar. c. 1. s. 2. p. 3.

[456] Deut. Emend. Temp. 1. 7. p. 323.

- [457] Chronolog. Tables, Cent. 19.
 [458] Praefat. ad Methurgeman, fol. 2.
 [459] Deut. Sinceritate Heb. Text. 1. 2. Exer. 2. c.
 2.
 [460] Infant Baptism no Institution of Christ, p.
 23.
 [461] T. Hieros. Yebamot, fol. 8. 4.
 [462] Kiddushin, fol. 64. 4.
 [463] Ibid. fol. 65. 2.
 [464] Ibid. fol. 66. 1.
 [465] Eruvin, fol. 22. 1.
 [466] History of Infant Baptism, Introduct. p. 44.
 [467] Vid. Wolfium, ut supra.
 [468] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 9. 1.
 [469] Yebamot, fol. 46. 1, 2. vid. Beracot, fol. 47.
 2. Avodah Zarah, fol. 57. 2. & 59. 1.
 [470] Works, vol. 1. p. 526. vol. 2. p. 117.
 [471] Halicot Olam, p. 201.
 [472] T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 54. 1. Megillah, fol. 16.
 2. Kiddushin, fol. 39. 1.
 [473] Pirke Abot, c. 2. s. 8.
 [474] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 71. 1.
 [475] Chinnuch, p. 17.
 [476] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 46. 1, 2.
 [477] Issure Biah, c. 14. s. 6.
 [478] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 78. 1.
 [479] Ibid. fol. 45. 2. & Gloss in ibid.
 [480] T. Bab. Yehamot, fol. 46. 2. & Gloss in ibid.
 [481] Ibid.
 [482] Ibid.
 [483] T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 11. 1.
 [484] Cetubot, fol. 26. 1.
 [485] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 9. 1.
 [486] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 46. 2.
 [487] Theologoumen. 1. 5. Digress. 1. p. 446.
 [488] On Heb. vol. 1. Exercitat. 19. p. 272.
 [489] Maimon. Hilchot Milah, c. 3. s. 4.
 [490] Chronicle of the Old Testament, p. 18.
 Harmony of the Evangelists, p. 465. Hor. Heb. in
 Matt. iii. 6.
 [491] Pfeiffer. Antiqu. Ebr. c. 1. s. 5. "et addit; uti et
 ejusdem collationem; quam inter hunc proselytorum
 baptismum et sacramentum initiationis christianorum
 instituit cum magno grano salis accipiendam
 putamus."
 [492] Tibullus, l. 2. eleg. 1.
 [493] Rhenferd. Orat. de Antiqu. Baptism, p. 954.

ad Calcem Oper. Philolog.

Chapter 5

**THE REASONS WHY CHRISTIAN
 BAPTISM IS NOT FOUNDED ON, AND
 TAKEN FROM, THE PRETENDED
 JEWISH BAPTISM OF ISRAELITES AND
 PROSELYTES**

Having traced the admission of the Jewish proselytes by baptism, or dipping, to the spring head of it, the Jewish Talmuds; I shall now proceed to give reasons, why Christian baptism cannot be thought to be taken from such a custom; nor that to be a rule according to which it is to be practised.

First, the Talmuds are of too late a date to prove that such a custom obtained before the times of John and Christ, since they were written some centuries after those times, as has been shown; and besides, there is in them a plain chronological mark, or character, which shows that this custom took place among the Jews since they were driven out of their own land, and scattered among the nations, and suffered reproach and persecution; for among the interrogatories put to persons who came to them to be made proselytes, this question was asked, [494] "What dost thou see to become a proselyte? dost thou not know, or consider, that the Israelites are now' vzmh hzh at this time', in sorrowful circumstances, driven about and scattered, and loaded with reproaches and afflictions? If he says, I know this; and I am not worthy (that is, to be joined to them) they receive him immediately."

Many are the surmises and conjectures of learned men concerning the original and rise of this custom. It is scarce worth while, to take notice of the notion of Grotius [495] that this custom was taken up on account of the flood, and in commemoration of the world's being purified by it: nor of Sir John Marsham's, [496] that it was taken up by the Israelites, in imitation of the Egyptian's manner of initiating persons into the mysteries of their goddess Isis, by washing them; for which he cites Apuleius. A goodly pattern of Christian baptism this! it is much it never entered into the thoughts of these learned men, or others, that the Jews took up this rite of dipping their proselytes, as they

found it among the Medes and Persians, when they lived in their countries, and so brought it into Judaea, some hundreds of years before the coming of Christ, and his forerunner John the Baptist; since of the eighty rites the Persians used in the initiation of men into the mysteries of Mithras, their chief deity, the first and principal was baptism. They "dipped" them in a "bath", and "signed" them in their "foreheads", and had a sort of an "Eucharist", an oblation of bread, as Tertullian has it, and an image of the resurrection (that is, in their baptism); promising the expiation of sins by the laver; and also had an imitation of martyrdom. [497] Some say [498] this custom of the Jews was taken up by them out of hatred to the Samaritans, and was added to circumcision, to distinguish them from them: but if so, it is very much that Symmachus the Samaritan, when he came over to the Jews, was not only circumcised again, as he was, but also baptized, or dipped; of which Epiphanius, who gives an account of his becoming a proselyte to them, and of his being circumcised, but not of his being baptized, as before observed. Dr. Owen thinks [499] this custom was taken up by some Antemishnical Rabbins, in imitation of John the Baptist; which is not very probable, though more so than anything before advanced. To me it seems a clear case, that this custom was framed upon a general notion of the uncleanness of heathens, in their state of heathenism, before their embracing the Jewish religion; and therefore devised this baptism, or dipping, as a symbol of that purity, which was, or ought to be, in them, when they became Jews, of whom they might hope to gain some, they being now dispersed among the nations; and of some they boast, even of some of note: and this was first introduced when they digested the traditions of the elders into a body, or pandect of laws; and were finishing their decisions and determinations upon them, to be observed by their people in future time.

Since I wrote the preceding chapters, I have met with a quotation; for I will not conceal anything that has occurred to me in reading, relative to this custom of dipping Jewish proselytes; I say, I have met with a quotation by Maimonides, [500] out of a book called Siphri, an ancient commentary on Numbers and Deuteronomy, which has these words: "As the Israelites did not enter into covenant but by three things, by circumcision, dipping, and acceptance

of sacrifice; so neither proselytes likewise." Now if this is the ancient book of Siphri, from whence this passage is taken, as may seem, which is a book of an uncertain author and age; and is allowed to be written after the Misnah; [501] yet if it is the same that is referred to in the Babylonian Talmud [502] it must be written before that was published, though it might be while it was compiling, and it may be, by some concerned in it; since the rite referred to is expressed in the same words in the one as in the other; [503] and is founded upon and argued from the same passage of scripture, (Num. 15:15) and seems to be the language and reasoning of the same persons. However, "if" the passage quoted by Maimonides stands in that book, which is a book I never saw, though printed; "if", I say, these several things can be made plain; it is indeed the earliest testimony we have of this custom; especially if the book was written before the Jerusalem Talmud, which yet is not certain: but be it as it may, it is a testimony of the same sort of persons, and of no better authority than what has been before produced, and serves to confirm, that this custom is a pure device of the Jewish doctors, and is merely "Rabbinical"; and besides, at most, it can only carry up this custom into the "fifth" century, which is too late for John Baptist and Christ to take up the ordinance from it; and on account of these testimonies not being early enough for such a purpose, the late Dr. Jennings [504] has given up the argument from them, in favour of infant baptism, as insufficient. His words are, "After all, it remains to be proved, not only that Christian baptism was instituted in the room of proselyte baptism; but that the Jews had any such baptism in our Saviour's time: the earliest accounts we have of it, are in the Mishna (but in that we have none at all) and Gemara." And again he says, "here wants more evidence of its being as ancient as our Saviour's time, than I apprehend can be produced to ground an argument upon it, in relation to Christian baptism."

Secondly, this custom, though observed as a religious action, yet has scarce any appearance of religion and devotion in it; but looks rather like a civil affair, it being in some cases under the cognizance and by the direction of the Sanhedrim, or court of judicature. There was no divine solemnity in the performance of it. It was not administered in the name of the God of Israel, whom the Jews professed; nor in

the name of the Messiah to come, expected by them, as was the baptism of John; nor in the name of the Three divine Persons in the Trinity, which yet the ancient Jews believed. They dipped their proselytes indeed, according to their account, vsm “in the name” of a proselyte, or as one; and a servant, “in the name” of a servant, or on account of servitude; and a free man, “in the name” of a free man; but neither of them in the name of any divine Person, or with the invocation of the name of God; so that it had no appearance of a religious solemnity in it. To which may be added, that this custom gave a licence to things the most impure and abominable, things contrary to the light of nature, and not to be named among the Gentiles, and which must make it detestable to all serious persons. According to the Jews, it dissolved all the ties of natural relations, which before subsisted among men; for according to them,

“As soon as a man is made a proselyte, a soul flies out of a (celestial) palace, and gets under the wings of the Shechinah, (or divine Majesty) which kisses it, because it is the fruit of the righteous, and sends it into the body of a proselyte, where it abides; and from that time he is called a proselyte of righteousness; [505] so that now he has a new soul, and is a new man, another man than he was before; “not a better man, but, to use our Lord’s words, he is made “twofold more the child of hell”. For, according to them, all his former connections with men are broken, and all obligations to natural relations are dissolved; and he may, without any imputation of crime, be guilty of the most shocking incest, as to marry his own mother or his own sister. But hear their own words, “When a Gentile is made a proselyte, and a servant made free, they are both as a newborn babe; and all the relations which they had when a Gentile or a servant, are no more relations to them; “or their kindred and relation by blood is no more; as brother, sister, father, mother, and children, these are no more to be so accounted; insomuch, that, “when one becomes a proselyte, he and they (his quondam kindred) are not guilty, by reason thereof, on account of incest, at all; so that it is according to law (the civil law of the Jews) that a Gentile may marry his own mother, or his sister, by his mother’s side (his own sister), when they become proselytes.” But though they allow it to be lawful, they have so much modesty and regard to decency,

or rather to their own character, that it is added; “But the wise men forbid this, that they (the proselytes) may not say, we are come from a greater degree of holiness to a lesser one; and what is forbidden today is free tomorrow; and so a proselyte who lies with his mother or his sister, and they are in Gentilism, it is no other than if he lay with a stranger.” [506] Now can any man, soberly thinking, judge that the New Testament ordinance of baptism was taken up by John and Christ from such a wretched custom, which gave licence to such shocking immorality and uncleanness; or that Christian baptism is built on such a basis as this?

Thirdly, to suppose that John took up the practice of baptizing as he found it among the Jews, and from a tradition and custom of theirs, greatly detracts from the character of John, his divine mission, and the credit of baptism, as administered by him; and is contrary to what the scriptures say concerning him. They represent him as the first administrator of baptism, and, for a while, the sole administrator of it; for, for what other reason do they call him the Baptist, and distinguish him by this title, if it was then a common thing, and had been usual in time past, to baptize persons? The scriptures say he was a man sent of God, and sent by him “to baptize with water” (John 1:6, 33). But what need was there of a mission and commission to what was in common use, and had been so time out of mind? The Jews hearing of John’s baptizing persons, sent messengers to him, to know who he was that took upon him to baptize; who asked, “Why baptizest thou, if thou art not that Christ, nor Elijah, nor that prophet?” As if it was a new thing; and that it was expected he should be some extraordinary person who baptized. But why should such questions be put to him, if this was in common use, and if any ordinary person, however any common doctor or Rabbi, had then, and in former times, been used to baptize persons? [507] The scriptures speak of John’s baptism as the “counsel of God”: but according to this notion, it was a device and tradition of men; and had this been the case, the Jews would not have been at a loss, nor under any difficulty, to answer the question Christ put to them, nor indeed, would he ever have put such an one; “The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men?” for his putting the question thus, supposes the contrary, that it was not

from men, but from God: and if it was not of God, but a tradition of men, they could have readily said, “Of men”; without being confuted by him, or exposed to the people; but being thrown into a dilemma, they took the wisest way for themselves, and answered, “We cannot tell”. Dr. Wall [508] says, If John had been baptizing proselytes, and not natural Jews, the Pharisees would not have wondered at it, it being so well known to them; and he suggests, that the wonder was, that natural Jews should be baptized: but why so! for according to this notion, the original natural Jews were received into covenant by baptism; they as the proselytes, and the proselytes as they; the case, according to them: was similar. But let us examine this affair, and see how the fact stands. When John first appeared baptizing, the Pharisees and Sadducees, who were natural Jews, came to his baptism, and were not admitted to it, but rejected from it, as unfit and improper persons; and others of the same nation and profession, in their turn, “rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized by John”, (Matthew 3:7; Luke 7:30). On the other hand, publicans, the Roman tax gatherers, of whom some indeed were Jews, others heathens, both equally odious, and therefore joined together, these “justified God”, being baptized with the baptism of John; and these “went into the kingdom of God”, into the gospel state, before the Pharisees, and embraced its doctrines, and submitted to its ordinances, (Luke 7:29 3:12; Matthew 21:31) and even soldiers, Roman soldiers, for no other soldiers were then in Judea, were among the multitude who came to be baptized by him, to whom he gave good instructions, but did not refuse to baptize them, (Luke 3:7, 14) and our Lord Jesus Christ, whose forerunner John was in his ministry and baptism, gave orders to his disciples to baptize indiscriminately persons of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, who believed in him; and who accordingly did baptize them: so that baptism, in those early times of John, Christ, and his apostles, was not confined to natural Jews; the wonder and the question upon it, as above, were not about the persons baptized, whether Jews or Gentiles, but about baptism itself, and the administrator of it, as being altogether new. The account which Josephus, [509] the Jewish historian, who lived soon after the times of John, gives of him, and his baptism, agrees with the sacred

scriptures; and which testimony stands not only in the common editions of that historian, but is preserved by Eusebius, [510] as a choice piece of history; in which, he not only says John was a religious and good man, but, with the scriptures, that he was surnamed the Baptist, to distinguish him from others; and that he ordered the Jews who lived righteous and godly lives to come to baptism, and such only did John admit of; and that baptizing was acceptable to God, when used not for removing some sins (by which his baptism is distinguished from Jewish baptisms, which were used to purge from sin in a ceremonial sense) but for the purity of the body, the soul being before purified by righteousness. Also he observes, with the scriptures, that multitudes flocked to him; and that Herod, fearing that by his means his subjects would be drawn into a revolt, put him to death. But why such flockings to him, if baptism had been a common thing? And what had Herod to fear from that? He might reasonably conclude, that if this was no other than what had been usually practised, the people would soon cease from following him. Nay, Josippon Ben Gorion [511] the Jew’s Josephus, the historian whom they value and prefer to the true Josephus, says of that sh tyvlh “he made”, instituted, and performed baptism, as if it was a new thing, founded by him; and for which later Jews express their resentment at him. One of their virulent writers says [512] “Who commanded John to institute this baptism? in what law did he find it? neither in the old nor in the new.” Now this would not be said by the Jews, if John had taken up his baptism from a custom of theirs; nor would they speak of the ordinance of baptism in such a scandalous and blasphemous manner as they do, and in language too shocking to transcribe [513]

Fourthly, the Jews will not allow that any proof of baptism can be produced out of the writings of the Old Testament, nor out of their Talmuds. Such passages in the Old Testament which speak of washing, and in which men are exhorted to “wash” and be “clean”, as Isaiah 1:16 it is said, are to be understood of men cleansing themselves from their sins, and not of plunging in water; “To plunge a man in water, is no where written; why therefore did Jesus command such baptism,” or dipping? [514] and whereas the passage in Ezekiel 16:9, “Then washed I thee with water”, is by some interpreted of baptism; the Jew observes

[515] the words are not in the future tense; “I will wash thee”: but in the past tense; “I have washed thee”; and so cannot refer to baptism. And whereas the promise in Ezekiel 36:25, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness”, &c. is brought by some, I suppose he means some popish writers, as another proof of baptism the Jews replies [516] “What sin and uncleanness does baptism take away? and what sin and uncleanness are there in newborn babes? Besides, says he, you do not do so; you do not sprinkle, but you are plunged into water:” which, by the way, shows that sprinkling was not used in baptism when this Jew wrote, which was in the twelfth century, as Wagenseil, the editor of his work, supposes. The same Jewish writer [517] asks, “If the law of Jesus, and his coming, were known to the prophets, why did not they observe his law? and why did not they baptize themselves’, according to the law of Jesus?” And he represents [518] David as praying (it must be supposed, under a prophetic spirit) for those who should, in this captivity of the Jews, be forced, against their wills, to baptism, and that they might be delivered from it (Ps. 69:1, 15; 144:7). Nor does this writer take any notice of receiving proselytes by baptism; though he makes mention of receiving men proselytes [519] yet by circumcision only; and also of women proselytes, but not a word of baptism of either; and had he thought the baptism their Talmud speaks of, had any affinity with our baptism, and was the ground of it, he would not have been so gruelled with an objection of the Christians, as he was; which is put thus, [520] “We baptize male and female, and hereby receive them into our religion; but you circumcise men only, and not women:” to which he appears to be at an entire loss to answer; whereas he might have readily answered, had the case been as suggested, that we baptize women as well as men, when they are received proselytes among us. But that the Jews had no notion that Christian baptism was founded upon any prior baptism of proselytes, or others, among them, as related in their Talmud, is manifest from a disputation had between Nachmanides, a famous Jew, and one brother Paul, a Christian, in the year 1263. [521] Brother Paul affirmed, that the Talmudists believed in Jesus, that he was the Messiah, and was both God and man: the Jew replied, after observing some other things, “How can brother Paul say so, that

they believed in him; for they, and their disciples, died in our religion? and why were they not baptized’, according to the command of Jesus, as brother Paul was? And I would be glad to hear, “says he, “‘how’ he learned baptism from them (the Talmudists) and in what place’ (of the Talmud)? did not they teach us all our laws which we now observe? and the rites and customs they gathered together for us, as they were used when the temple was standing, from the mouths of the prophets, and from the mouth of Moses, our master, on whom be peace? and if they believed in Jesus, and in his law, they would have done as brother Paul has; does he understand their words better than they themselves?”

Fifthly, to say, as Dr. Lightfoot does, that Christ took baptism into his hands as he found it, that is, as practised by the Jews, is greatly to derogate from the character and authority of Christ; it makes him, who came a Teacher from God, to teach for doctrines the commandments of men, which he himself condemns. It makes that “all power in heaven and in earth”, said to be given him, in consequence of which he gave his apostles a commission to “teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”; I say, it makes it to dwindle into this only, a power to establish a tradition, and commandment of men long in use before he came. Again, who can believe that Christ, who so severely inveighed against the traditions of the Jews, could ever establish any one of them, and make it an ordinance of his; and particularly, should inveigh against those, respecting the baptisms, or dippings of the Jews then in use among them; and especially without excepting that of their baptism of proselytes from the rest, and without declaring it his will that it should be continued and observed; neither of which he has done.

Sixthly, such a notion as this highly reflects dishonour on the ordinance of baptism; that one of the principal ordinances of the New Testament, as that is, should be founded on a human tradition, an invention of men; it must greatly weaken the authority of it, as well as disparage the wisdom of the Lawgiver; and must have a tendency to bring both the author and the ordinance into contempt. Nothing can make an ordinance a Christian ordinance, but its being instituted by Christ. If baptism is an institution of men, and received and retained from men, and

regulated according to their device, it is no Christian ordinance: and, as Witsius says, [522] “Whatever may be said of the antiquity of that rite (proselyte baptism, which yet with him was dubious and uncertain) there can be no divine institution of it (of baptism) before John, the forerunner of Christ, was sent of God to baptize; for to him that was expressly commanded; The word of God came unto John’, Luke 3:2; John 1:33, &c.”

Seventhly, if it was the custom of the Jews before the times of John and Christ, to receive young children as proselytes by baptism, or dipping, and this was to be as a rule according to which Christian baptism was to be practised; then most surely we should have had some instances of children being baptized by John, or by the apostles of Christ, if “baptizing infants had been as ordinarily used’ in the church of the Jews, as ever it hath been in the Christian church,” as Dr. Lightfoot says; and yet we have not one instance of this kind; we no where read of any children being brought to John to be baptized, nor of any that were baptized by him; nor of any being brought to the apostles of Christ to be baptized, nor of their being baptized by them; from whence it may be concluded there was no such custom before their times; or if there was, it never was intended it should be observed by Christians in later times; or otherwise there would have been some precedents of it, directing to and encouraging such a practice: many things would follow on such a supposition, that Christian baptism is borrowed from and founded on proselyte baptism, and the latter the rule directing the practice of the former; for then,

Eighthly, Self-baptizing, or persons baptizing themselves, without making use of an administrator, might be encouraged and established; which is what the Paedobaptists charge, though wrongly, some of the first reformers of the abuses of baptism with; since it is plain, from the quotations before made, that though it is sometimes said, “they”, that is, the doctors or wise men, “baptize”, or “dip”, yet it is also said, both of men and women, that they “dipped themselves”; as of a man hv’ tkl “he dipped himself”, and went up from the water; and of a woman, being placed by women in the water, tkl “she dipped”, that is, herself; and so Leo of Modena says, [523] of a Jew proselyte, that after he is circumcised, and well of his sore, “he is to wash himself all over in water”, in the presence of

three Rabbins, or other persons in authority, and from thenceforth he becomes as a natural Jew; and, indeed, all the Jewish baptisms, or bathings, commanded in the law, were done by persons themselves (see Lev. 14:8, 9; Num. 19:7, 8). And Dr. Lightfoot [524] thinks that John’s baptism was so administered; he supposes, that men, women, and children came unto it; and that they standing in Jordan, were taught by John, that they were baptized into the name of the Messiah, ready to come, and into the profession of the gospel, about faith and repentance; and that “they plunged themselves into the river”, and so came out.

Ninthly, if this Jewish custom is to be regarded as a rule of Christian baptism, it will tend to establish the Socinian notion, that only the first converts to Christianity in a nation, they and their children are to be baptized, but not their posterity in after ages; for so both Lightfoot and Selden, with others, say, who were sticklers for Christian baptism being taken from the custom of baptizing, or dipping Jewish proselytes, and their children; that only the children of proselytes, born before their parents became such, were baptized, or dipped; but not those born afterwards: baptism was never repeated in their posterity; the sons of proselytes, in following generations, were circumcised, but not baptized; [525] and, as Dr. Jennings [526] rightly observes, “it was a maxim with the Rabbins, Natus baptizati, habetur pro baptizato’.” This “restriction of baptism to children born before their parents’ proselytism, rests on the same authority as the custom of baptizing any children of proselytes.” So that if the one is to be admitted, the other is also; and so the children of Christian parents are not to be baptized, only the converts from another religion; and these the first, and their then posterity, but not afterwards.

Tenthly, if this custom, said to be practised before the times of John and Christ, is the rule to direct us in Christian baptism, there were several circumstances attending that, which should be observed in Christian baptism, to make it regular; it must be done before three witnesses, and these men of eminence; but who, of such a number and character were present at the baptism of the apostle Paul? (Acts 22:16, 9:18). Nor was it to be performed in the night; what then must be said of the baptism of the jailor, and his family? (Acts 16:33) nor on a Sabbath day; nor on a feast day; yet Lydia, and her household, were baptized on a Sabbath

day, (Acts 16:13, 15) and the three thousand Christian converts were baptized on the day of Pentecost? and which was also the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, (Acts 2:1, 41). Wherefore, if this Jewish custom was the rule of baptism, and from whence it was taken, and by which it should proceed; (for if in one case, why not in others?) these instances of Christian baptism were not rightly performed.

11. Eleventhly, if the Ethiopian eunuch Philip baptized, was a proselyte, as Grotius and others say, he must be either a proselyte of the gate, a proselyte inhabitant, or a proselyte of righteousness; not the former, for he was no inhabitant in any part of Judea; but most probably he was the latter, since he was a very devout and religious man, had an high opinion of the worship of God among the Jews, and had travelled from a far country to worship at Jerusalem; and so Dr. Jennings [527] justly observes, that “he seems to be rather a proselyte of the covenant, or completely a Jew; not only from his reading the scripture, but because he had taken so long a journey to worship at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost, one of the three grand festivals; when all the Jewish males, who were able, were, according to the law, to attend the worship of God at the national altar.”

He appears to have thoroughly embraced the religion of the Jews, even their whole law, and was conversant with their sacred writings; he was reading in one of their prophets when Philip joined his chariot, and was taken up into it by him: whereas a son of Noah, as the Jews called a proselyte of the gate, might not study in the law, according to their canons, [528] which they say he had nothing to do with; only with the seven precepts of Noah; and, indeed, no Gentile or uncircumcised person. [529] And if the eunuch was a proselyte of righteousness, according to the pretended custom of dipping such, he must have been baptized, or dipped, when he became a proselyte; and since, according to this notion, he must have been baptized with a baptism which John and Christ took up as they found it among the Jews, and which is the basis and foundation of Christian baptism, and the rule to direct in the performance of it, it is much he should desire baptism again! and that Philip, who is thought to be a proselyte also, (Acts 6:5) and must know the custom of making proselytes, should administer it to him: and if he had been baptized

before, must he not then be an Anabaptist? And so the proselytes in (Acts 2:10) were, as Drusius and others think, proselytes of righteousness, who had embraced the Jewish religion, and were circumcised, and, according to this notion, baptized. Besides, none but proselytes of righteousness might dwell in Jerusalem; as has been observed, Chapter 1. And also proselytes of the gate were never called Jews, as these were; only proselytes of righteousness: and if any of these were among the three thousand converted and baptized by the apostles, which is not improbable, must not they be also Anabaptists? The Grecians, or Hellenists, whose widows were neglected in the daily ministration, are thought by Beza, and others, to be widows of Jewish proselytes, and therefore it is highly probable, that their husbands had been members of the Christian church at Jerusalem, and so must have been rebaptized; and most certain it is, that Nicholas of Antioch, who was one of the seven appointed to take care of these widows, was a proselyte, and as Grotius truly thinks, a proselyte of righteousness; and so, as he must have been baptized according to this notion, when he became a proselyte, he must have been rebaptized when he became a member of the Christian church at Jerusalem, of which he most certainly was, being chosen out of it, and appointed to an office in it, (Acts 6:1, 5).

12. Twelfthly, it may be observed, in a quotation before made, that if a proselytess big with child was baptized, or dipped, her child needed not baptism, or dipping, the mother’s baptism, or dipping, was sufficient for it: but this is not attended to by Paedobaptists; it seems, in the beginning of the fourth century, there were some of the same opinion with the Jews; but a canon in the council of Neocaesarea was made against it; which, as explained, declared that the child of such a person needed baptism, when it came to be capable of choosing for itself; [530] which canon should not have been made, if this Jewish custom is to be regarded as a rule.

Lastly, As an argument “ad hominem”, it may be observed, that if this custom is to be considered as a rule of Christian baptism, then sprinkling ought not to be used in it; for the baptism of Jewish proselytes, men, women, and children, was performed by dipping; as all the above quotations show. To which may be added, that one of their rules respecting proselyte

baptism is, that a proselyte must dip in such a place (or confluence of water) as a menstruous woman dips herself in, [531] or which is sufficient for such an one; and that, as the Gloss is, was what held forty seahs of water; and to this agrees the account Maimonides [532] gives of such a confluence of water, that it must be “sufficient for the dipping of the whole body of a man at once; and such the wise men reckon to be a cubit square, and three cubits in depth; and this measure holds forty seahs of water.” And he further says, [533] “that wherever washing of the flesh, and washing of clothes from uncleanness, are mentioned in the law, nothing else is meant but the dipping of the whole body in a confluence of water--and that if he dips his whole body, except the top of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness:--and that all unclean persons, who are dipped in their clothes, their dipping is right, because the waters come into them (or penetrate through them) and do not divide,” or separate; that is, the clothes do not divide, or separate between the water and their bodies, so as to hinder its coming to them; so the menstruous woman dipped herself in her clothes; and in like manner the proselyte. Let such observe this, who object to the baptism of persons with their clothes on.

Again, as an argument of the same kind, if baptism was common in all ages, foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, as is said, then it could not succeed circumcision, since it must be contemporary with it. Upon the whole, what Dr. Lightfoot, [534] and others after him, have urged in favour of infant baptism from hence, is quite impertinent; that “there was need of a plain and open prohibition, that infants and little children should not be baptized, if our Saviour would not have had them baptized; for since it was most common in all ages foregoing, that little children should be baptized, if Christ had been minded to have had that custom abolished, he would have openly forbidden it; therefore his silence, and the silence of the scripture in this matter, confirms Paedobaptism, and continues it unto all ages”

But first, it does not appear that any such custom was ever practised before the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, as to admit into the Jewish church by baptism, proselytes, whether adult or minors. No testimony has been, and I believe none can be given of it. And, as some very learned men have truly

observed, [535] and as Dr. Owen [536] affirms, there are not the least footsteps of any such usage among the Jews, until after the days of John the Baptist, in imitation of whom, he thinks, it was taken up by some Ante-Mishnical Rabbins; and, as he elsewhere says, [537] “The institution of the rite of baptism is nowhere mentioned in the Old Testament; no example is extant; nor during the Jewish church, was it ever used in the admission of proselytes; no mention of it is to be met with in Philo, Josephus, nor in Jesus the son of Syrach; nor in the evangelic history.”

What testimony has been given of this custom, falls greatly short of proving it; wherefore Christ could have no concern about abolishing a custom which had not obtained in his time; nor was there any room nor reason for it, since it had never been practised, for ought appears: his silence about what never existed, can give no existence to it, nor to that which is founded on it, Paedobaptism; and which is neither warranted and confirmed by any such custom, nor by the word of God, in which there is an high silence about both. This custom of baptizing little children was so far from being common in all ages foregoing the times of John, Christ, and his apostles, that not a single instance can be given of anyone that ever was baptized; if there can, let it be produced; if not, what comes of all this bluster and harangue? With much more propriety and strength of reasoning might it be retorted; that since it is plain the children of the Jews, both male and female, did eat of the passover, which was not an human custom and tradition; but an ordinance of God, common in all ages foregoing the times of John, &c. and since, according to the hypothesis of the Paedobaptists, the Lord’s supper came in the room of the passover; for which there is much more reason in analogy, than for baptism coming in the room of circumcision; it should seem, if our Saviour would not have had children eat of the Lord’s supper, as they did of the passover, he would have openly forbidden it. A plain and open prohibition of this was more needful than a prohibition of the baptism of infants, if not his will, had there been such a custom before prevailing, as there was not; since that could only be a custom and tradition of men; and it was enough that Christ inveighed against those of the Jews in general, which obtained before, and in his time; and against their baptisms and dippings in

particular. And after all, it is amazing that Christian baptism should be founded upon a tradition, of which there is no evidence but from the Rabbins, and that very intricate, perplexed, and contradictory, and not as in being in the times referred to; upon a tradition of a set of men blinded and besotted, and enemies to Christianity, its doctrines and ordinances; and who, at other times, reckoned by these very men, who so warmly urge this custom of theirs, the most stupid, sottish, and despicable, of all men upon the face of the earth! If this is the basis of infant baptism, it is built upon the sand, and will, ere long, fall, and be no more.

I conclude this Dissertation in the words of Dr. Owen, [538] "That the opinion of some learned men concerning transferring the rite of Jewish baptism, by the Lord Jesus, which, indeed, did not then exist, for the use of his disciples, is destitute of all probability." And after all, perhaps, the Paedobaptists will find their account better in consulting the baptism of the ancient heathens, and its rites, than that of the Jews; said [539] to be in use before the times of Moses, and in ages since, and that among all nations; and being more ancient than Christian baptism, a learned writer referred to, says, it is as a sort of preamble to it. And from whom the Paedobaptists may be supplied with materials for their purpose.

- [494] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 1.
 [495] Annot. in Matt. iii. 6.
 [496] Chronic. secul. 9. p. 200.
 [497] Witsii Aegyptiaca, 1. 2. c. 16. s. 10. vid. Tertullian. de Praescript. Haer. c. 40.
 [498] Schickard. & Mayerus, apud Pfeiffer. Antiqu. Ebr. c. 1. s. 5. vid. Selden. de Syned. 1. 1. c. 3.
 [499] Ut Supra & Theologoumen. p. 447.
 [500] Praefat. ad Seder Kodashim.
 [501] Mabo. Hagemara ad Calcem Halicot Olam, p. 223.
 [502] T. Bab. Kiddushin, fol. 49. 2. Beracot, fol. 47. 2.
 [503] T. Bab. Ceritot, fol. 9. 1.
 [504] Jewish Antiqu. vol. 1. p. 136, 138.
 [505] Zohar in Numb. fol. 69. 4. Ed. Sultzbach.
 [506] Maimon. Issure Biah, c. 14. s. 11, 12. Schulchan Aruch, par. 2. Yore Dea. Hilchot Gerim, Art. 269. s. 1.
 [507] "Annon plane innuunt (verba Joan. i. 25)

nullum fuisse baptismi usum, et receptam fuisse opinionem inter ipsos (Judaeos), nullum debere esse, usquedum veniret Christus, vel Elias, vel propheta ille?" Knatchbul in 1 Pet. iii. 21.

- [508] Introduction to his History, p. 64. Ed. 2. 4to.
 [509] Antiqu. 1. 18. c. 6. s. 2.
 [510] Eccl. Hist. 1. 1. c. 11.
 [511] Ibid. Heb. 1. 5. c. 45.
 [512] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 195. Ed. Wagenseil.
 [513] Vet. Nizzachon, p. 62, 64, 70, 74, 77, 150, 191, &c, vid. Maji Synops. Theolog. Jud. loc. 18. s. 2. p. 266. Edzardi not. in Avodah Zarah, c. 2. p. 266. Wagenseil. in Sotah, p. 959.
 [514] Nizzachon, p. 53.
 [515] Ibid, p. 74.
 [516] Nizzachon, p. 192.
 [517] Ibid. p. 99.
 [518] Ibid. p. 193.
 [519] Ibid. p. 242, 243.
 [520] Ibid. p. 251.
 [521] Apud Wagenseil. Tela Ignea, vol. 2. p. 25, 26.
 [522] Oeconom. Foeder. 1. 4. c. 16. s. 8. p. 875. Ed. 3.
 [523] History of the Customs of the Jews, par. 5. c. 2.
 [524] Hor. Heb. in Matt. iii. 6. vol. 2. p. 122.
 [525] See Wall's History of Infant Baptism, Introduct. p. 50, 55.
 [526] Jewish Antiquities, ut supra, p. 135. Marg.
 [527] Jewish Antiqu. p. 159, 160.
 [528] Maimon. Melacim. c. 10. s. 9.
 [529] T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 59. 1. Shaare Orah, fol. 18. 2.
 [530] See Stennet against Russen, p. 103, 104.
 [531] T. Bab. Yebamot, fol. 47. 2.
 [532] Hilchot Mikvaot, c. 4. s. 1. T. Bab. Eruvim, fol. 14. 2.
 [533] Mikvaot, c. 1. s. 2. 7.
 [534] Hor. Heb. in Matt. iii. 6. vol. 2. p. 119.
 [535] "Proselytorum baptismum ante Johannem extitisse nullo testimonio certe constat", Fabricii Bibliograph. Antiqu. c. 11. p. 392. ita Deylingius in ibid. p. 386.
 [536] On Heb. vol. 1. Exercitat. 19. p. 272.
 [537] Theologoumen. 1. 5. Digress. 1. p. 447.
 [538] "Omni ideo probabilitate caret sententia ista

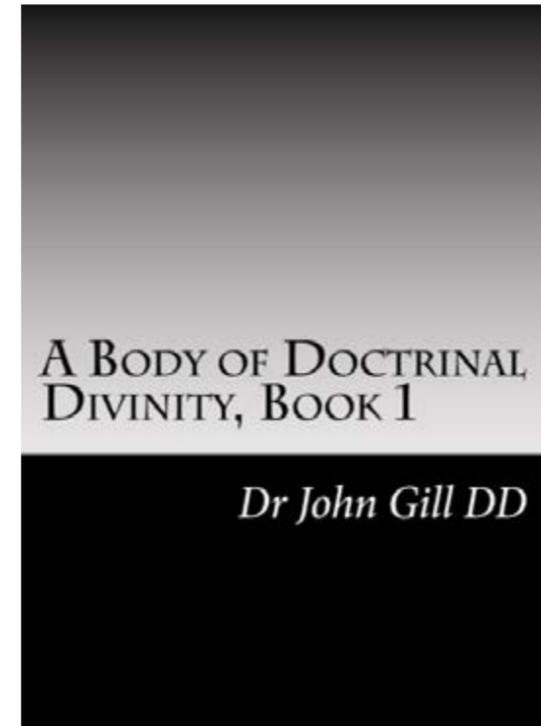
doctorum quorundam virorum de translatione ritus baptismatis Judaici, qui revera eo tempore nullus erat, in usum discipulorum suorum per Dominum Jesum facienda", Theologoum. ibid.

[539] Sperlingius de baptismo veterum Ethnicorum, p. 116, 117, 120, 129, 210

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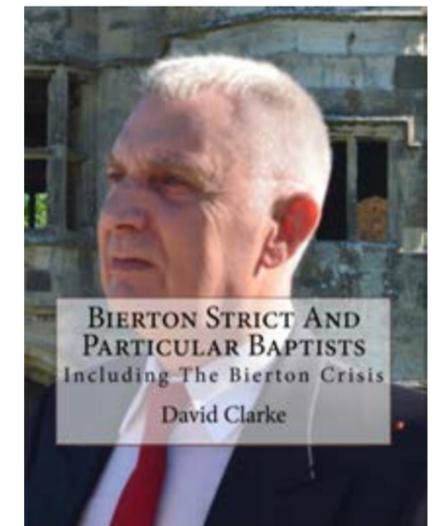
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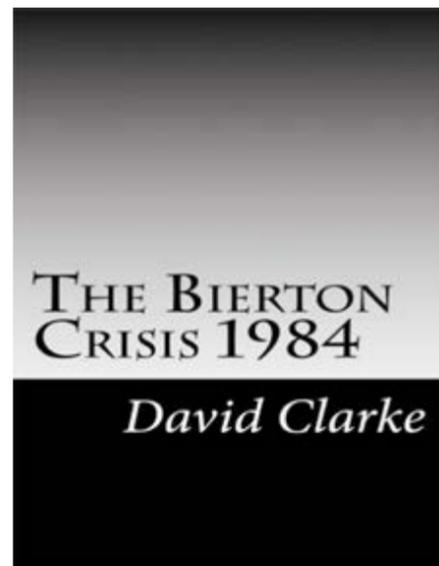
This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60's, living in Aylesbury,

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 Berton 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 Berton 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.

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The Berton Crisis



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

The Berton Church was formed in 1832 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.

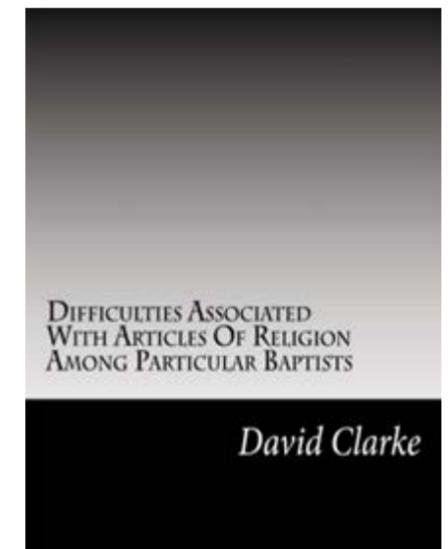
David hopes that his testimony will promote the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as set out in the doctrines of grace, especially Particular Redemption and the rule of life for the believer being the gospel of Christ, the royal law of liberty, and not the law of Moses as some reformed Calvinists teach,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

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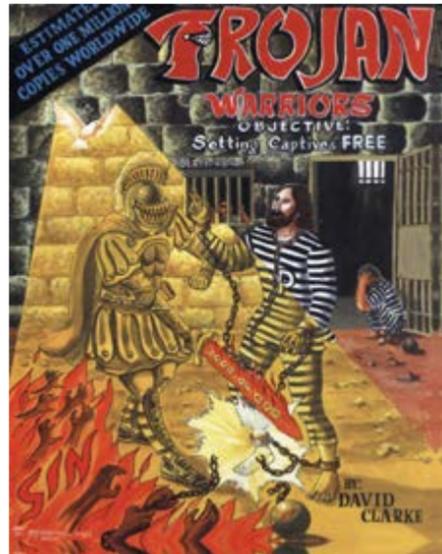
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Articles of Religion are important when dealing with matters of the Christian Religion, however problems occur when churches fail to recognize there is a growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in any believer. When a person first believes in the Lord Jesus Christ they cannot possibly have a comprehensive knowledge of a churches constitution or its articles of religion, before solemnly subscribing to them. The author David Clarke has introduced the Doctrines of Grace to Berton Particular Baptists Pakistan, situated in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistan and bearing in mind his own experience with articles of religion he has compiled Berton Particular Baptists Pakistan articles of religion from the first Berton Particular Baptists of 1831, of which he is the sole surviving member, the First London Baptist Confession, 2nd edition 1646, and those of Dr John Gill, in order to avoid some of the difficulties encounter by Particular Baptist during the later part of the 19 century and since. This booklet highlights the problem and suggests the Berton Particular Baptists Pakistan is as step in the right direction.

Isaiah 52:8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. **Trojan Warriors**



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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.

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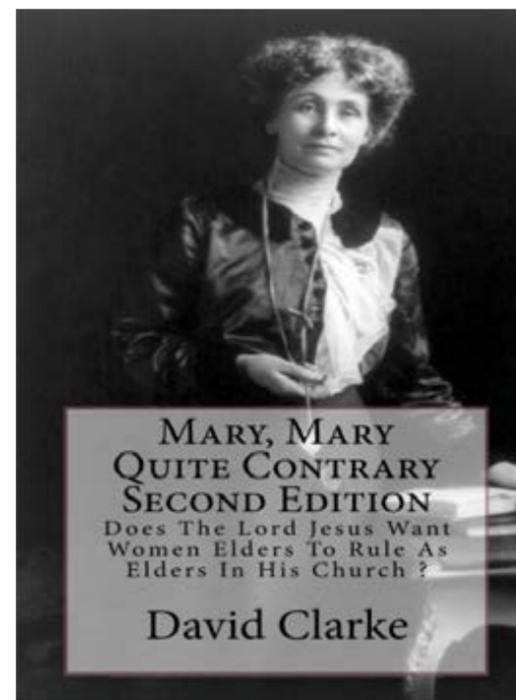
When David heard the news of his brothers arrest on an ITN television news bulletin he felt compelled to wrote their story. And then when he heard of his own brothers conversion from crime to Christ, after serving 5 year of his sentence, he published their story in his book, "Converted on LS Trip", and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

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

ISBN-13: 978-1514206812

ISBN-10: 1514206811

BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / General

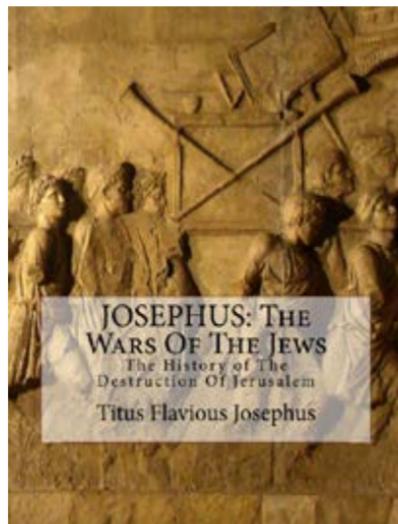
When treating the subject of women elders in the church we are not dealing with the affairs of a secular society and so it has nothing to do with women's rights, equality of sex or race in the world. This matter only relates to men and women in a Christian church. It is about the rules of the house of 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.

Josephus: The Wars Of The Jews**The History of The Destruction Of Jerusalem**

Authored by Titus Flavius Josephus, Designed by
Translated by William Winston

ISBN-13: 978-1985029132 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

ISBN-10: 1985029138

BISAC: Religion / Christianity / History / General

Josephus was an eye witness to those events that he records in this book, 'The Wars of The Jews,' or 'The History of The Destruction Of Jerusalem.'

He records historic events that took place during and after the times of the New Testament scriptures.

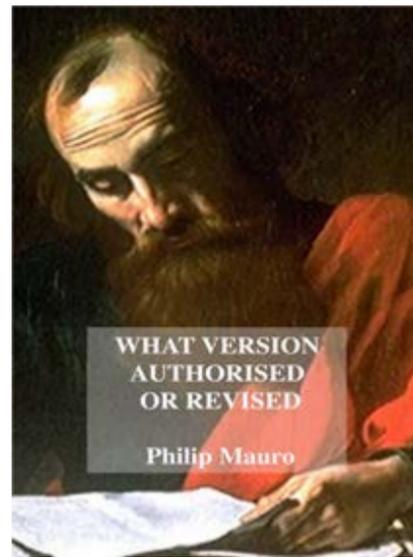
The book of Revelation was a prophecy, given to Jesus Christ, and published by the Apostle John, about those things that were shortly to come to pass in his day.

From the internal evidence of the book Revelation was written before the Neuronic persecution, of 66 A.D. and before the fall off Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple, in 70. A.D. This is because the book records that the temple in Jerusalem was still standing at the time the book was written and not around 95 A.D. as Eusebius mistakenly says.

The historic events that Josephus records are remarkable as they give evidence to the fulfillment of Prophecy given by the Lord Jesus in his Olivet prophecy. In fact the book of Revelation was a prophecy of those events that were shortly to come to pass when Jesus spoke to John who wrote the Revelation. Jesus had informed his Apostles about future events and they lived in expectation of there fulfillment in their day.

Josephus gives the historic evidence of the fulfillment of those prophecies and that confirms scripture fulfillment.

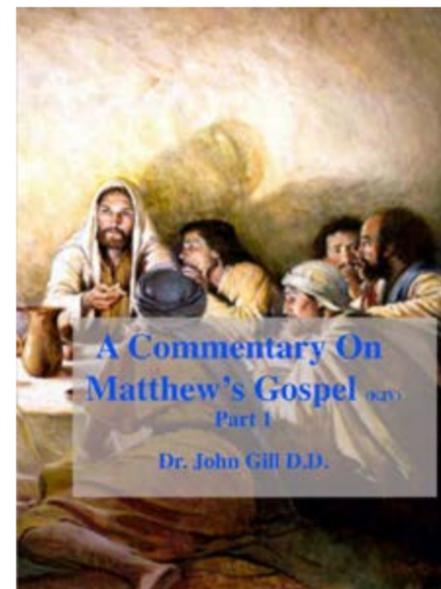
We recommend the James Stuart Russell's book, 'The Parousia' as a very good introduction to this subject and advertised at the back of this book in our Further Publications.

What Version Authorised Or Revised

Philip Mauro

The book discusses the issues relating to the reliability of the Authorised 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 Authorised Version is not accurate and Wescott and Hort produced a new compiled Greek Printed text manuscript, derived from, and base upon, two 4th C handwritten extant manuscripts. Codex Sinaiticus, written in Greek and Codex's 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 Authorised 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 Authorised Version of the Bible and know by

Christians, throughout the Christian age, as the Word of God. It has been republished by Bierton Particular Baptist to educate serious minded people about the subject of Bible translations and support the Authorised 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

By 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

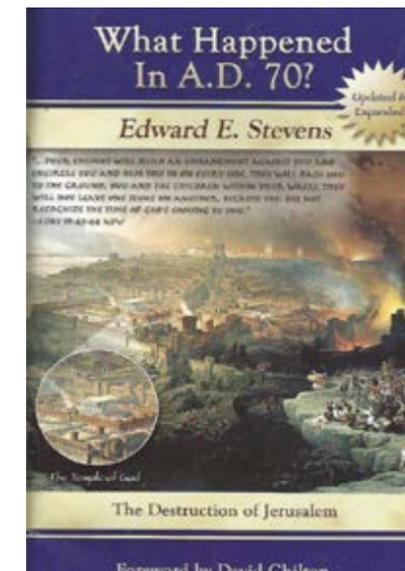
of the Lord Jesus Christ and named Levi. He was a tax collector for the Romans. There are two strong traditions that Matthew made a personal copy of his gospel and gave it to Barnabas, a companion of the Apostle Paul.

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

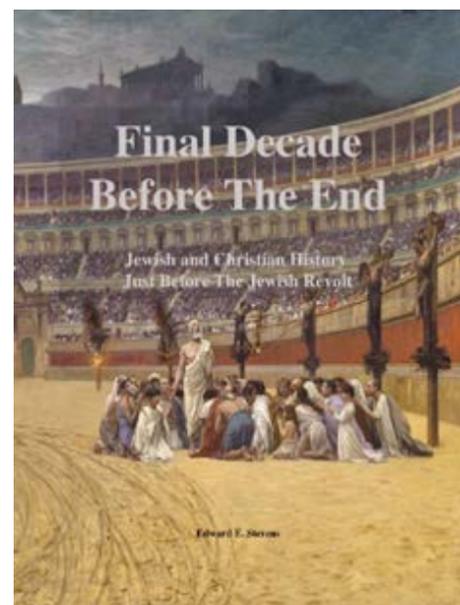
INTERNATIONAL PRETERIST ASSOCIATION

<https://www.preterist.org>

Bradford, Pennsylvania

April 17, 2010

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, Yosephus, 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).

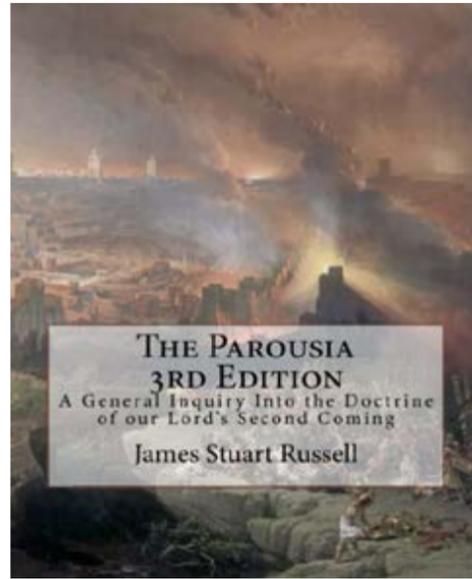
Edward E. Stevens

INTERNATIONAL PRETERIST ASSOCIATION

<https://www.preterist.org>

Bradford, Pennsylvania

April 17, 2010

The Parousia 2nd 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 (CreateSpace-Assigned)

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.