

The Cause of God and Truth

By Dr John Gill, D.D.

Part I AND II

PREFACE.

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

In the year 1735, the First Part of this work was published, in which are considered the several passages of Scripture made use of by Dr. Whitby and others in favour of the Universal Scheme, and against the Calvinistic Scheme, in which their arguments and objections are answered, and the several passages set in a just and proper light. These, and what are contained in the following Part in favour of the Particular Scheme, are extracted from Sermons delivered in a Wednesday evening's lecture.

The Second Part was published in the year 1736, in which the several passages of Scripture in favour of special and distinguishing grace, and the arguments from them, are vindicated from the exceptions of the Arminian, and particularly from Dr. Whitby, and a reply made to answers and objections to them.

The Third Part was published in 1737, and is a confutation of the arguments from reason used by the Arminians, and particularly by Dr. Whitby, against the above doctrines ; and a vindication of such as proceed on rational accounts in favour of them, in which it appears that they are no more disagreeable to right reason than to divine revelation ; to the latter of which the greatest deference should be paid, though the Rationalists of our age too much neglect it, and have almost quitted it ; but to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them.

In this part of the work is considered the agreement of the sentiments of Mr. Hobbes and the Stoic philosophers with those of the Calvinists, in which the difference between them is observed, and the calumny removed ; to which is added, a Defence of the 'Objections to the Universal Scheme, taken from

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the prescience and the providence of God, and the case of the Heathens.

The Fourth Part was published in 1738, in which the sense of the ancient writers of the Christian Church, before the times of Austin, is given ; the importance and consequence of which is shown, and that the Arminians have very little reason to triumph on that account.

This work was published at a time when the nation was greatly alarmed with the growth of Popery, and several learned gentlemen were employed in preaching against some particular points of it ; but the author of this work was of opinion, that the increase of Popery was greatly owing to the Pelagianism, Arminianism, and other supposed rational schemes men run into, contrary to divine revelation, This was the sense of our fathers in the last century, and therefore joined these and Popery together in their religious grievances they were desirous of having redressed ; and indeed, instead of lopping off the branches of Popery, the axe should be laid to the root of the tree, Arminianism and Pelagianism, the very life and soul of Popery.

This is Part 1 of 4 parts, and a new edition, with some alterations and improvements, is now published by request.

PUBLISHERS DEDICATION

This reproduction of Dr John Gill's, 'The Cause of God and Truth' is Part I of IV parts and has been presented and dedicated to the students, pastors and teachers of Christ-Centered Church Inc. Ministries, Philippines, under the care of Bishop William Ola Poloc, its founder and senior pastor 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 William and his 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>

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.



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](#)

Authors Biography

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).

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PART I
EXAMINATION
Section 1— Genesis 4:7
<i>If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted.</i>
It will be proper to inquire, whether a wicked, an unregenerate man, as was Cain, can perform good works. To which may be answered,
Adam had a power to do every good work the law required; which men, since the fall, have not. Men indeed, in an unregenerate state, might do many things which they do not; such as reading the Scriptures, attending on public worship, etc. No doubt but the persons in the parable, who were invited to the dinner, could have gone to it, had they had a will, as well as the one did to his farm, and the other to his merchandise. Men have an equal power, had they an heart, a will, an inclination, to go to a place of divine worship, as to a tavern, or alehouse; but it is easy to observe, that persons often times have it in the power of their hands, when they have it not in the power of their hearts, to do a good work; as a rich man to give alms to the poor. Unregenerate men are capable of performing works, which are in a natural and civil, though not in a spiritual sense, good. They may do those things, which externally, in appearance, and as to the matter and substance of them, may be good; such as hearing, reading, praying, giving alms to the poor, etc., when the circumstances requisite to good works are wanting; for whatsoever is done as a good work, must be done in obedience to the will of God; from a principle of love to him; must be performed in faith; in the name of Christ, and to the glory of God by him. Therefore,It must be denied, that wicked, unregenerate men, have a power to perform good works in a spiritual manner; which is evident from their natural estate and condition, according to the scriptural representation of it, which is this: that the bias of their minds is to that which is evil, and to that only; that they are wholly carnal, and mind nothing else but the things of the flesh; that they are weak and strengthless, yea, dead in trespasses and sins; nay, that they are under an impossibility to do that which is spiritually good; There is none that doeth good, no, not one of them, nor are they able; they are not subject to the law of God, nor can they be. When the Ethiopian changes his skin, and the leopard his spots,

then may they also do good, who are accustomed to do evil. Men may expect as soon to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles, as good fruit to grow upon, or good works to be performed by, unregenerate men; no, they must be created in Christ Jesus, have the Spirit of Christ put into them, and his grace implanted in them; they must be believers in him, before they are capable of doing that which is spiritually good. And even believers themselves are not able to think a good thought or perform a good work of themselves; it is God who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Sometimes when they have a will to that which is good, yet how to perform they know not; they can do nothing without Christ, though all things through him, who strengthens them; much less then have unregenerate persons either a power or a will to that which is spiritually good. Nor, Is there any foundation for such a proposition in these words, which are hypothetically expressed, and therefore nothing absolutely to be concluded from them; that is to say, we are not to argue from God’s saying to Cain, If thou dost well, therefore Cain had a power to do well, or to do that which is spiritually good, well; much less should we infer from hence, as one does, that “God could not have proposed the doing of good as a condition, if he had not given Cain sufficient strength whereby he was capable to do good.” Since God could not only have proposed the doing of good, but have required it according to his law, without being under obligation to give sufficient strength to obey; for though man by his sin has lost his power to obey the will of God in a right manner, yet God has not lost his authority to command; which he may use without obliging himself to find man sufficient strength to act in obedience to it. Besides,

These words regard doing well, not in a moral, but in a ceremonial sense. Cain and Abel were very early taught the necessity, manner, and use of sacrifices; and in process of time they brought their offerings to the Lord, each according to his different calling and employment; the one brought of the fruit of the ground, the other of the firstlings of his flock. Now to Abel and his offering the Lord had respect, that is, he accepted him and his offering; but to Cain and his offering he had not respect; which made Cain very wroth, and his countenance fell; upon which the Lord expostulates with him after this manner, Why art thou

wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou dost well, ean orqwV prosenegkhV , If thou hadst offered rightly, as the Septuagint renders the words which though it is not a proper literal translation of them, yet agreeable enough to their sense, shouldst thou not be accepted? Cain failed either in the matter or manner of his sacrifice; probably in the latter; since the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews observes, that by faith, Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. (Heb. 11:4) Cain offered his sacrifice without faith, without any view to the sacrifice of Christ: he performed this his sacrifice hypocritically, in show and appearance only; he acted from no right principle, nor to any right end; and therefore his works, whatever show of righteousness they might have, are, by the apostle John, (1 John 3:12) rightly called evil; as are also all the works of wicked and unregenerate men. I proceed,

To consider whether man's acceptance with God is on the account of his good works.

There is a difference between the acceptance of men's works, and of their persons for them: there are many actions done by men, which are acceptable and well-pleasing to God, when they themselves are not accepted by him, on account of them. Besides, no man's works are accepted by him whose person is not previously accepted: God first had respect to the person of Abel, and then to his offering; which shows that his was not accepted for the sake of his offering. The best works of the saints are imperfect and attended with sin, and are only acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, in whom, and in whom only, who is the beloved, their persons are accepted and well-pleasing to God. No man can be justified or saved by his works, and therefore no man can be accepted with God on that account; which is the current doctrine of the sacred writings: this will help us to understand the true sense of such passages, as Acts 10:35, Romans 19:18, 2 Corinthians 5:9, compared with Ephesians 1:6, and 1 Peter 2:5.

Nor do these words suppose that man's acceptance with God stands upon the foot of works. The Hebrew word tas, for there is but one word in the original text, which our translators render, shalt thou not be accepted? signifies either excellency, as in Psalm 62:4, and may design the dignity of primogeniture, or honor of birth-right, as it does in Genesis 49:3, and so

be rendered, shalt thou not have the excellency? that is, shall not the right of primogeniture continue with thee? shall not the honor and privilege of being the first-born abide with thee? thou needest not be afraid that this shall be taken from thee, and given to thy younger brother, who is willing to be subject to thee, and ready to serve thee; which well agrees with the latter part of the text, and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shall rule over him; or the word signifies an elevation, or lifting up; and is to be understood as Aben Ezra observes of Mygp tas, a lifting up of the countenance, which was fallen, verses 5, 6, and then the sense is, if thou hadst done well, when thou broughtest thine offering, thou mightest have lift up thy face without spot, and doubtless thou wouldst have done so; but inasmuch as thou hast sinned and done evil, and which is to be seen in thy fallen countenance, sin lies at the door of thy conscience; which, when once opened, it will enter in, and make dreadful work; as it did a little after; which made him say, My punishment is greater than I can bear. But admitting that the word signifies acceptance, and be rendered, shall there not be an acceptance? it is to be understood, not of an acceptance of his person, but of his sacrifices and services.

It remains to be considered, whether Cain had a day of grace, in which it was possible for him to be accepted with God.

There is no acceptance of any man's person, but as he is considered in Christ the Mediator. Now as there is no reason to believe that ever Cain, who was of the wicked one, the devil, was ever in Christ, or ever considered in him; so there is no reason to conclude, that he either was, or that it was possible for him to be, accepted with God.

The text does not speak of his doing well in a moral or spiritual, but in a ceremonial way; and not at all of the acceptance of his person, on the foot of so doing; but at most, only of the acceptance of his sacrifice and ceremonious services, supposing them rightly performed.

These words are not expressive of a day of visitation in a way of grace and mercy to him; but are to be considered as an expostulation with him for his wrath, fury, and fallen countenance, and an upbraiding of him with his evil doing, in order to awaken his conscience, and bring him to a full sense of his sin;

which was so far from proving a day of grace to him, that it quickly issued in the utmost distress of mind, torture of conscience, and black despair.

Section 2—Genesis 6:3.

And the Lord said, my Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

It will be necessary, in order to understand the sense of this text, to inquire,

Who is meant by the Spirit of God; and whether the Holy Ghost, the third Person in the Trinity, is designed or not.

Some of the Jewish writers think, that the soul of man is intended; which is called not only the spirit of man, but also the Spirit of God; as in those words of Job, All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils. (Job 27:3). Some of them derive the word dg translated strive, from zry, which signifies the scabbard of a sword, and say, what the scabbard is to the sword, that the body is to the soul; and give this as the sense of the words; "My Spirit, or the soul which I have put into man, shall not always abide in him as a sword in its scabbard; I will unsheath it, I will draw it out; he shall not live always, seeing he is flesh, corrupt, given up to carnal lusts; yet his days, or term of life, which I will now shorten, shall be one hundred and twenty years." Another of them delivers the sense of the words to this purpose; "My Spirit, which I have breathed into man, shall not be any more in contention with the body; for it does not delight in nor receive profit from the desires of the body; for the body is drawn after beastly desires, and that because it is flesh, and its desires are plunged and fixed in the propagation of the flesh; however, I will prolong their days one hundred and twenty years; and if they return by repentance, very well; but if not, I will destroy them from the world. The Targum paraphrases the words thus, "This wicked generation shall not be established before me for ever." Others, as Sol Jarchi, understand it of God himself, thus saying, within himself, "My Spirit, which is within me, shall not always be, as it were, in a tumult, or contention about man, whether I shall spare him, or destroy him, as it has been a long time, but it shall be no longer so; I will let man know that I am not fluctuating between mercy and judgment, but am at a point, being determined to punish him, since he is wholly

given up to carnal pleasures, when I have spared him an hundred and twenty years more." This sense of the words much obtains among learned men. And if either of these senses be received, the reasonings of the Arminians from these words, in favour of any branch of their scheme, fall to the ground; but I am willing to allow, that by the Spirit of God, we are to understand the Holy Ghost; so Jonathan Ben Uzziel, in his Targum, expressly calls him; and I am the rather induced to believe this to be the meaning of the phrase; since the apostle Peter, when he speaks of Christ being put to death in the flesh, and quickened by the Spirit, which is to be understood of the Holy Spirit, adds, by which, that is, by which Spirit, also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, (1 Pet. 3:18-20.) which words refer to those in Genesis, and are the best key unto them, and comment on them. I proceed to consider,

Whether the Holy Spirit was in the men of the old world, since, as it is observed, the words may be rendered, My Spirit shall not always strive in man; and whether it may be concluded from hence, that the Spirit of God is in every man, from whom he may wholly remove through man's misconduct.

The Spirit of God is every where, in every creature, and so in every man, as he is the omnipresent God; hence says the Psalmist, Whither shall I fly from thy Spirit? (Ps. 139:7.) He may also be in some persons by his gifts natural or divine, and that either in an ordinary or in an extraordinary way, or by some operations of his on the mind; which are not of a saving nature, nor designed to a saving purpose; and in one or other of these senses, the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal; (1 Cor. 12:7); and the Spirit may be said to be both in the men of the old world, and of this. But,

That he is in every man in a way of special grace, and to saving purposes, provided they behave well, must be denied; for every unconverted man is destitute of the Spirit; were the Spirit, in this sense, in every man, the indwelling of the Spirit would be no evidence of regeneration; the difference between a regenerate and an unregenerate man lying in this, the one has, the other has not the Spirit of God. Hence,

It is easy to judge in what sense the Spirit of God

does, and does not depart where he once is. Where he is only by his gifts or external operations, he may wholly remove, he may take away those gifts, or cease from those works; and men, notwithstanding these, may be everlastingly lost; but where he is by his special grace, he never totally departs, though he may withdraw his gracious presence for a time; his people may not be indulged with his joys and comforts, and in their apprehension he may seem to be taken away from them, yet he always abides in them; otherwise Christ's prayers for his perpetual continuance with his people would not be answered; nor would the Spirit's indwelling be a security of the saints' perseverance nor any certain pledge of their future glory. To add no more, the words of the text speak not of the Spirit's being in the men of the old world, but of his striving with them. Wherefore the next inquiry Is, what is meant by the strivings of the Spirit? and whether through man's neglect of him, or opposition to him, he may strive to no purpose.

The Hebrew word *zwd*, here used, signifies to judge, to execute judgment, or punish in a righteous way; and so some read the words, My Spirit shall not judge these men for ever; I will not reserve them to everlasting torments; I will punish them here in this world; for they are flesh, frail sinful creatures; I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made; (Isa. 57:16) or rather the sense is according to this version, My Spirit shall not exercise judgment on them for ever, that is, immediately, directly, at this very instant; though they are so corrupt, I will give them the space of one hundred and twenty years to repent in; and after that, if they repent not, I will deliver them up to destruction; which accordingly was the event of things.

The word here translated strive, signifies also to litigate a point, or reason in a cause; before it is ripe for judgment, or the execution of it. Now the Spirit of God had been litigating and reasoning with these men in the court and at the bar of their own consciences, about their sins, by one providence or another, and by one minister or another; particularly by Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and that to no purpose; hence he determines to go on no longer in this way, but to proceed to pass and execute the sentence of condemnation on them, since they were so very

corrupt, being nothing else but flesh. However, to show his clemency and forbearance, he grants them a reprieve for one hundred and twenty years; which is that long suffering of God the apostle speaks of, that waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing. (1 Pet. 3:20). Hence it appears, that the strivings of the Spirit of God with these men, were only by the external ministry of the word, and in a way of moral suasion, which came to nothing. This may lead us to observe the insufficiency of moral suasion and the external ministry of the word, without the powerful and efficacious grace of the Spirit.

It is now easy to discern in what sense the Spirit of God may be opposed and resisted, and strive to no purpose, and in what sense not. The things of the Spirit of God are disagreeable to a natural man: it is no wonder that the external ministry of the word and ordinances are despised, opposed, and resisted. The external call maybe rejected; yea, some inward motions and convictions may be overruled, stifled, and come to nothing: nay, it will be granted, that there may be and is an opposition and resistance to the work of the Spirit of God in conversion; but then the Spirit cannot be so resisted, in the operations of his grace, as to be obliged to cease from his work, or to be overcome or hindered in it; for he acts with a design which cannot be frustrated, and with a power which is uncontrollable; were it otherwise, the regeneration and conversion of every one must be precarious, and where the grace of the Spirit is effectual, according to the doctrine of free-will, it would be more owing to the will of man than to the Spirit of God.

It may be asked whether the old world had a day of grace, and so all mankind, in which they might be saved if they would; during which time the Spirit strives with man; and when that is expired he strives no longer.

The space of one hundred and twenty years allowed the old world for repentance was indeed a favour, and indulgence of divine Providence, a time of God's long-suffering and forbearance; but it does not follow, that because they had such a space allotted to them, in which, had they repented, they would have been saved from temporal ruin; that therefore all mankind have a day of grace, which if they improve, they may be saved with an everlasting salvation. For, If by a day of grace are meant the means of grace, the

external ministry of the word and ordinances, these are insufficient to salvation, without the efficacious grace of God; and besides, these are not enjoyed by all mankind. Every man has not a day of grace in this sense. Sometimes the means of grace, have been confined to one particular nation, and all the rest of the world have been without them for a considerable number of years. This was the case of all the nations of the world whom God suffered to walk in their own ways; overlooked them, took no notice of them, gave them no day of grace; while his worship was only kept up in the land of Judea. And since the coming of Christ; the administration of the word and ordinances has sometimes been in one place, and sometimes in another, when the rest of mankind have been without them: so that every man in this sense has not had a day of grace.

The whole Gospel dispensation in general may be called a day of grace; but this day does not expire while men live, or at their death; it reaches from the coming of Christ, unto the end of the world; it will continue until all the elect of God are gathered in: nor can it be said of any man, that, he has outlived or out-sinned this day of grace; for still it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice; Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. (Heb. 3:7; 2 Cor. 6:2)

The open special day of grace to God's elect, begins at their conversion, which will never end, never be over with them; though may have their clouds and darkness, until it is changed into the everlasting day of glory.

Section 3—Deuteronomy 5:29.

O that there were such an heart in them that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever.

These vehement desires of God for the good of these people, are said to be irreconcilable with his decrees of election and reprobation; and supposing those decrees, they are represented to be hypocritical: to which may be replied;

For God passionately to wish good things, even salvation itself, for some, and not for all, is no ways contrary, but perfectly agreeable to the doctrine of election. If any thing is said to the purpose, as militating against that doctrine, it ought to be said and proved, that God has vehemently desired the salvation

of all mankind; of which these words can be no proof, since they only regard the people of Israel, who were the fewest of all people. As for those scriptures which represent God as willing all men to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9), and not willing that any should perish, they will be considered in their proper places.

It might seem repugnant to these decrees, and to imply hypocrisy and guile, could any instance be produced of God's passionately wishing the salvation of such whom the Scriptures represent as rejected of him, given up to a reprobate mind, and as vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, or who are not eventually saved; but none will say, such were the people whose good and welfare are vehemently desired in this passage of Scripture. For, These are the most improper instances that could have been pitched upon: since they were a peculiar people to the Lord, whom he had chosen to be a special people to himself, above all people upon the face of the earth (Deut. 7:6).

These passionate wishes also, supposing the doctrine of particular redemption, are said to represent as full of guile, deceit, insincerity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy; to which I answer, The doctrine of particular redemption is the doctrine of the Scriptures. Christ died not for all men, but for some only; who are called his people, his sheep, his church, unless all men can be thought to be the people, sheep, and church of Christ.

The blasphemous charge of guile, deceit, insincerity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy, ought to be removed from God, who cannot lie, deceive, dissemble, or deny himself; who is a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he. Nor, Does such a passionate wish for the good of these people, whom God had so great a regard for as to redeem from Egyptian bondage, imply any thing of this nature, supposing the doctrine of particular redemption for, as has been observed in answer to former question, it ought to be proved, that God has ever used such expressions of desire for the salvation of all mankind, and particularly of such who are not saved; in which number none will choose to put the people of Israel, especially since it is said (Rom. 11:26), that all Israel shall be saved. And, After all, these words do not express God's desire of their eternal salvation, but only of their temporal good and welfare, and that of their posterity; for their eternal salvation was not to

be obtained by works of righteousness done by them, by their fear or worship of God, or by their constant universal obedience to his commands. They were saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, even as we. Their fear of God, and obedience to his will, issued indeed in their temporal prosperity, and on this account were strictly enjoined them; that so they might live, and it be well with them, and they prolong their days in the land they were going to possess, as appears from verse 33; and with a view to this, God so ardently desired these things in them, and to be done by them.

Such pathetic expressions are thought to imply, that God gives to all men sufficient grace for conversion, and to militate against the necessity of the unfrustrable operation of his grace in that work.

Admitting that the saving work of conversion is here wished for; such a wish does not necessarily suppose that sufficient grace for that work either was or would be given; and if the thing wished for was effected, it does not follow from hence, that this was not performed by the unfrustrable operation of God's grace.

Allowing that this grace, an heart to fear the Lord, and all that is requisite to it, were given to the Israelites; it ought not to be concluded from hence, that all men have the same, or that God wishes the same to all men.

We are not to imagine that such velleities and wishes are strictly and properly in God; who here speaks, as R. Aben Ezra observes, Mda ygb zwlk, by an anthropopathy, after the manner of men; such desires are ascribed to him in the same way as human passions and affections are; as anger, grief, repentance, and the like: nor do such wishes and desires declare either what God does or will do; but what he approves of, and is grateful to him; as are an heart to fear him, and a constant and universal obedience to his commandments.

The words are so rendered by some, as that they express no wish or desire in God, but rather what was to be desired by the Israelites themselves; so the Arabic version, it should be wished for by them, that such an heart would continue in them; that is, such an heart as they professed to have in verse 27, when they said to Moses, Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the

Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it, and do it. The Lord takes notice of this declaration, in verse 28: I have heard, says he, the voice of the words of this people, they have well said all that they have spoken; and then adds, according to this version, that a continuance of such an heart to hear and do, should be very desirable by them. Moreover, the words zty ym, may be rendered as they are by the Septuagint, tisdwsei, who will give? and so be considered as an inquiry, as Dr. Whitby himself says who will give them this heart? they could not give it themselves: no creature could give it them; only God could give them such an heart as this. And perhaps this mode of expression may be used on purpose to convince them of their want of such an one, and that God only could give it to them; and therefore they should apply to him for it, and not presume, as they seemed to do, to hearken to his commandments, and obey them in their own strength, and without the assistance of his grace. Or, These words may be considered as an upbraiding of these people with the want of an heart to fear the Lord, and with want of ability, to keep all his commandments, and that always, notwithstanding the vain boasts and empty resolutions they had just now made. In the same manner are we to consider other pathetic expressions of the like nature; such as Deuteronomy 32:28, 29 and Psalm 81:11-13.

Section 4—Deuteronomy 8:2.

And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.

It is said, that it is evident from this and other passages of Scripture, that the state of man in this world, is a state of trial or probation. It will be proper therefore to make the following inquiries:

What this state of probation is, or what is meant by it. This state of trial is not of men's graces, as faith, patience, etc., by afflictive dispensations of Providence; for men in general are not in such a state, since all men have not grace to be tried; nor is the state of every man an afflicted one in this life: this is a state peculiar to the people of God, and to them only when converted: for before conversion they have no graces to be tried; and with some of them, this state is very short, and so far from being the state of man whilst

in this world; and yet, as will be seen hereafter, the proof of the state of probation pretty much depends on passages of Scripture which relate to the exercise of the graces of the saints by afflictions, temptations, etc.

This state of trial, if I understand it right, is of man's obedience and conduct towards God during his life; according to which conduct and behavior God acts towards him, both in this and the other world; his state, as to happiness or misery, being yet unfixed: so that whilst this state lasts, it is uncertain whether he will be saved or lost.

What proof is given of the state of man in this world, being such a one. All those scriptures are urged, which speak of God's proving the children of Israel when in the wilderness, and in their own land, whether they would walk in his statutes, and keep his commandments, or no; such as Exodus 16:4, Exodus 20:20; Deuteronomy 8:2, and 13:3; Judges 2:21, 22, and 3:1, 4. It ought to be observed, that these people were under a theocracy, or the immediate government of God as their King, who gave them laws, according to which they should act; to which they readily promised a cheerful and universal obedience; on condition of which obedience, they were to enjoy, and continue in their enjoyment of the land of Canaan. Therefore, before they entered into the land, and when in it, God was pleased to try them, sometimes in one way, and sometimes in another, whether they would yield that obedience to his commands which he required, and abide by the promises which they themselves had made, or no; all which he did not for his own sake, who knows all things, but that their obedience or disobedience might be made manifest, and he be justified in all his dealings with them. This trial of their obedience was not in order to their salvation in another world, but to their temporal good in this; for such of them as were saved with an everlasting salvation, were saved not by their obedience to the commands of God, but by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides, the scriptures produced, speak only of the people of Israel, and of what was their state and case as a politic body, under the immediate government of God, in a certain period of time; and not of all mankind; and so fall abundantly short of proving that the state of man in this world, is such a state of probation as before described.

This is attempted to be proved from all those places in which God is said to try men, their works and graces, by afflictions, persecutions, temptations, and the like; as 1 Corinthians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 3:2; 1 Peter 1:7, and 4:12; James 1:3; Revelation 2:10, and 3:10; Psalm 66:10; Daniel 11:35, and 12:10; Zechariah 13:9. What I have said in answer to the first query, is a sufficient reply to what is alleged from these passages; since these only speak of the saints, and of the trial of their grace, who only have grace to be tried, and that not in order to fix and settle the affair of their salvation; nor are these trials mere experiments of the truth and constancy of their graces: but are also designed for the further exercise and increase of them; the issue of which is their own spiritual good, and God's glory. Hence it must follow that these scriptures are insufficient proofs of every man's being in a state of probation, and in order to everlasting happiness or misery.

This is said to be evident from all the promises and threats recorded in the Scripture, to engage all men to repent, and turn to God; for it is added, no such thing is or can reasonably be offered to them who are already in a fixed state either of happiness or misery. To which I reply, that the promises and threats recorded in the Scripture, which relate to men's spiritual and eternal good, may be reduced to and comprehended in these words, He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned; which was the substance of the gospel ministry the apostles had in commission from Christ to fulfill, and which might be exercised fully and thoroughly, supposing a fixed state of happiness or misery; since such a ministry might be, and is used, through the grace of God, to bring those who are designed for happiness, into a state of grace meet for the same; and to leave others inexcusable, to discover the more the corruption and vitiosity of their nature, and so to justify the righteous proceedings of God against them.

This is argued for from all the exhortations of the holy Scripture to men to watch and pray, that they enter not and are not led into temptation, and from such scriptures which suppose men to be in danger by temptation; the passages referred to are, Matthew 6:13, and Matthew 26:41; Luke 8:13; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; which only regard the saints, or such who profess

to be so, and not all mankind. Besides, if God has put all men into a state of probation, and this designed by temptation, how should any watch and pray not to enter or be led into it? Moreover, this state of probation, is either a good one, or a bad one; if a good one, why should men watch and pray against it? if a bad one, can it be reasonably supposed, that God has put men into it, in order to their everlasting good? and why then should it be contended for?

This is said to be evident from the temptations of Satan, who goes about continually seeking whom he may devour; and it is added, to what end should he tempt, or endeavor to destroy the elect, or strive to hinder the progress of the gospel, or the conversion of any man; when supposing a fixed state by the decrees of God, and a divine unfrustrable operation on the hearts of men, he must know that his labor will certainly be in vain? To which I answer, that Satan has not the book of life in his keeping; nor does he know who are and who are not the elect of God, until this appears by the unfrustrable operation of God's grace on their hearts, and it may be, not even then: so that it is no wonder that he tempts, strives, and endeavors to hinder the success of the gospel in their conversion, and to destroy them; and when he does know who they are, endeavors to distress them by his temptations, though he cannot destroy; and in ten thousand instances will show his malice, when he cannot show his power. Besides, the text referred to in 1 Peter 5:8, carries in the sense of it the doctrine of a fixed state; when it supposes that there are some whom Satan may devour, and leaves a plain intimation that there are others whom he may not and cannot devour; who are the sheep of Christ, and being in his hands, neither man nor devil will ever be able to pluck from thence. This is the sum of the proof offered in favour of this notion, by a celebrated writer, which how pertinent it is, must be left to the consideration of others.

What reason there is to conclude that the state of man in this world is not such a state.

Angels and man both, have been in a state of probation already, in which their free-will, and power to obey the commands of God, have been sufficiently tried; which trial has issued in the fall and ruin of a large number of angels, and of the whole race of mankind: and therefore it is not reasonable to suppose that God would put man into such a state again; but

rather provide in another way for the good of those he designed to bring to everlasting happiness.

If men were in a state of probation, they ought to be on equal ground, enjoying equal privileges and advantages; whereas this is not the case; some have only the dim light and weak law of nature, whilst others enjoy the gospel revelation; and of these some have larger, and others lesser, means of grace, light, and knowledge; some have the grace of God itself bestowed upon them, others have it not. Now were all men in such a state of probation as is pleaded for, is it reasonable to suppose that there would be such an inequality among them?

This state of probation, which renders salvation precarious and uncertain, is contrary to God's foreknowledge and decree of election; for God, according to his foreknowledge, has chosen and predestinated a certain number of men to eternal life and salvation, by which their state is fixed, and their salvation sure, for the purpose of God according to election shall stand. Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate; whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Rom. 9:11; 8:29, 30).

This notion puts man's salvation on the foot of his obedience and works, contrary to the Scriptures, to the merits of Christ, and to the grace of God; it ascribes more to the free-will of man than to the free grace of God, and lays a foundation for boasting in the creature.

Such a state of probation is contrary to all those scriptures which represent the saints to be now in a saved state, and as having everlasting life; such as Ephesians 2:8, John 5:24, and John 6:47. In a word, it destroys the doctrine of assurance, and leaves the saints themselves in a most uncomfortable condition, because it leaves them in a most precarious, unsettled, yea, dangerous one.

Section 5—Deuteronomy 30:19.

I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.

These words are frequently made use of by the patrons of free-will, in favour of it, and its power, to do that which is spiritually good. I shall briefly consider this so-much-controverted subject, by

considering the following things:

What free-will is, or what is the nature of the liberty of the human will.

The will of man, though it is free, yet not independently and absolutely so; it is dependent on God, both in its being and acting; it is subject to his authority and command, and controllable by his power. The King's heart (Prov. 21:1), and so every other man's, is in the hand of the Lord: as the rivers of waters, he turneth it whithersoever he will. The will of God is only free in this sense; he is not subject to a superior being, and therefore acts without control, according to his will, in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth: hence those great swelling words of vanity, *aujtexousion*, *liberum arbitrium*, which carry in them the sense of self-sufficiency, despotic, arbitrary liberty, are improperly given to the human will, though agreeable enough to the language of some free-willers; such as Pharaoh, who said, Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go (Ex. 5:2). Others have said, Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us? (Ps.12:4).

The liberty of the will does not consist in an indifference to good and evil, or in an indetermination to either; otherwise the will of no being would be free; for God, as he is essentially and naturally good, his will is determined only to that which is so; nor does he nor can he do anything evil; and yet in all he does, acts with the utmost freedom and liberty of his will. The will of the good angels, though in their state of probation, was left mutable and liable to change; yet in their confirmed state, is impeccable, wholly turned unto and bent upon that which is good, and yet all the services they perform to God and man, are done with the greatest readiness, cheerfulness, and willingness, without any force or compulsion. The will of the devil is biased only to that which is evil, without the least inclination to that which is good; and yet moves freely in the highest acts of sin and malice. The will of man, considered in every state he has been, is, or shall be in, is determined to good or evil, and does not stand in equilibrio, in an indifference to either. The will of man, in a state of innocence, was indeed mutable, and capable of being wrought upon and inclined to evil, as the event shows; yet during that state, was entirely bent on that which is good, and acted freely, and

without any co-action, in obedience to the commands of God. The will of man, in his fallen state, is wholly addicted to sinful lusts, and in the fulfilling of them takes the utmost delight and pleasure. Man, in his regenerate state, though he is inclined both to good and evil which arises from the two different principles of corruption and grace in him; yet both move freely, though determined to their several objects. The flesh, or corrupt part, is solely determined to that which is evil; grace, or the new creature, to that which is spiritually good; so that with the flesh, the regenerate man serves the law of sin, and with his mind the law of God. The will of the glorified saints in heaven is wholly given up to spiritual and divine things, nor can it be moved to that which is sinful; and yet as they serve the Lord constantly, so with all freedom and liberty. Consider, therefore, the will in very rank of beings, its liberty does not consist in an indifference or indetermination to good and evil.

The liberty of the will is consistent with some kind of necessity. God necessarily, and yet freely, hates that which is evil, and loves that which is good. Christ, as man, was under some kind of necessity of fulfilling all righteousness, and yet performed it voluntarily. The will of man is free from a physical or natural necessity; it does not act and move by a necessity of nature, as many creatures do. So the sun, moon, and stars, move in their course; fire, by a physical necessity, burns; light things ascend upwards, and heavy bodies move downwards. Moreover, it is free from a necessity of co-action or force; the will cannot be forced; nor is it even by the powerful, efficacious, and unfrustrable operation of God's grace in conversion; for though before, it; is unwilling to submit to Christ, and his way of salvation, yet it is made willing in the day of his power, without offering the least violence to it; God working upon it, as Austin says, *cum suavi omnipotentia et omnipotentis suavitatem*, with a sweet omnipotence, and an omnipotent sweetness: but then the will of man is not free from a necessity of obligation; it is bound to act in obedience to the divine will; though it is free, it is not free to act at pleasure, without control; though the sinful, corrupt will of man, breaks out in despite of the laws of God, and chooses its own ways, and delights in its abominations; yet this is not properly liberty, but licentiousness. And though a good man looks upon

himself under a necessary obligation to act agreeable to the will of God, yet this necessity is act contrary to the liberty of his will; for he delights in the law of God after the inner man. Moreover, there is a kind of necessity which the school-men call a necessity of immutability; which respects the divine decrees, and their necessary, unchangeable, and certain events, that is consistent with the liberty of man's will: for though the decrees of God are necessarily fulfilled, yet these do not infringe nor hinder the liberty of the creature in acting; for instance, the selling of Joseph to the Ishmaelites, by whom he was brought to Egypt, was according to the decree and purpose of God, who sent him thither, and designed it for the good of others, and yet his brethren in the whole of that affair, acted with the utmost deliberation, choice, and freedom of their wills imaginable. Nothing was more peremptorily decreed and determined by God than the crucifixion of Christ, and yet men never acted more freely, as well as more wickedly, than the Jews did in all the parts and circumstances of that tragical scene. So that the liberty of the will is consistent with some kind of necessity, yea, even with some kind of servitude. A servant may serve his master freely and voluntarily, as the Hebrew servant who was unwilling to part from his master when his time of servitude was expired. A wicked man, who commits sin, gives up himself wholly to it, is a servant of it, yet acts freely in all his shameful and sinful services; even at the same time he is a slave to those lusts and pleasures he chooses and delights in; which made Luther call free-will servum arbitrium.

The consideration of the will of man in the several states of innocence, the fall, regeneration, and glorification, serves much to lead us into the true nature and notion of the liberty and power of it. Man, in his state of innocence, had both a power and will to do that which was naturally and morally good; though his will was left mutable, and so through temptation might be inclined to evil, at which door came in the sin and fall of man. Man, in his fallen state, is wholly under the power and dominion of sin, is a captive under it, and a slave unto it, and has neither a power nor will to that which is spiritually good. Man, in a state of regeneration, is freed from the dominion of sin, though not from the being of it; his will is sweetly and powerfully wrought upon, and inclined to what

is spiritually good, though he finds a body of sin and death about him, which much distresses and hinders him in the performance of it. The saints in heaven are freed both from the being and dominion of sin; and as they have a will solely inclined, so they have full power, to serve the Lord without ceasing.

The distinction between the natural and moral liberty of the will is of great service in this controversy; though these two are artfully confounded together; and because the one is denied by us, it is concluded that the other is also; whereas we affirm, that the natural liberty of the will is essential to it, and always abides with it in every action and in every state of life. A wicked man, in the highest degree of servitude to sin, his will acts as freely in this state of bondage as Adam's will did in obedience to God, in a state of innocence; but the moral liberty of the will is not essential to it, though it adds to the glory and excellency of it; and therefore may and may not be with it, without any violation to, or destruction of, the natural liberty of the will. The moral liberty of the will to that; which is good was with Adam in a state of innocence; this was lost by the fall; hence man in a state of corruption and unregeneracy is destitute of it; in the regenerate state it is implanted in the will by the Spirit and grace of God, and in the state of glorification will be in its full perfection; so that the controversy ought to be not about the natural, but moral liberty of the will, and not so much about free-will itself, as the strength and power of it; which leads me to the consideration of the next inquiry, which is,

What is the strength and power of man's free-will; or what it is that the will of man itself can will or nill, choose or refuse, effect and perform.

It will be allowed that the human will has a power and liberty of acting, in things natural or in things respecting the natural and animal life; such as eating, drinking, sitting, standing, rising, walking, etc. The external parts, actions, and motions of the body, generally speaking, are subject to, and controllable by the will; though the internal parts, motions, and actions of it, are not so, such as digestion of food, secretion of it to various purposes and uses, nutrition and accretion of the several parts of the body, circulation of the blood, etc., all which are performed without the consent of the will.

The will of man has a liberty and power of

acting in things civil, such as relate to the good of societies, in kingdoms, cities, towns, and families; as obedience to magistrates, lawful marriage, education of children, cultivation of arts and sciences, exercise and improvement of trades and manufactures, and every thing else that contributes to the good, pleasure, and advantage of civil life.

Man has also a power of performing the external, parts of religion, such as praying, singing praise of God, reading the scriptures, hearing the word of God, and attending on all public ordinances. So Herod heard John gladly, and did many things in a religious way, externally. Men. may also give to every one their own, do justice between man and man, love such as love them, live inoffensively in the world, appear outwardly righteous before men, and do many things which have the show of moral good, as did the heathen and publicans, and the apostle Paul before conversion.

Man has neither will nor power to act of himself in things spiritually good, or in such as relate to his spiritual and eternal welfare; as conversion, regeneration, faith, repentance, and the like. Conversion is not the work of a creature, but of God, even a work of his almighty power; by which men are turned from sin and Satan to him, are delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. Regeneration, or a being born again, is expressly denied to be of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, and is ascribed to God himself. All men have not faith in Christ; and such who have it, have it not of themselves; it is the gift of God, the operation of his Spirit, the fruit and effect of electing and efficacious grace. Evangelical repentance, which is unto life, is not in the power of man; man, in a state of nature, has no true sense of his sins; nor will any means of themselves bring him to repentance for them, without the efficacious grace of God. True evangelical repentance is God's free-grace gift.

That there is no power naturally in the will of man, to will, choose, and effect things spiritually good, does not only appear from all experience of human nature, but also from all those scriptures which represent men as polluted, wholly carnal, given up to sin, slaves unto it, and dead in it; and not only impotent unto, but under an impossibility to do that which is good; and from

all those scriptures which declare the understanding, judgment, and affections, to be corrupt, by which the will is greatly influenced and directed; and from all such scriptures which intimate that every good gift and spiritual blessing come from God, and that the saints themselves only will and act through the power, and under the influence of the grace of God; who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. I proceed, To inquire whether the words of the text under consideration assert the power and liberty of the will of man in choosing that which is spiritually good. To which I answer,

Supposing what is here proposed to be chosen is spiritually good, and what to be refused is spiritually evil; it does not follow from hence that man has a power to choose the one and refuse the other; for, as Luther says, "The words are imperative, they assert nothing but what ought to be done; for Moses does not say, thou hast a power of choosing, but choose, keep, do.

He delivers precepts, of doing, but does not describe the power of man."

Life and death, blessing and cursing, are to be taken in a civil sense, and design the external dispensations of God's providence, with respect to temporal good or evil, which should befall the people of Israel, according to their civil behavior. That people were under the immediate government of God; he was their political king and head. Moses, from him, gave a system of laws to them as a body politic; according to their obedience to which laws, they and their seed were to live and dwell in and enjoy all the temporal blessings of the land of Canaan, as appears from verses 16, 20; but if they disobeyed, they were to expect cursing and death, captivity and the sword, and not prolong their days in the land they were going to possess, as is evident from verses 17, 18. Therefore Moses advises them to choose life, that is, to behave according to those laws given them as a commonwealth; that so they, under the happy government they were, might comfortably live, and they and their posterity enjoy all the blessings of a civil life in the land of promise. What comes nearer to such a case, and may serve to illustrate it, is as if a person should represent the wholesome constitution laws of Great Britain, preserved under the government of his majesty king George, with all the consequent blessing and happiness thereof, and also,

the sad and miserable condition it would be in under a popish Pretender; and then observe that it would be most desirable, advisable, and eligible peaceably to continue under the government of the one, than to receive the yoke of the other. To choose the one is to choose liberty and property, blessing and life, and everything, that is valuable, in a civil sense; to choose the other, is to choose slavery and arbitrary power, cursing and death, and everything that is miserable and destructive. Now it is allowed that man has a power of willing and nilling, choosing and refusing, acting and not acting, in things of a civil nature; therefore these words can be of no service, nor ought they to have a place or concern in the controversy about the power and liberty of the will in things spiritual.

Section 6—Deuteronomy 32:29.

O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.

These words were made use of to contradict the doctrines of absolute election, particular redemption, and unfrustrable grace in conversion; it is intimated, that, on supposition of these doctrines, they would represent the God of sincerity and truth as full of guile and hypocrisy, when he earnestly wishes and desires the welfare of men, and that they have spiritual wisdom; and yet he himself has decreed to leave them without a Savior, and without means of being spiritually wise; which is all one as though he had passionately wished they had been of the number of his elect, when he himself, by an absolute decree from all eternity, had excluded them out of that number. In answer to which, let it be observed,

That it ought to be proved that God does passionately wish the spiritual and eternal welfare of all mankind; or desires that every individual of human nature might have spiritual wisdom to know his spiritual estate, and consider his latter end; since it is evident that he does not afford to every son of Adam the means of being spiritually wise, and it is certain that these words do not express such an universal wish; for they only regard a part of mankind, either the people of Israel, or the adversaries of Israel, as will be seen hereafter; and therefore, being spoken only of some, and not of every individual of men, cannot militate against the election and redemption of some only.

It ought to be proved that God wishes or desires the spiritual welfare of, or spiritual wisdom for any,

but those whom he has chosen to eternal life, whom Christ has redeemed by his blood, and to whom the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of themselves and Christ is given; or in other words, that God wishes and desires the spiritual welfare of such, and spiritual wisdom for such, who, in the event, are not eternally saved.

It ought to be considered whether these words regard the spiritual welfare of any, or contain in them a wish for wisdom and understanding in spiritual things; or rather, whether they do not only regard things temporal, and the knowledge of them, as will quickly be made to appear. Supposing the words to contain a wish for wisdom and understanding in spiritual things, such a wish must be ascribed to God, not properly, but by an anthropopathy (the attributing of human emotions, passions, sufferings to God; ed.), or after the manner of men; wishes and velleities (a very low degree of desire or volition; ed.) are improperly, or in a figurative way, attributed to God; nor do they suppose any imperfection in him, nor sufficiency in his creatures; nor do such necessarily imply that it is his will to give that wisdom he wishes for; nor do they lay him under obligation even to afford the means of spiritual wisdom; but as a man wishes for that which is grateful and agreeable to him, so when God wishes for spiritual wisdom in men, it only implies that such wisdom in them would be well-pleasing to him. Besides, such a mode of speaking may be used either by way of complaint of ignorance, or as expressing pity for it, or as upbraiding with it; and that in order either to bring to a sense of it, and encourage to apply to him for wisdom, who gives it liberally, or to leave inexcusable. But,

The words are not delivered in the form of a wish, but are an hypothetical proposition. The Hebrew word *wl* signifies if, and the whole verse should be rendered thus:—If they were wise, they would understand this, they would consider their latter end; and supposing them to be understood in a spiritual sense, the meaning is, had they been wise to do good, as they are to do evil, they would have understood the things that belong to their spiritual peace and welfare, and would have seriously considered the last issue and end of all things, and themselves; but they are not wise in things divine and spiritual, and therefore have no understanding of them; nor do they consider

the end of their sinful actions; nor the end of their days, how short it is, how nigh at hand; nor that awful judgment that will follow after death; nor their final doom, nor whither they shall go, to heaven or hell. Though,

After all, the words are to be understood of things temporal, and not of what concerns the spiritual and eternal welfare of any. Instances of God's goodness to the people of Israel are at large recited in verse 14. After that, their many sins against God and great ingratitude to him are mentioned in verses 15-18, which drew God's resentment and indignation against them, expressed in threatenings of many severe judgments, verses 19-25, which he would have executed on them, but that he feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this (v. 27), for he knew that they were a nation void of counsel: neither was there any understanding in them (v. 28), for if they had been wise, they would have understood this, that the destruction of the people of Israel was of God, and not of them; for otherwise, how should one chase a thousand, that is, one Gentile a thousand Israelites; and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? (v. 30). They would also have considered their own end, or what must befall them in length of time; that as God had cut off and destroyed his people Israel for their sins, so they might expect the same destruction for iniquities of a like kind. Now since this is the plain and obvious sense of the words, they cannot be used with any propriety in the controversy about the doctrines of distinguishing grace.

Section 7—Psalm 81:13, 14.

O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways; I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.

This passage is produced by the Remonstrants, to prove the resistibility of the grace of God in Conversion; in favour of the delectability of the saints; and by a late writer, as irreconcilable with God's decrees of election and reprobation, and the doctrine of particular redemption; and as proving that men have a sufficiency of ability to do what God wishes they would do. But let it be considered,

That, admitting the words contain a wish and desire of God for the spiritual welfare and conversion of men, such a wish can only be ascribed to him in a figurative sense, as has been observed under the preceding section. Wishing cannot be attributed to God in such sense as it is to man, who often wishes for that which is not in his power to perform, and therefore desires it to be done by another, which cannot be said of God without impeaching his omnipotence. When God is said to wish for and desire, as we will suppose here, the conversion and obedience of men, it only implies that these would be grateful and well-pleasing to him; and not that either is in the power of men to convert themselves, and obey the commands of God, or that it is the determining will of God that every individual of mankind should be converted and obey his commands in a way acceptable to him; for then every man would be converted and obey: therefore, such a wish, suppose it as universal and extensive as you please, does not militate against the distinguishing grace of God, in choosing, redeeming, and calling some only; since such a wish only declares what God approves of, and not what he determines shall be.

The wish for the spiritual welfare of the persons here mentioned, supposing it to be one, is only for the people of Israel, God's professing people, and whom he calls my people, and not all mankind, or every individual son of Adam, as it ought to have been, could it be thought to militate against the election, redemption, and effectual vocation of some particular persons only; and besides, it would be difficult to prove that these persons spoken of, notwithstanding all their perverseness, rebellion, and misconduct, were not chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and savingly wrought upon by the power of divine grace, and finally saved.

The words, if duly examined, will appear not to contain any wish at all, but an hypothesis, or supposition; being to be read thus, If my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways, I should, etc. R. Sol. Jarchi interprets *wl* by *sa*, and R. Aben Ezra by *wlya*, and the Septuagint by *eij*; all which signify if: so the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Vulgate Latin, Junius, and Tremellius, read the words; therefore, as the Contra- Remonstrants have rightly observed, it does not follow from hence, that these people could obey the commands of God; or that the

performance of obedience depended on their will; no more than it would follow from such a proposition, if a man keeps the law of God perfectly, he shall be justified by it: therefore it is in the power of man to keep the law of God perfectly; or from this, if a man believes he shall be saved; therefore, faith depends on man's will, or is in man's power. Besides,

The words are not to be understood of the internal work of grace and conversion, and of spiritual and evangelical obedience springing from it, which would have been attended with spiritual and eternal blessings; but of an external obedience to God's commands, which would have been followed with temporal favours; such as subduing their enemies under them, feeding them with the finest of the wheat, and satisfying them with honey out of the rock; in the same sense are we to understand the words in Isaiah 48:18, which usually go in company with these under examination, and are also to be read conditionally; If thou hadst hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river; as they are by the Targum, the Septuagint, and Arabic versions, by R. David Kimchi, Junius, and Tremellius; and neither the one nor the other regard the spiritual, but temporal welfare of God's people Israel; nor do they contain a wish for that, but a declaration or an asseveration of it, on condition of their obedience to God's commands. The passage in Hosea 11:8, which is sometimes joined with this, is a human way of speaking, as R. Aben Ezra on the place observes; and expresses God's compassionate concern for the temporal welfare of Ephraim and Israel, and not transports of affection, and desire after the spiritual welfare of any, much less of all mankind.

Section 8—Psalm 125:3.

For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

These words are made use of to prove, that "saints, or true believers, or men once truly good, may cease to be so: for it is said, that they seem plainly to insinuate, that great and long impressions might have this effect upon them; trod surely that which God is thus careful to prevent, might possibly befall the righteous: there being no need of care to prevent that which he hath absolutely engaged to preserve them from." Strange! seeing, the doctrine of the saints final perseverance

is so plainly intimated in the two preceding verses of this psalm: They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever. If they that trust in the Lord, who are saints, true believers, men truly good, are as mount Zion; then they cannot be removed neither from the heart of God, nor out of the hands of Christ; but will abide there for ever, and consequently cannot cease to be what they are. If, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about the same persons before described, who are his people, and that even for ever; how is it possible that they should ever perish?

These words are strictly connected with the former, and express a certain effect that should surely follow from the safe state and happy situation of such who trust in the Lord, yk for, or because it is so and so with them; therefore the rod of the wicked, the tyrannical government, oppressions, and persecutions of wicked men, to which the saints are often subject, shall not rest, always continue and abide, upon the lot, not the back, as Dr. Whitby cites the words, of the righteous; meaning either their persons or their goods; lest the righteous, who are made so by the righteousness of Christ, put forth their hands unto iniquity; that is, lest through the oppressions of wicked men, the instigation of Satan, and their own hearts, they should be moved to that which would dishonor God, bring a reproach on his ways, and wound their own souls; all which they may do, and yet not cease to be saints, true believers, truly good men; as the instances of David, Peter, and others, fully make appear. The righteous may put forth their hands unto iniquity, and fall into great sins, and yet not totally fall away, or so fall as to be lost and perish: total apostasy is not intended by putting forth their hands unto iniquity.

It is stranger still, that the care of God to prevent the righteous putting forth their hands unto iniquity, should be improved into an argument against their perseverance, and in favour of their apostasy. It will be readily allowed, that what God is thus careful to prevent, even suppose a total apostasy was meant, might possibly befall the righteous, should they be left to themselves, destitute of the powerful protection of God; nor would there be a possibility of its being

otherwise; but since the care and power of God are so greatly employed about their preservation, it is impossible that it should befall them.

It is an egregious mistake to say, that "there is no need of care to prevent that which he (God) absolutely hath engaged to preserve them from;" since God's engagement to preserve his people, is the true reason of the employment of his care about them; which is necessary to prevent their doing the iniquity, which otherwise would be done by them: God having absolutely resolved, determined, and engaged, that those that trust in him should not be removed, but abide for ever; therefore he will be round about them for ever, and take care of them, that nothing hurt or destroy them; he will keep them by his power through faith unto salvation.

Section 9—Psalm 145:9.

The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

The doctrines of election and reprobation, and of particular redemption, are represented as contrary to the general mercy and goodness of God expressed in this passage: with a view to these doctrines, it is asked by one writer, "Why is it said, that his tender mercies are over all his works, if they are so restrained from his most noble creatures?" And it is observed by another, "That it should not be said, his tender mercies are over all his works: but his cruelties are over all his works." To which I reply, that the said doctrines do not restrain the tender mercies of God in a providential way, of which this text only speaks, as will be shown hereafter, from any of his creatures; no, not even from the non-elect, or those who have no share in the special grace and favour of God, and who are not eventually saved; though these should not be reckoned God's most noble creatures: for surely they are not more noble than the elect of God, or those who are saved with an everlasting salvation; or more noble than the angels, who stand, and never left their first estate in which they were created. Admitting also that these doctrines carried in them ideas of cruelty, and want of compassion in God to those who are rejected by him, and excluded from redemption by Christ; yet it should not be concluded from hence, that the cruelties of God are over all his works; since, according to the known tenor of these doctrines, some of God's creatures are chosen by him to eternal life,

redeemed by the blood of Christ, and shall be certainly and eternally saved.

The said doctrines are not expressive of cruelty in God to mankind, nor inconsistent with his goodness and mercy; nor do they represent God less good, or less merciful, than the doctrines of conditional election and universal redemption do; nay, they represent him more merciful than these do, since they ascertain the salvation of some, whereas these leave the salvation of every man. precarious and uncertain, if not impossible, depending upon the mutable will of the creature.

These words are to be understood not of special mercies, or saving benefits, bestowed by God upon any of his creatures; but of his providential goodness, which extends to them all, even to the brutal world, to all irrational as well as rational creatures, as appears from verses 15, 16, compared with Psalm 147:8, 9, who have no concern in election and redemption; so that if these words should be so understood, as to relate to the blessings of spiritual and eternal salvation, they would prove too much, more than our opponents desire; namely, that these blessing are provided for, and extend unto irrational creatures, yea, even to all the works of God, of every kind and sort. Therefore,

The said doctrines are not at all repugnant to these universal expressions of God's goodness and mercy; since the non-elect, or such who have no saving benefit by the death of Christ, have a share in the providential goodness and tender mercies of God; who makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, and is kind to the unthankful and to the evil: nay, often times the worst of men have the greatest share of the good things of this World; their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart could wish: their temporal mercies are often times larger than those, that the dear children of God enjoy; and therefore are not what they have in common with the brutes that perish; God takes more care of them than of oxen, or the fowls of the air, in a providential way; though they despise the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance; but after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Section 10—Proverbs 1:22-30.

How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? Turn ye at my reproof, etc.

These are the words of Christ, who, hinder the name of Wisdom, is represented crying without, and uttering his voice in the city in the streets, in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates; which is to be understood of the public preaching of the word, either by Christ himself, or by his ministers. What is advanced from these passages in favour of any part of the Arminian scheme, will be considered in the following order:

It, is said, that from hence “it is very evident, that it was primarily the counsel and will of God, that even they who would not turn, would not repent and accept of salvation, should believe and come to repentance, and be made partakers of it:” in which I observe,

That this writer, with the Remonstrants, supposes an antecedent and consequent will in God, when he says, that it was primarily the counsel and will of God, etc., as if what was once the will of God is not now his will; which is contrary to the immutability of his nature and will; who is in one mind; and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doth. What is once his will, is always so; nor can it be made null and void by the will of man.

That he mistakes the counsel of God here, as also in Luke 7:30, for the intentional will of God, respecting the faith, repentance, and salvation of persons; when it designs in both places, God’s will of command and approbation; and is expressive, not of what God intended and designed concerning these persons; but of what was their duty, and which would be grateful to him, and approved of by him: for had it been his intentional determining will that these persons, who rejected and despised his counsel, should believe, repent, and be saved, they would have believed, repented, and been made partakers of salvation; for who hath resisted his will?

It; is intimated from hence, that man does not lie under a disability to believe, repent, and turn to God; and it is asked, “To what purpose did wisdom say to them, who were thus disabled, Turn you at my reproof? Or could she, without insulting over the misery of fallen man, thus laugh at the calamity they could never prevent?” To which I reply,

That the exhortation, Turn ye at my. reproof, is not

to repentance and conversion, but to an attendance to the external ministry of the word. Reproof is the same with counsel, in verses 25, 30, where they are joined together, and put for each other, and design the word preached, which reproves of sin, righteousness, and judgment; and it is not turning at, but to this reproof, which is exhorted to; for the ythkytl wbmt, should not be rendered, turn ye at, but to my reproof; so Arias Montanus, Mercerus, Gejerus, Junius, and Tremellius, read them; and the meaning is either as the Targum interprets them zwnptt ytwgskml, turn your face to my reproof, and not your backs; or as Aben Ezra, turn ye, that is, your ears, to hear my reproof; and do not pull away the shoulder, or stop your ears. Now it is certain, that man does not lie under a disability to turn his face and ears to the external ministry of the word; though so depraved are the inclinations and will of man, and such a lover is he of simplicity and scorning, and such a hater of true, useful, and spiritual knowledge, that he had rather hear an idle story told, or the Scriptures burlesqued, than an honest, serious sermon, which is reproving, searching, and informing.

The calamity of these persons did not arise from a disability to do what they were exhorted to, but was owing to a neglect of what they might have done: for they could have attended the ministry of the word, observed ordinances, and turned their faces and ears to the reproof of Wisdom; but they hated knowledge, and the means of it; they despised sermons, laughed at ordinances, and treated with the utmost contempt every admonition, counsel, and reproof; therefore they did eat of the fruit of their own ways, and were filled with their own devices, verse 31; there was a just retaliation made to them; they were paid in their own way; it was a righteous thing with Wisdom, and no insult on their misery, to laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear came upon them. This passage is produced in favour of sufficient grace given to men, to repent, believe, and convert themselves; and to prove that God’s calls, invitations, and messages, by his prophets, are sufficient inducements to procure reformation and repentance. To which I answer,

It is plain that the persons here spoken of, called unto, exhorted, and threatened, had not sufficient grace; since they are represented as fools, scorers, lovers of folly, haters of knowledge; who despised the counsel of Wisdom, and rejected her reproof.

Nor should this be concluded from the encouragement that Wisdom gives, to turn to her reproof; saying, Behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you; since this is not to be understood of the Holy Ghost, and of the dispensation of his extraordinary gifts, or of saving grace; for when he is promised in either of these senses, it is expressed by a different phrase than what is here used; he is promised to be poured out upon, and not as here, unto the sons of men: (see Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 39:29; Joel 2:28). I observe that Dr. Whitby, whenever he cites the passage before us, inadvertently transcribes it as though it was read, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, when it is unto you. By the Spirit, we are to understand the mind of Wisdom; so the word hwr is used in Proverbs 29:11; and by pouring it out, a large and full revelation of it to the sons of men, as it is explained in the next clause, I will make known my words unto you.

This external revelation of the mind of Christ, ought not to be called sufficient grace; it is indeed the means of conveying and implanting grace, when it comes not in word only, but the Holy Ghost and with power: it is not sufficient means of grace to all men; for all men have it not, nor is it so to all that have it; for to some it is the savor of death unto death, whilst it is to others the savor of life unto life; nor is it of itself sufficient means to any, without the efficacious grace of God. Hence,

Though the calls, invitations, and messages of God to men, by his ministers, may be sometimes (for they are not always) sufficient inducements to procure an external reformation, an outward repentance, as in the people of Nineveh; yet these are not sufficient of themselves, without powerful grace, to produce true faith in Christ, evangelical repentance towards God, and new spiritual obedience, in life and conversation.

These words, I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, are used to prove the resistibility of the grace of God, and that an irresistible power is not necessary to the conversion of a sinner. But,

It ought to be observed, that there is a twofold call; the one is internal, which is by the powerful operations of the Spirit of God on the soul, either with or without the word; which cannot be so resisted, as to be made to cease, to become void, and of no effect; the other is external, by the ministry of the word; and may be

resisted, rejected, and despised, and become useless: now it is of the latter call, and not of the former, that the text speaks, and therefore no way militates against the irresistible, unfrustrable grace of God in conversion: and in this sense are we to understand some other places of Scripture, as Proverbs 2:3, 4, and Proverbs 11:3, 4; Isaiah 65:2; Matthew 20:16.

It is said, that “were such an irresistible power necessary to the conversion of a sinner, no man could be converted sooner than he is; because before this irresistible action came upon him, he could not be converted; and when it came upon him, he could not choose but be converted.” To which I reply, I see no absurdity in the consequence: for, as all our times are in the hands of God, a time to be born, and a time to die; so likewise the time of conversion, which is called a time of love (Ezek. 16:8). Now as a man cannot be born sooner or later than he is, nor die sooner or later than he does; so neither can he be converted sooner or later than he is. But then,

It is objected, that if this be the case, “no man could reasonably be blamed that he lived so long in his impenitent and unconverted state.” To which I answer, that living in an impenitent and unconverted state, is living in sin, and therefore blameworthy. And though man, by sinning, has involved himself in a state, out of which he cannot extricate himself; yet is he not the less culpable on that score for living in it.

It is further objected, that if man cannot be converted sooner than he is, God must unreasonably make these inquiries, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? With others, in the following places, Exodus 16:28; Numbers 14:11; Jeremiah 4:14, and 13:27. In answer to which, it will be enough to say, that these passages speak not of conversion, but of external obedience and reformation; which might be sooner done, though conversion cannot.

It is said, that if it is so, “it would not be praiseworthy in persons that they were then converted, it being not in their power then to be otherwise; since an unfrustrable operation is that which no man can frustrate.” It is very true; for all the praise of conversion is due to the powerful and efficacious grace of God, and none to the power and will of man.

It is asked, “If there be some physical and unfrustrable operation on God’s part, necessary to the new birth, why is the want of this new birth and

spiritual renovation imputed to men's voluntary want of consideration, to their rejecting the counsel of God, and not choosing the fear of the Lord?" (Prov. 1:24, 25, 29, 30). I reply, that the want of the new birth and spiritual renovation, is not the thing spoken of in the place referred to; but a non-attention to, and a contempt of, the ministry of the word, though these indeed are a sign of it; much less is this imputed to men's rejecting the counsel of God, and not choosing the fear of the Lord.; for the tables must be turned; and if we speak truth, we must say, that man's rejecting the counsel of God, and not choosing the fear of the Lord, are owing, and to be imputed, to a want of the new birth and spiritual renovation. Besides, as the new birth and spiritual renovation are the effects of, and owing to the Spirit and grace of God, and therefore called a being born of water and of the Spirit, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; so a want thereof is owing to a man's not having that grace which is in the power of God only to bestow upon him.

Section 11—Isaiah 1:16, 17.

Wash ye, make you clean, etc.

These words are supposed to express the power of man, and contradict the necessity of unfrustrable grace in conversion: the argument from them is formed in this manner; "If conversion be wrought only by the unfrustrable operation of God, and man is purely passive in it, vain are all these commands and exhortations directed to wicked men." The weakness of which conclusion will appear by considering particularly each command or exhortation.

Wash ye, make you clean; these two are to be regarded as one, since they intend one and the same thing; and suppose, that men, in a state of nature, are polluted and unclean; and indeed their pollution is of such sort, and to such a degree, that they cannot cleanse themselves, either by ceremonial ablutions, or moral services, or evangelical ordinances; for, who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin? (Prov. 20:9). This is God's work only, as appears from his promises to cleanse his people from their sins; from the end of Christ's shedding his blood, and the efficacy of it; from the sanctifying influences of the Spirit; and from the prayers of the saints (Ps. 51:2, 7, 10), to God, that he would create in them clean hearts, wash them thoroughly from their iniquity, and cleanse them from their sin. But if this

be the case, that it is God's work alone, and that man is incapable to cleanse himself from sin, it will be said, to what purpose are such exhortations? I answer, to convince men of their pollution, and that they stand in need of being washed and cleansed, of which they are naturally ignorant: there are two many who are pure in their own eyes, and yet not washed from their filthiness (Prov. 30:12); as also, to bring them to a sense of their own inability to cleanse themselves; which seems to be the particular design of them here; since these Jews thought to have washed themselves from their immoralities by their ceremonial services, and which are therefore rejected by God, verses 11-15; and they, notwithstanding all their legal purifications, are called upon to wash and make clean: besides, such exhortations may be useful to lead persons to inquire after the proper means of cleansing, and so to the fountain of Christ's blood, in which only souls being washed are made clean. These exhortations then are not in vain; though conversion is wrought only by the unfrustrable operation of God, and man is purely passive in it. This view of them will help us to understand aright some parallel places; such as Jeremiah 4:14, 13:27; 2 Corinthians 7:1; James 1:21, and James 4:8, which commonly go in company with these.

Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Evil is said to be put away from a nation, when it is punished in the doer of it; see Deuteronomy 13:5, and Deuteronomy 17:7, 12; and from a family and particular persons, when discouraged and abstained from, Job 11:14, and 22:23. But it ought to be observed, that the exhortation here is not barely to put away their doings, but the evil of them; and that not from themselves, but from before the eyes of God. Now to put away sin in this sense, is to take it away, to remove it, as that it is pardoned, and men acquitted and discharged from it; but this is impracticable to men, and is the act of God only; as is evident from his promises to remove the sins of his people; from the end of Christ's sacrifice which was to put away sin for ever; and from the prayers of the saints, who desire that God would take away all iniquity, and receive graciously. But why then is such an exhortation given? First to convince men, that the putting away of sin from the eyes of God's vindictive justice, is absolutely necessary to salvation; and then

that men cannot by all their ceremonial and moral services do this; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin (Heb. 10:4); as also to lead and direct their views to the sacrifice of Christ, which effectually does it; and without which, to what purpose is the multitude of sacrifices? and vain are all oblations, verses 11, 12. Cease to do evil; which regards either a cessation from ceremonial works, which being done with a wicked mind, were an abomination to the Lord, verses 13, 14, or an abstinence from outward immoralities; such as shedding innocent blood, oppressing the fatherless and widow, verses 15, 17. Now a natural man may be able to abstain from such external enormities of life, without supposing a power in him to do that which is spiritually good; or that the unfrustrable grace of God is unnecessary in conversion.

Learn to do well; that is, to do acts of justice, beneficence, liberality, and charity, such as are here mentioned; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow; all which are very commendable, and may be performed by men in an unconverted state; and no way militate either against man's passiveness, or the necessity of God's efficacious grace in the work of conversion.

Section 12—Isaiah 1:18, 19.

Come now and let us reason together; If ye be willing and obedient, etc.

The eighteenth verse is considered in strict connection with the words preceding and following; from whence it is concluded, that to cease to do evil, and learn to do well, to be willing and obedient, are qualifications for the pardoning mercy of God, and conditions of obtaining it; the promises of pardon, life, and salvation, being made to persons of such characters. But, Let it be observed, that the eighteenth verse may be read in a parenthesis, without any connection with or dependence on either the preceding or subsequent verses; being thrown in on purpose to comfort the people of God, oppressed with a sense of their sins, whilst he is expressing his just resentment and indignation against the sins of others.

Admitting it to be in strict connection with the context, it contains a free declaration of pardoning grace and mercy, without any conditions annexed to it; it is not expressed in a conditional form; it is not said, if ye cease to do evil, and learn to do well, then

though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; nor is it said, if ye be willing and obedient, then though your sins be red like crimson, they shall be as wool, but ye shall eat the good of the land.

God's promise of pardon is free, absolute, and unconditional; it is expressed in this manner; I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more (Heb. 8:12.); and made to persons guilty both of sins of omission and commission; who had bought him no sweet cane with money; neither had filled him with the fat of sacrifices; but had made him to serve with their sins, and had wearied him with their iniquities (Acts 5:31).

Pardon of sin is never ascribed to any condition performed by men, but to the free grace of God, streaming through the blood of Christ; which was shed to obtain it, and in whose gift it is, being exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Isa. 43:24, 25); and which is often given to persons without any conditions previously qualifying them for it.

Obedience is not the condition of pardon, though a declaration of pardon is an excellent motive to induce to obedience; evangelical obedience springs from, and is influenced by, discoveries of pardon, but is neither the cause nor condition of it.

It is here promised to such who are willing and obedient, that they shall eat the good of the land; and threatened to the disobedient, that they shall be devoured with the sword; from whence it does not follow, that it is in the power of man to do what is spiritually good, much less that eternal happiness depends upon, or is to be obtained by man's obedience. For,

The voluntary obedience here encouraged, is to things civil; such as to relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow, verse 17, which it is allowed are in the power of a natural man to perform; and might be reasonably expected from a professing people, as these were to whom those exhortations were given.

What is here promised, is not of a spiritual or eternal, but of a temporal nature; ye shall eat the good of the land; that is, of the land of Canaan; the possession of which they held by their obedience to those laws of a moral, civil, and ceremonial kind, which God gave them as a body politic; and which,

so long as they observed, they were continued in the quiet and full enjoyment of all the blessings of the good land, flowing with milk and honey, as were promised to them; see Deuteronomy 5:32, 33, 6:24, 25, 28:1-14, and Leviticus 26:3-10. But when they refused and rebelled it was otherwise with them. And therefore,

The punishment threatened to their disobedience and rebellion is temporal; ye shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it; as he had in Leviticus 26:25, 33, and so it was frequently with this people, when they broke the laws of God, transgressed his commands, and rebelled against him, the enemy was let in upon them, the sword was drawn against them, and they destroyed by it, or carried captive.

Section 13—Isaiah 5:4.

What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked, etc.

No one place of Scripture is more frequent in the mouths and writings of the patrons of free-will, and adversaries of the grace of God, than this; which is used by them, to prove that God gives sufficient grace for the conversion of such who are not converted; and that he does not effect that work by an irresistible power, by an unfrustrable operation; which operation, it is said, “if necessary to produce the expected fruits, and not vouchsafed, it must follow, that this vineyard had not grace sufficient to answer her Lord’s expectations; and if so, he must unreasonably complain, that she brought forth wild grapes, and more unreasonably expect good grapes, and. most unreasonably punish, her for not doing what he would not give her grace sufficient to perform. To which I reply,

These, words are part of a parable, representing the state and condition of the people of the Jews. Now, parabolical divinity is not argumentative; nor ought parables to be stretched beyond. their scope and design; the intent of this is to show the ingratitude of the Jews, in the midst of many favours bestowed on them, and the patience and long-suffering of God towards them, and to vindicate his justice in their ruin as a nation.

Seeing there is a particular application of this parable to the people of Israel and Judah, verse 4; The vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel,

and the men of Judah his pleasant plants; who were favoured with peculiar blessings above all people on the face of the earth; it can be no proof of any blessing or grace common to all mankind; or in other words, it can be no proof that God gives to all men sufficient grace for conversion, though not effectual, through their perverseness.

It does not appear from hence that God gave to all the men of Israel and Judah, grace sufficient for conversion; which is not a national, but a personal blessing; and it is evident, that some among them had not restraining grace, no sense of sin in them, nor fear of God before their eyes; they drew iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope; they said, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it; they called evil good, and good evil; put darkness for light, and light for darkness (vv. 18, 20). Nor was every man in Israel and Judah capable of judging whether God had given sufficient grace or no, to any, or all among them.

These words, What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done, in it; cannot be understood of God’s having done all that was sufficient and necessary to the saving conversion of those who are designed by the vineyard; for a reply to the question, taken in this sense, might easily be made after this manner: that God could have made of this bad vine a good one, which was absolutely necessary to its bringing forth good grapes; he could by internal grace have effected the saving work of conversion; to which, external means, without it, were insufficient; he could have removed the veil from their understandings, and have taken away the stony heart, and given an heart of flesh; all which are requisite to the real work of conversion.

The similitudes in the parable only regard the external culture of the vineyard, and can only, at most, design the outward means of reformation, which these people enjoyed; such as the mission of the Lord’s prophets to them, the ministry of the word, admonitions, exhortations, reproofs, etc., when it might be expected that a people enjoying such privileges, would behave well in their moral conversation; and instead of being guilty of rapine, oppression, luxury, drunkenness, pride, and contempt of God himself,

sins which they are in this chapter charged with; they would have done common justice between man and man, would have sought judgment, relieved the oppressed, judged the fatherless, and pleaded for the widow; all which they might have done, without supposing them to have grace sufficient to saving conversion, and though this might be withheld from them, and therefore it was not unreasonable in the Lord to expect good grapes of this kind from them, nor to complain of their wild grapes, nor to punish them for them.

If the parable is narrowly examined, it will be found, that the good things which God had done for his vineyard, the men of Israel and Judah, were of a civil nature, and which regarded their civil constitution and settlement as a body politic; such as the planting of it in a very fruitful hill, in the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey; fencing it with good and wholesome laws, which distinguished and kept them separate from other nations, as well as with his almighty power and providence; especially at the three yearly festivals, when all their males appeared at Jerusalem; gathering out the stones, casting the heathen out, and driving Canaanites before them; planting it with the choicest vine, such having fallen in the wilderness who murmured and rebelled against God; building a tower in it, expressive of divine protection, and placing a wine press, which may either mean plenty of temporal blessings, or the prophets, who were placed among them to stir up and exhort the people to a regard to the laws of God.

God’s looking or expecting that this vineyard should bring forth grapes, is not to be taken properly but figuratively, after the manner of men; for, from such a well-formed government, from such an excellent constitution, from a people enjoying such advantages, might it not be reasonably expected hat the fruits of common justice and equity would have appeared? might not judgment have been looked for instead of oppression, and righteousness instead of a cry? but alas! it proved just the reverse.

The interrogation ought not to be rendered as it is by our translators, What could have been done more to my vineyard? nor as Dr. Whitby reads it, What was there more to do for my vineyard? etc., but ymrkl rws twselAhm should be translated, What is to be done here, after to my vineyard? etc., and so designs not

any thing past, but something to come; and is to be understood not of good things bestowed before, but of punishment hereafter to be inflicted, as evidently appears from the answer to it, (vv. 5, 6): — And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof and it shall be eaten up, and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down, and I will lay it waste, etc., which was fulfilled in the destruction of the land by the Chaldeans, a punishment God never inflicted to that degree before on that people; and so the words have much the same meaning with those in Matthew 21:40, 41: — When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto these husbandmen? they say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons; for the question must be of the same nature with the answer; and if it be so, the words are far enough from proving that grace sufficient for conversion is given to some who are not converted, or from contradicting the doctrine of unfrustrable grace in conversion.

Section 14—Isaiah 30:15.

For thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence we shalt be your strength; and ye would not.

These words are cited in favour of free-will, as proving that men’s impotency to that which is good, is not owing to any disability by the fall of Adam, but to other causes acquired by, and not born with them; such as evil dispositions, customs, prejudices, hardness of heart, or blindness willfully contracted; and therefore irresistible and unfrustrable grace is not necessary to the conversion of a sinner; but of what service they are in this cause will be better understood when the following things are observed.

Admitting that the words regard the spiritual and eternal salvation of men, then they are expressive of the way and manner in which God saves such who are saved. In returning and rest shall ye be saved, that is, by faith and repentance; repentance may be meant by returning, and faith by rest; or by returning and rest, may be designed returning to rest, that is, to Christ, who is the only rest to weary souls; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. Quietness may intend peace of conscience, and confidence assurance

of faith, which make men strong Christians, though their strength does not barely lie in these graces, but in the object of them. Now faith and repentance are blessings of the covenant, gifts of God; the graces of the Spirit go together in the doctrine of salvation, and have a great concern in it; though they are not meritorious, procuring causes, nor conditions of it, yet in this way God brings his people to salvation; they enter into and are descriptive of the character of such that are saved; there is so close a connection between these and salvation, that none are saved without them.

If we take this to be the sense of the words, then the last clause, and ye would not, shows, that God's way of saving men through repentance and faith, by going to Christ alone for rest, by placing all confidence in, and deriving all peace and comfort from him, is disagreeable to unregenerate men; which is a proof of the wretched depravity, corruption, and perverseness of the will. Hence this scripture, viewed in this light, with Jeremiah 6:16, 17, and 13:11, 27, and 18:12, and 29:19, Ezekiel 20:8, Hosea 5:4, stand on record, as so many lasting reproaches to the will of man.

Let this depravity, corruption, perverseness, and obstinacy of the will, proceed from what cause soever, whether from any thing born with men, or acquired by them; such as evil dispositions, customs, prejudices hardness and blindness of heart; what else can conquer these evil dispositions, break such customs, destroy such prejudices, and remove this blindness and hardness of heart but the almighty power and efficacious grace of God? How necessary, therefore are irresistible and unfrustrable operations of the Spirit of God to the conversion of such sinners; when can it be reasonably expected they should be willing to be saved by Jehovah in his own way, but in the day of his power on their souls? who must work in them both to will and do of his good pleasure, if ever the perverseness of their wills is cured. But,

Though, no doubt, the depravity and stubbornness of the will is increased by prejudices, customs, etc., yet to what can its first taint be ascribed, or from whence had it its first blow, and received its original disability, at from the fall of Adam? Does not the Scripture, according to this doctrine, furnish us with the best account of the origin of moral evil? Does not the apostle (Eph. 2:8), attribute men's conversation in the lusts of the flesh, their fulfilling, taqelhmata

thV sarkoV the wills of the flesh, and of the mind, to their being by nature children of wrath? Why is it the wicked will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely; but because they are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born speaking lies (Ps. 58:8). And what else can be the source and spring of such early practices in iniquity, but the corruption of nature, owing to the fall of man, they bring into the world with them? Do we not read (Isa. 48:4, 8) of some whose neck was an iron sinew, and their brow brass; whose obstinacy, disobedience, and treacherous, dealing, are accounted for by their being called transgressors from the womb?

After all, the words are not to be understood of the spiritual and eternal salvation of men, but of the temporal safety and happiness of the people of Israel, had they acted according to the advice given them; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; that is, if ye return from the evil counsel which ye have taken, which is not of me, saith the Lord, verse 1, and rest quietly in your own land, and do not walk to go down into Egypt, nor seek to Pharaoh for help, verses 2, 3, ye shall be saved; you shall be in safety, no enemy shall break in upon you, or disturb you: in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength; your strength is to sit still, verse 7, quietly to abide in Jerusalem, in your own cities, and trust in my power and protection, then ye need not fear any enemy; and ye would not; but ye said, for we will flee sws l□, unto horses, to Egypt for horses, or upon horses, which we have had from thence; therefore shall flee; we will ride upon the swift; therefore they that pursue you shall be swift: meaning the Chaldeans; one thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one, at the rebuke of five shall ye flee, till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill. Now as this appears from the context to be the plain and genuine sense of the words, they can be of no use to prove what they are cited for, and ought to have no place in the controversy about free-will, and efficacious grace.

Section 15—Isaiah 55:1.

He, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

These words are no call, invitation, or offer of grace to dead sinners, since they are spoken to such who

were thirsty, that is, who, in a spiritual sense, were thirsting after pardon of sin, a justifying righteousness, and salvation by Christ; after a greater knowledge of him, communion with him, conformity to him, and enjoyment of him in his ordinances, which supposes them to be. spiritually alive; for such who are dead in sin, thirst not after the grace of God, but the lusts of the flesh; they mind and savor the things of the flesh, and not the things of the Spirit; only new-born babes, or such who are born again, are quickened and made alive, desire Christ, his grace, and the sincere milk of the word, that their souls may grow thereby; besides, the persons called unto, are represented as having no money; which, though true of unconverted persons, who have nothing to pay off their debts, or purchase any thing for themselves; yet they fancy themselves to be rich, and increased in goods, and stand in need of nothing; whereas the persons here encouraged are such, who not only have no money, but know they have none; who are poor in spirit, and sensible of their spiritual poverty; which sense arises from the quickening influences of the Spirit of God upon their souls; nor are Isaiah 1:18, 19, Luke 13:3, John 3:16, and 7:24, any offers, grace, as they are with this represented to be.

They do not express any power or ability in unconverted persons to come to Christ, seeing they are not directed to such, as is before observed; besides, neither Christ, nor the grace of Christ, are designed by the waters, but the ordinances; the allusion being, as is thought by some, to maritime places, or sea-ports, where ships of merchandise unload their traffic, and people resort to buy things necessary for them. Now where should hungry and thirsty souls, and such that have no money, attend, but on the ordinances, the means of grace? where they may expect to meet with Christ, and of his fullness receive, even grace for grace. Nor,

Do they declare any self-sufficiency in creatures to procure any thing for themselves by their works; for the things to be bought, wine and milk suitable to thirsty persons, signify either the doctrines of the gospel, or the blessings of grace, both which are freely given. Buying here is to be taken not in a proper sense, for no valuable consideration can be given to God for his grace; but in an improper one, the manner in which these things were to be bought, being without

price; and besides, the persons who are called upon to buy, are said to have no money. This explanation of the words in the several parts of them, will help us to understand the advice and invitation given in other places; such as Revelation 3:18, and 22:17.

Section 16—Isaiah 55:6.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

This passage of Scripture is no proof of a day of grace, which, if men improve, they may enjoy the favour of God; but if they let it slip, if it is once elapsed, there is no more opportunity of meeting with him.

They are an exhortation to public worship, signified by seeking the Lord and calling upon him; the time for which, with the Jews, was on the seventh day of the week, and with us Christians, on the first; these being times in which he might be found, it became the Jews of old, and us now, to attend public ordinances, in expectation of meeting with God; since he has promised his people to be in the midst of them, when they are met together.

The words may be so rendered, as that they may be understood of place as well as time; Seek ye the Lord, waxmhb, in his being found, call ye upon him, wtwyhb brq, in his being near; that is, in the place where he is to be found, and in the place where he is near. Now, though God is everywhere, and in all places, yet, in the Old Testament dispensation, there was a particular place for public worship appointed, where God vouchsafed his presence, and where it was both the duty and interest of his people to attend; and though under the gospel dispensation, all places are alike, yet where the saints agree to meet together, there God has promised to be in the midst of them; and, therefore, there should he be sought and called upon.

The words may have a particular regard to Christ's being on earth in the land of Judea, seeing he is spoken of under the name of David (v. 3), and is promised to be given for a witness to the people, a leader, and commander of the people (v. 4), and it is prophesied of him, that there should be a large concourse of the Gentiles to him (v. 5), who are here encouraged, or rather the Jews, to seek unto him, and call upon him, while he was in their land, near unto them; when they had the advantage of his personal presence, ministry,

and miracles.

Section 17—Isaiah 55:7.

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

These words are represented as a promise of pardon, on condition of forsaking sinful ways and thoughts and turning to the Lord; which, if not in man's power to perform, is to promise on an impossible condition, and that is, indeed, to promise nothing. To which may be replied,

That forsaking sin, and turning to the Lord at first conversion, or returning to him after backslidings, which perhaps may be here meant, are not owing to the power of man, but to the efficacious grace of God. None can truly forsake sin, or heartily turn to the Lord, but such who are influenced by the Spirit of God; hence says Ephraim, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned (Jer. 31:18).

That the promise of pardon is free, absolute, and unconditional, not depending on any condition whatever to be performed by men; forsaking sinful ways and thoughts, and returning to the Lord, are not here proposed as conditions of obtaining mercy, and receiving pardon; but the declarations of pardoning grace and mercy here made, are made on purpose to encourage souls sensible of the wickedness of their ways, and unrighteousness of their thoughts, to return to the Lord, who is a God of grace and mercy,

Though faith and repentance are not conditions of pardon, nor in the power of man, of himself, to perform; yet as pardon is promised to such who repent, believe, and turn to the Lord, so all such, to whom God makes the promise of pardon, he gives the graces of faith and repentance; hence his promise is not vain, empty, and delusory.

It is said, that "if conversion is wrought only by the unfrustrable operation of God, and man is purely passive in it, vain are the promises of pardon, such as this; for no promises can be means proper to make a dead man live, or to prevail upon a man to act, who must be purely passive." To which I answer,

That these words contain no promise to dead men, but a declaration of pardoning grace to sensible sinners; who were wicked and unrighteous in their own apprehensions, being represented as thirsty (v.

1), seeking after the way of life and salvation; though they took the wrong way, and had their thoughts wrongly turned to spend money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not, (v. 2), and therefore remained oppressed with a sense of sin; hence they are here encouraged to quit their own way of salvation, and all thoughts of their own righteousness, and alone to seek the Lord for mercy and pardon; since his thoughts were not as their thoughts, nor his ways as their ways.

Admitting them to be a promise of pardon made to dead men; it may be thought to be a proper and sufficient means in the hand of God, under the mighty influences of his Spirit and grace, to make dead men live; since the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, the ministration of life, yea, the savor of life unto life (Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor.2:16; 3:6); and especially when it is observed what is said in verses 10, 11. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud. that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, now at this present time delivered, in verses 7-9; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Though man is passive in regeneration, yet he is active in forsaking sin and turning to the Lord. Promises of pardon may, through the grace of God, prevail on such to act in these instances, who have been passive in the work of regeneration; for regeneration antecedes these; forsaking sin, and turning to the Lord, follow upon, and rise from regenerating grace. No man can truly do these, until he is regenerated by the Spirit of God. It follows, then, that men may be prevailed upon, by the promises of pardon, to act, who have been passive in regeneration.

It is intimated, that such who are in the Calvinistical way of thinking, say, that God promises pardon and life to the non-elect, on condition of their faith and repentance: and it is asked, "How can a God of truth and sincerity be said to promise to them pardon and salvation, seriously and in good earnest, who are, by his own act of preterition, infallibly and unfrustrably excluded from it?" I answer, Who the men are that say so, I do not know, and must leave them to defend their own positions, who only are accountable for the

consequences of them; for my own part, I utterly deny that there is any promise of pardon made to the non-elect at all, not on any condition whatever. The promise of pardon is a promise of the covenant of grace, and which is made to none but to such who are in that covenant, in which the non-elect have no share; to whom the blessing of pardon belongs, to them only is the promise of it made: the blessing of it only belongs to such for whom Christ died, whose blood was shed for the remission of sin; and these are the elect of God only: and though the gospel declaration of pardon is made in indefinite terms, to every one that believes; the reason is, because all those who are interested in the covenant of grace, and for whom Christ died, God does in his own time, give faith and repentance, and along with them forgiveness of sins.

This passage of Scripture now under consideration, is no promise of pardon to the non-elect; for the words wicked and unrighteous, are not peculiar to them; God's elect are so in their state of nature, and in their own sense and apprehension, when the Spirit of God convinces them. Besides, the persons spoken to, appear from the context, to be such towards whom God's thoughts had been from everlasting (vv. 8, 9); and who were to partake of the blessings of joy and peace for ever (vv. 12,13).

Section 18—Jeremiah 4:4.

Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; let my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it; because of the evil of your doings.

These words, with Deuteronomy 10:16, which express much the same thing, in almost the same words, are thought to disprove man's passiveness and the unfrustrable operation of God in conversion; or that that is God's work alone; which, if true, it is said, vain are all such commands and exhortations as these: on which, let the following things be observed:

That it is questionable whether these figurative expressions are to be understood of internal conversion, or the first work of it on the soul; since they are directed to backsliding Israel and Judah; and may not rather design a national repentance and reformation of them, as God's professing people, that they might be saved with a temporal deliverance from temporal judgments; with which they are threatened

throughout this chapter.

Admitting that they are to be understood of the internal, spiritual, and saving work of conversion; since he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God (Rom. 2:29): this sense of the word carries the things expressed by them still farther out of the power of man, and into the hands of God alone; seeing this is the circumcision made without hands (Col. 2:11), that is, without the power, help, and assistance of men. Circumcision of the flesh was typical of that of the spirit, and fitly expresses the passiveness of men in it; for as the infant was entirely passive and not active in circumcision, so is man in regeneration and first conversion; not to take any notice of, or insist upon the word wlmh, being of a passive form, and rendered by the Septuagint, peoitmhqhte and by the Vulgate Latin, circumcidimini, be ye circumcised. What God here requires, commands, and exhorts unto, he elsewhere promises to do himself, saying; The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live (Deut. 30:6); which at once discovers the inability of man, and the necessity of the grace of God; for if man could do this of himself, there would be no need of God's doing it for him: since this is the case, we may say, as Austin did, Domine, da quod jubes, et jube quod vis; Lord, give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.

Such commands and exhortations are not in vain, supposing man's passiveness in this work of conversion, and the unfrustrable operation of God in it; seeing such exhortations may be useful to convince men of the corruption of their nature; the necessity of a spiritual circumcision, without which there can be no salvation; their own disability, and the need of the power and grace of God to effect it.

Section 19—Ezekiel 18:24.

But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, shall he live? all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

This scripture is placed at the front of those which are said “expressly to assert the possibility, that true believers, true penitents, men truly just and righteous, may fall from their righteousness, and die in their iniquity.” But,

The man here spoken of, is not one truly just and righteous; seeing he is denominated righteous from his own righteousness in which he trusted, and from which he is supposed to turn. Now none are truly, and in an evangelic sense, righteous by their own righteousness; only such are, who are made so by the obedience of Christ; and these never can, nor shall they turn from this righteousness, which is the righteousness of God, an everlasting one, and is revealed from faith to faith; nor do they commit sin, that is, make a trade of sinning, live in a course of it; much less do they according to all the abominations of the wicked; nor can it be said of them, that their righteousness shall not be mentioned, since it endures for ever; and they, on the account of it, shall be in everlasting remembrance. Nor can they ever die, in the Arminian sense of the phrase here used; for they are justified by Christ’s righteousness from all their sins, and therefore shall not die in them; they live by faith on it, and shall never die the second death; there is more virtue in the righteousness of Christ to justify them, than there is in all their sins to condemn them; their justification and glorification are inseparably connected together. Besides, such are the love, care, and power of God, which are engaged on their side, and exercised towards them, that it is impossible they should everlastingly perish. The man here designed, is one that is outwardly righteous before men; who imagines himself to be so; trusteth to his own righteousness (Ezek. 33:13); concludes, that what he suffered was owing to his father’s sin, and not any iniquity of his own; and therefore complains of injustice in God; whose folly, vain opinion of himself, and unrighteous notions of God’s providence, are fully and justly exposed in this chapter. The righteousness from which he is denominated righteous, is his own, and not another’s, and what he himself hath done, and not what Christ hath done for him: a mere moral, righteousness, consisting of some negative holiness, and a few external, moral performances, as appears from verses 5-9; from such a righteousness a man may turn, commit iniquity, sin and die; but then this is no

proof or instance of the apostasy of the saints, of true believers, true penitents, men truly just and righteous. It is indeed said, “that the righteous man here spoken of, is one truly righteous; for he is one who sinneth not, committeth not iniquity, and turneth not away from his righteousness; one who walketh in God’s statutes, and keeps his judgments, yea, who walketh in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; and therefore assuredly is one, who is truly and inwardly righteous, and not in outward profession only.” To which I answer; the texts referred to in Ezekiel 33:12, 13, and 8:9, 17, 19, say not any one of these things concerning the righteous man; but on the contrary, suppose he may sin, commit iniquity, and turn from his righteousness; and indeed, there is not a just man, one that is truly so, that lives and sins not; nor is any man righteous in the sight of God by virtue of his inward holiness, or outward walk; besides, the same author contradicts himself in the next page, when he says,” the righteous man who turneth away from his righteousness, is one who committeth iniquity and doth according to all the abominations which the wicked man doth; and therefore must be one to whom belongs the portion of the wicked, which is death eternal.” It is further objected from Dr. Prideaux, that “should he (the righteous man) only turn from his counterfeit and hypocritical righteousness, should he not rather live than die; inasmuch as he would put off the wolf, to put on the lamb?” which will be fully answered by observing the horrid blunder, and wretched mistake, that one doctor has made, and another by him is led into; for the turn is not from a counterfeit and hypocritical righteousness to a real one; but from a mere external moral righteousness, which had some appearance and degree of obedience in it, to an open. shameful, and abominable course of sinning; which is so far from putting off the wolf to put on the lamb, that it is just the very reverse; it is to put off the lamb or sheep’s clothing, in which he appeared, to put on the wolf he really was; and consequently such an one should rather die than live.

The death threatened to the righteous man that turns from his righteousness, is not an eternal death, or the death of the soul and body in hell; since this death was then upon them, what they were complaining of, imagining it came upon them for the sins of their parents; and besides, they might have been recovered

from it by repentance and reformation. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways and live? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye (Ezek. 18:13); all which cannot be said of an eternal death; dying in his iniquity, is the same with dying for his iniquity, as it is rendered in verse 26, and designs some severe temporal calamity or affliction; which is often in Scripture called a death (Ex. 10:17, 2 Cor. 1:10; 11:23); such as captivity, in which the Jews then were, of which they were complaining, what was owing to their sins, and from which they were capable of being recovered. “This answer, it is said, contradicts the express words of the prophet about twenty times;” though not one single instance of it is given. Wherefore,

Admitting that the truly just and righteous man is here intended; it is no proof of a possibility of his turning away from his righteousness and sinning, so as to be finally lost and perish; only so as to be afflicted, or suffer in a general calamity; besides, the words are delivered in a conditional form, being to be read thus: If the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness. Now suppositio nil ponet in esse, a supposition puts nothing in being, is no proof or instance of matter of fact. But this is said to be “flying for refuge to a mere mistake; the words in the original being not if, but beshub, en h an hmera epistreyh, in the day that he turns away from his righteousness.” To which I reply, that the word bwvb beshub may be rendered, if he turns; as it is by the Vulgate Latin and Pagnine here and by our translators in Ezekiel 33:19, agreeable to the like forms of expression in other places; as Psalm 46:2, Therefore will not we fear xra rymtb, though, or if the earth be removed, syrh jwmbw. and though, or if the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Nor does the Greek version of the Septuagint read the words, en h an hmera epistreyh, in the day that he turns away; but en de tw apostreyai, in his turning, or when he turns. Add to this, that a conditional form is not only signified by if, but by when. And whereas it may be said, as it is, that such a form of words suppose something in possibility, though not in being, as it does in a wicked man’s turning from his wickedness, opposed unto; it will be allowed that, there is a possibility of a truly

righteous man’s falling away, was he left to himself, and not kept by the power and grace of God; and therefore such a supposition as this may be designed for, and made use of, as a means to show him his weakness, make him cautious of his walk, and lead him wholly to rely and depend on superior help and assistance, and so consequently be the means of his final perseverance.

Section 20—Ezekiel 18:30.

Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God: repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

These exhortations are represented as contrary to the doctrines of absolute election and reprobation, and of unfrustrable grace in conversion. The argument from them stands thus; “He who would have all men, to whom the gospel is vouchsafed, to come to repentance, hath not prepared this saving grace only for some few Christians, leaving the rest under a necessity of perishing for the want of it; for to all such persons he hath promised, that they shall not perish.” And elsewhere, it is said, that “such delude men with vain words, who teach, that a God of truth, and of sincerity, and of great goodness, should say to persons with such symptoms of passionate concern, Repent, and be converted from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin; when he himself had from eternity appointed them to ruin, and purposed to withhold from them that grace, without which it was impossible they should repent, or be converted;” and that, “if conversion be wrought only by the unfrustrable operation of God, and man is purely passive in it, vain are all such exhortations.” To all which I reply,

That these exhortations are not made to all men, but only to the house of Israel; and therefore do not contradict the preparation of saving grace for some few only, as the Israelites were; nor do we say, that God has prepared saving grace only for some few Christians, but for all Christians; that is, all that are Christ’s; nor are any of them left under a necessity of perishing for the want of it, since it is given to them, and they have it, as their character supposes: and whereas it is said, that to all such persons God has promised, that they shall not perish; it is readily granted, and by the way, is an acknowledgement, of

the doctrine of the saints' final perseverance; which is elsewhere greatly objected to. Moreover, inasmuch as they were the house of Israel, and every one of them, that are here spoken to, they are the wrong persons pitched upon to contradict the decrees of election and reprobation; for who will say of every one of them, that they were doomed to eternal death or appointed to everlasting ruin, who were chosen to be a peculiar people? It ought to be shown, if anything is done to purpose, that God has somewhere or other expressed himself in such language to all men, and particularly to such as shall not eventually be saved, as is here used to his professing people.

The repentance here exhorted to, is not to be understood of an evangelical one, which is a repentance unto life, and unto salvation; but of a national one, for national iniquities, and to prevent national judgments, with which they are here threatened; seeing it is the whole house of Israel, the whole nation, and every one of them, who are exhorted unto it. Now, though there can be no true evangelical repentance without the unfrustrable grace of God, yet there may be a national external repentance without it; as in the case of the Ninevites. Besides, was an evangelical repentance designed here, an exhortation to it being made to the people of God, as the house of Israel were, could only be to the exercise of it, the grace itself having been wrought in them by the power of God: or admitting that the words are spoken to such who had not the grace itself; such an exhortation might not be in vain, supposing the necessity of an unfrustrable operation; seeing it might be made use of to convince such of the necessity of repentance, and of their want of it; and so God may in this way bring his elect to it, according to his eternal purposes and designs. Moreover, turning from transgression, does not intend the first work of internal, saving conversion, which is wrought by the powerful and efficacious grace of God and in which men are purely passive; but an external reformation, or a bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, in which persons may be, and are active; since it is not reasonable to suppose that the house of Israel, and every one of them, should be in an unconverted state. Besides, some give the sense of these words thus: not turn yourselves, but turn others, every man his neighbor, or his brother; so R. Sol. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi, R. Sol. Ben Melec, and some Christian

interpreters.

The ruin the house of Israel was in danger of through iniquity, and which they might escape by repentance and reformation, was not eternal but temporal; so iniquity shall not be your ruin, *lwvkml* a stumbling-block to you; an hindrance, an obstruction, lying in the way of your enjoyment of temporal blessings; therefore, cast away from you all your transgressions. This sense of the words may be confirmed from the advantages proposed to such who turned from their sins and transgressions (vv. 27, 28), as that such an one should save his soul alive; not with an everlasting salvation, for no man can save his soul alive in that sense; but with a temporal one, as did the Ninevites, by their repentance and reformation: it is also said, that he shall surely live, not a spiritual and eternal life; for he is said (Ezek. 33:19.) to live by his doing that which is lawful and right; whereas, no man can live spiritually and eternally by so doing; but it intends a civil life, in the comfortable enjoyment of outward mercies. It is moreover added, he shall not die, which is to be understood not of an eternal death, but of a temporal one, or of a death of afflictions, as has been observed under the preceding section.

Section 21—Ezekiel 18:31&32.

Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

This passage of Scripture is frequently used by the patrons of free-will, and opposers of God's grace; in which they imagine the power of man in conversion is strongly asserted, and the doctrine of reprobation sufficiently disproved; but whether they are, or are not, we shall be better able to judge when, the following things are considered.

That the exhortation to cast away their transgressions from them, regards either their sins themselves, which they had committed, and shows, that they were not only unprofitable, but pernicious, and so to be disliked and abhorred, as such things are that are proper to be cast away; or else the punishment due to their sins, which they might have removed and cast off from them by their repentance and reformation, and is the sense Kimchi gives of the

words; or rather those things, particularly their idols, by which then transgressed. Now let it be observed, that this phrase of casting away transgressions, is no where else used, is peculiar to Ezekiel, and so may be best interpreted by Ezekiel 20:7, 8. Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, etc. Now these idols were the abominations of their eyes, were the cause of their transgressions, or that by which they transgressed, which their own hands had made unto them, for a sin (Isa. 31:7), and what they had power or were able to cast away from them; and no ways militates against the necessity of an unfrustrable operation in conversion.

The other exhortation, to make them a new heart and a new spirit, admitting that it designs a renewed, regenerated heart and spirit, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace, and holiness, it will not prove that it is in the power of an unregenerate man, to make himself such a heart and spirit; since from God's commands, to man's power, *non valet consequentia*, is no argument: God commands men to keep the whole law perfectly; it does not follow from hence that they can do it; his precepts show what man ought to do, not what he can do. Such an exhortation as this, to make a new heart, may be designed to convince men of their want of one, and of the importance of it, that without it is no salvation; and so be the means, through the efficacious grace of God, of his elect enjoying this blessing; for what he here exhorts to, he has absolutely promised in the new covenant (Ezek. 34:26); A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. Though it ought to be observed, that these words are not spoken to unconverted persons, but to the house of Israel, every one of them; who cannot be thought, especially all of them, to have been at that time in an unregenerate state; and therefore must not be understood of the first work of renovation, but of some after renewings, which were to appear in their external conversation; and so the words have the same sense as those of the apostle Paul to the believing Ephesians (Eph. 4:23, 24). Be ye renewed in the spirit of your minds; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Moreover, by a new heart, and a new spirit, may be meant, as the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel renders them, *aljd hwrw lytd bl*, a fearing heart, and a spirit

of fear, that is, a heart and spirit, to fear, serve, and worship the Lord, and not idols. And it is observable, that wherever a new heart and spirit are spoken of, they stand opposed to idols, and the service of them; so that the exhortation amounts to no more than this, that they yield a hearty reverential obedience to the living God, and not to dumb idols. Besides, what is here called a new heart, is, in Ezekiel 11:9, called one heart, that is, a single heart, in opposition to a double or hypocritical, one; and so may design sincerity and uprightness in their national repentance and external reformation, which they are here pressed unto.

The expostulation, Why will ye die? is not made with all men; nor can it be proved that it was made with any who were not eventually saved, but with the house of Israel, who were called the children and people of God; and therefore cannot disprove any act of preterition passing on others, nor be an impeachment of the truth and sincerity of God. Besides, the death expostulated about, is not an eternal, but a temporal one, or what concerned their temporal affairs, and civil condition, and circumstances of life; see Ezekiel 33:24 to 29. Hence,

The affirmation, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, which is sometimes introduced, with an oath, (Ezek. 33:11) as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, does not in the least militate against an act of preterition; whereby any are left by God justly to perish in and for their iniquities; or the decree of reprobation, whereby any, on the score of their transgressions, are appointed, or foreordained to condemnation and death; and therefore all the reasonings made use of to disprove these things, founded on this passage of Scripture, are vain and impertinent; for a death of afflictions is here intended, as has been already observed, which the house of Israel was groaning under, and complaining of; though it was wholly owing to themselves, and which was not grateful to God, and in which he took no pleasure: which is to be understood, not simply and absolutely, and with respect to all persons afflicted by him; for he delights in the exercise of judgment and righteousness, as well as in showing mercy, and laughs at the calamity of wicked men, and mocks when their fear cometh; (Jer. 9:24; Prov. 1:26) but it is to be taken comparatively; as when he says (Hosea 5:6.) I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; that is, I

take delight in mercy rather than in sacrifice; so here, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth: in his afflictions, distresses, calamities, captivity, and the like; but rather, that he would return from his ways, repent and reform, and live in his own land; which shows the mercy and compassion of God (Lam. 3:33) who does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. Wherefore he renews his exhortation, Turn yourselves, and live ye. The sum of all this is, you have no reason to say, as in verse 2, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge; or as in verse 25, that the way of the Lord is not equal; seeing it is not for the sins of your parents, but your own, that the present calamities you are complaining of lie upon you; for my part, I take no delight in your death, in your captivity; it would be more agreeable to me, would you turn from your evil ways, to the Lord your God, and behave according to the laws I have given you to walk by, and so live in your own land, in the quiet possession of all your goods and estates. But what has this to do with the affairs of eternal life, or eternal death?

Section 22—Ezekiel 24:13.

Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shall not be purged from thy filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.

These words are represented as irreconcilable with God's decrees of election and reprobation as inconsistent with the doctrine of particular redemption, and in favour of sufficient grace given to all men. But,

The words are not spoken to all men, nor do they declare what God hath done for, or what he would have done by all men; but are directed only to Jerusalem, or the house of Israel, whose destruction is here represented under the parable of a boiling pot; and do not discover any design of God, or steps that he has taken towards the purgation of all mankind, and therefore no ways militate against the decrees of election and reprobation.

This purgation of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants thereof, is to be understood either of ceremonial purifications, or of an external reformation of life and manners, and not of an internal cleansing of them, much less of all men, from sin, by the blood of Jesus; and so is no ways inconsistent with the doctrine of particular redemption.

These words do not express what God had done, and was not done; which is a contradiction in terms; nor what he had done sufficient for their purgation, but was obstructed by their obstinacy; or that he would have purged them, and they would not be purged; for our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased (Ps. 115:3), but what he commanded to be done, and was not done; for so the words should be rendered; as they are by Pagnine, Jussi ut mundares to, et non mundasti to, I commanded that thou shouldest purge thyself, and thou hast not purged thyself; to which, agrees the note of Junius on the text. Verbo praecepi to mundari et toties et tamdiu per prophetas imperavi, I have in my word, and by my prophets, so often and so long commanded thee to be purged. The sense of them is, that God had commanded either ceremonial ablutions and purifications, or a moral, external reformation, and they had not obeyed; and therefore threatens to leave them in their filthiness, and pour out all his fury on them; and so are no proof of God's giving sufficient grace, or sufficient means of grace to all men. The text in Jeremiah 2:9,

We told have healed Babylon, but she is not healed, is very improperly joined with this, since they are not the words of God, expressing any kind intentions, or sufficient means of healing, which were obstructed, as through mistake, they are represented by a learned writer; but of the Israelites, or others, who were concerned for the temporal welfare of Babylon, though in vain, and to no purpose.

Section 23—Matthew 5:13.

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shalt it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

This is one of the places which, it is said, “do plainly suppose that saints, or true believers, or men once truly good, may cease to be so; for sure, good salt must signify good men; nor can this salt lose its savor, and become good for nothing, but by ceasing to be good salt.” To which I reply,

That the text speaks not of men as saints or true believers, comparable to salt, for the truth and savor of the grace of God in them: but as ministers and preachers of the Gospel, who, by their savory doctrines and conversations are the salt of the earth, the means of purifying and preserving the world from

corruption. Now some men may be good preachers, and so good salt, and yet not be good men, or true believers; and therefore, when any of these drop the savory truths of the word, and fall off from the seeming conversation they have maintained, they are no proofs nor instances of the final and total apostasy of real saints. If it should be said, that those who are here called the salt of the earth, were the disciples of Christ, and therefore good men, as well as good preachers; it may be replied, that there were many who were called the disciples of Christ, besides the apostles; and some there were who, in process of time, drew back from him (John 6:66), and walked no more with him. But allowing the twelve apostles are particularly designed, there was a Judas among them, whom Christ might have a special eye to; for he knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him (John 6:64, 70); that one of those whom he had chosen was a devil; that he would lose his usefulness and his place; that he would be an unprofitable wretch; and, at last, be rejected and despised of men. Admitting further, that the true and sincere apostle of Christ are here intended; yet this of losing their savor is only a supposition, which nil ponit in esse, puts nothing in being, proves no matter of fact, and may be only designed as a caution to them, to take heed to themselves, their doctrines, and ministry, to which they are advised in many other places; see Matthew 16:6, 12, and 24:4, 5; Luke 21:34-36; though there was no possibility of their final and total falling away

The savor here supposed, that it may be lost, cannot mean the savor of true grace, or true grace itself, which cannot be lost, being, an incorruptible seed; but either gifts, qualifying men to be good and useful preachers, which gifts may cease; or the savory doctrines of the gospel men may depart from; or their seeming savory conversations they may put away; or that seeming savor, zeal, and affection, with which they have preached, and which may be dropped; or their whole usefulness, which they may lose; for all these things men may have and lose, who never really and truly tasted that the Lord is gracious: and, generally speaking, when such men lose their usefulness, it is never more retrieved; they become and remain unprofitable, are despised and trodden under foot of men: but these instances are no proofs that saints, or

true believers, or men once truly good, may cease to do so. The similitude in which our Lord saith, that a piece of new cloth is not to be put to an old garment:, lest the rent be made worse; nor new wine into old bottles, lest the bottles burst (Matthew 9:16, 17); no more plainly supposes this, than the former metaphor of salt: for be it that the design of this to show, that Christ's “young disciples must not presently be put upon severe duties, lest they should be discouraged and fall off from him.” It shows indeed their weakness and danger of falling, and yet, at the same time, the care and concern of Christ in the preservation of them; and therefore ought not to be improved into an argument against their final perseverance: though the plain design of the similitude seems, from the context, to be this, that it would be equally as absurd for the disciples to fast and be sad, while Christ, the bridegroom, was with them, as it would be to put new cloth into an old garment, or new wine into old bottles.

Nor does the commination against them, who shall offend one of Christ's little ones believing in him, viz. that it were better for him that a mill-stone was hanged about his neck, and he cast into the midst of the sea (Matthew 18:6), plainly suppose that saints, or true believers, may cease to be so; for the word skandalizein, here used, does not signify an offending of them, so as to be the occasion of their falling off from the faith to their eternal ruin, but stands opposed, to receiving of them, in verse 5 and is explained by despising them, in verse 10, and at most, can only mean the laying of an offense, scandal, or stumbling-block in their way; which might be of bad consequence, considering their weakness and the wickedness of men, were it not for the care, power, and grace of God, which are concerned for them: and since the angels, who are their guardians on earth, always behold the face of Christ's Father in heaven, verse 10; and seeing the Son of man, who also is the Son of God, is come to save such lost ones, verse 11, and especially since it is not the will of our Father, which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish, verse 14. It is not false but true, that they who do truly believe in Christ, are of the number of those whom God would not have to perish, cannot be so offended as to fall off from the faith to their ruin: nor do the pathetic discourses, and dreadful woes and punishments denounced, imply the contrary; seeing they are used to show the care of

God over his people, and the natural tendency to ruin such offenses might have, was it not prevented by his power; and consequently their attempts that way are not less sinful and criminal. As for Romans 14:20; 1 Corinthians 8:9, 11; Psalms 125:3; which are urged to the same purpose; see in sections 8, 36, and 37.

Section 24—Matthew 11:21, 23.

Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

These words are frequently insisted on as proving man's ability to repent, believe, and convert himself; and that unfrustrable and irresistible grace is not necessary to these things; and that faith, repentance, and conversion, are not produced by it. But,

Here is no mention made of faith and conversion, only of repentance; and that not spiritual and evangelical, but external and legal; such as was performed in sackcloth and ashes, and by virtue of which Sodom might have remained unto this day; for though a repentance is not unto eternal salvation, yet it is often attended with temporal blessings, and is the means of averting temporal judgments, as in the case of the Ninevites, and may be where the true grace of God is not; with the want of this Christ might, as he justly does, upbraid the cities where his mighty works had been done, and the Jews, in Matthew 12:41, and 21:31, 42, which might have been performed by them, though they had no power to repent in a spiritual and evangelical sense, to which more is required than the bare performance of miracles. See Luke 16:31.

These words are to be understood, as Grotius observes, in a popular sense, and express what was probable, according to a human judgment of things; and the meaning is, that if the inhabitants of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, had had the advantages of Christ's ministry, and of seeing his miracles, as the inhabitants of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum had, it looks very likely, or one would be ready to conclude, they would have repented of their flagitious crimes, which brought down the judgments of God upon them in such a remarkable manner; as these ought to have

done, particularly of their sin of rejecting the Messiah, notwithstanding all the evidence of miracles, and convictions of their own consciences, and so probably sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost. And therefore,

The words are an hyperbolical exaggeration of their wickedness, such as those in Ezekiel 3:5-7, showing that they were worse than the Tyrians and Sidonians, who lived most profligate and dissolute lives; than the inhabitants of Sodom, so infamous for their unnatural lusts; yea, than any others, if there were any worse than these under the heavens; and therefore would be punished with the worst of punishments, verses 22, 24. In much the same way are we to understand, Matthew 12:14, and 21:31, 32, where Christ upbraids the Jews with the want even of an external repentance for their sin of rejecting him, though they had such a full proof and demonstration of his being the Messiah; and therefore were worse than the men of Nineveh, who repented externally at the preaching of Jonah; yea, worse, notwithstanding all their pretended sanctity and righteousness, than the publicans and harlots, who went into the kingdom of God, attended on the outward ministry of the word, believed John the Baptist, and gave at least an assent to what he said concerning the Messiah as true.

4. These words can be no proof of God's giving sufficient grace equally to all men, which is in some effectual to conversion, and in others not; seeing the men of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, had not the same advantages and means, or the same grace, as the inhabitants of these cities had, if the mighty works done among them are to be called so. Besides, where persons have the same external means of grace, and the same outward advantages, and one truly repents, believes, and is converted, and another not; this is owing not to the will of man, but the sovereign grace of God, as appears from verses 25, 26: —At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

Section 25—Matthew 23:37.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chicken under

her wings, and ye would not!

Nothing is more common in the mouths and writings of the Arminians than this Scripture, which they are ready to produce on every occasion against the doctrines of election and reprobation, particular redemption, and the irresistible power of God in conversion, and in favour of sufficient grace, and of the free-will and power of man, though to very little purpose, as will appear when the following things are observed.

That by Jerusalem we are not to understand the city, nor all the inhabitants; but the rulers and governors of it, both civil and ecclesiastical, especially the great Sanhedrim, which was held in it, to whom best belong descriptive characters of killing the prophets and stoning such as were sent to them by God, and who are manifestly distinguished from their children; it being usual to call such who were the heads of the people, either in a civil or ecclesiastical sense, fathers, Acts 7:2, and 22:1, and such who were subjects and disciples, children, 19:44, Matthew 12:27, Isaiah 8:16, 18. Besides, our Lord's discourse, throughout the whole context, is directed to the scribes and Pharisees, the ecclesiastical guides of the people, and to whom the civil governors paid a special regard. Hence it is manifest, that they are not the same persons whom Christ would have gathered, who would not. It is not said, how often would I have gathered you, and you would not, as Dr. Whitby more than once inadvertently cites the text; nor, he would have gathered Jerusalem, and she would not, as the same author transcribes it in another place; nor, he would have gathered them, thy children, and they would not, in which form it is also sometimes expressed by him; but I would have gathered thy children, and ye would not, which observation alone is sufficient to destroy the argument founded on this passage in favour of free-will. That the gathering here spoken of does not design a gathering of the Jews to Christ internally, by the Spirit and grace of God; but a gathering of them to him internally, by and under the ministry of the word, to hear him preach; so as that they might be brought to a conviction of and an assent unto him, as the Messiah; which, though it might have fallen short of saving faith in him, would have been sufficient to have preserved them from temporal ruin, threatened to their city and temple in the following

verse—Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: which preservation is signified by the hen gathering her chickens under her wings, and shows that the text has no concern with the controversy about the manner of the operation of God's is grace in conversion; for all those whom Christ would gather in this sense were gathered, notwithstanding all the opposition made by the rulers of the people.

That the will of Christ to gather these persons is not to be understood of his divine will, or of his will as God; for who hath resisted his will? This cannot be hindered nor made void; he hath done whatsoever he pleased, but of his human will, or of his will as man; which though not contrary to the divine will but subordinate to it, yet not always the same with it, nor always fulfilled. He speaks here as a man and minister of the circumcision, and expresses a human affection for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and a human wish or will for their temporal good, instances of which human affection and will may be observed in Mark 10:21, Luke 19:41, and 22:42. Besides, this will of gathering the Jews to him was in him, and expressed by him at certain several times, by intervals, and therefore he says, How often would I have gathered, etc. Whereas the divine will is one continued invariable and unchangeable will, is always the same, and never begins or ceases to be and to which such an expression as this is inapplicable; and therefore this passage of Scripture does not contradict the absolute and sovereign will of God in the distinguishing acts of it, respecting election and reprobation.

That the persons whom Christ would have gathered are not represented as being unwilling to be gathered; but their rulers were not willing that they should. The opposition and resistance to the will of Christ. were not made by the people, but by their governors. The common people seemed inclined to attend the ministry of Christ, as appears from the vast crowds which, at different times and places, followed him; but the chief priests and rulers did all they could to hinder the collection of them to him; and their belief in him as the Messiah, by traducing his character, miracles, and doctrines, and by passing an act that whosoever confessed him should be put out of the synagogue; so that the obvious meaning of the text is the same with that of verse 13, where our Lord says, Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye shut up the

kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in; and consequently is no proof of men's resisting the operations of the Spirit and grace of God, but of obstructions and discouragements thrown in the way of attendance on the external ministry of the word.

That in order to set aside and overthrow the doctrines of election, reprobation, and particular redemption, it should be proved that Christ, as God, would have gathered, not Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof only, but all mankind, even such as are not eventually saved, and that in a spiritual saving way and manner to himself, of which there is not the least intimation in this text; and order to establish the resistibility of God's grace, by the perverse will of man, so as to become of no effect, it should be proved that Christ would have savingly converted these persons, and they would not be converted; and that he bestowed the same grace upon them he does bestow on others who are converted; whereas the sum of this passage lies in these few words, that Christ, as man, out of a compassionate regard for the people of the Jews, to whom he was sent, would have gathered them together under his ministry, and have instructed them in the knowledge of himself as the Messiah; which, if they had only notionally received, would have secured them as chickens under the hen from impending judgments which afterwards fell upon them; but their governors, and not they, would not, that is, would not suffer them to be collected together in such a manner, and hindered all they could, their giving any credit to him as the Messiah; though had it been said and they would not, it would only have been a most sad instance of the perverseness of the will of man, which often opposes his temporal as well as his spiritual good.

Section 26—Matthew 25:14-30.

The parable of the talents.

It is not to be concluded from this parable that sufficient grace is given to all men, by which they may be saved if they will. For,

All men are not designed by the servants to whom the talents were committed; these are not all Christ's servants, nor so called; much less with an emphasis his own servants. No more can be included under this character here than belong to the kingdom of heaven, the visible gospel church-state, the subject of

this parable, which does not consist of all mankind; yea, even all the elect of God are not intended; for though they are the servants of Christ, and his own servants, whom the Father has given him, and he has purchased, by his blood, and subjects to himself by his grace, yet all that come under this character here, were not such; for one of them is represented as a wicked and slothful servant, and to be justly cast into outer darkness; but the servants of the man travelling into a far country, meaning Christ, are the ministers of the gospel, who are, in a peculiar sense, the servants of Christ; and who, whether faithful or slothful, are in a lively manner described in this parable, which is a distinct parable from that which is delivered in the preceding part of this chapter; for as that gives an account of the several and different members of the visible church, so this of the several and different ministers in it; and being spoken to the disciples, was an instruction, direction, and caution to them, and not only to them, but is so to all the ministers of the word in succeeding ages.

Sufficient grace is not intended by the talents, but gifts; and these not merely the gifts of natural and acquired knowledge, of wealth, riches, and honor, of the external ministry of the word, gospel ordinances, and opportunities of enjoying them; but spiritual gifts, or such as fit and qualify men to be preachers of the gospel, as appears from the name, talents, these being the greatest gifts for usefulness and service in the church, as they were the greatest of weights and coins among the Jews; from the nature of them being such as may be improved or lost, and for which men are accountable; from the persons to whom they were delivered, the servants of Christ; from the time of the delivery of them, when Christ went into a far country, into heaven, when he ascended on high, and received gifts for men, and gave them to men; and from the unequal distribution of them, being given to some more, and to others less; all which perfectly agree with ministerial gifts. Now these may be where grace is not; and if they are to be called grace because freely given, yet they are not given to all men, and much less unto salvation, for men may have these and be damned. See Matthew 7:22, 23; 1 Corinthians 13:1, 2. And therefore,

It is not to be established from hence that a man has a power to improve the stock of sufficient grace

given him, and by his improvement, procure eternal happiness to himself; since such a stock of grace is not designed by the talents, nor is it either implanted or improved by man; nor does the parable suggest that men, by their improvement of the talents committed to them, do or can procure eternal happiness. Good and faithful servants are indeed commended by Christ, and he graciously promises great things to them, which are not proportioned to their deserts; for whereas they have been faithful over a few things, he promises to make them rulers over many things, and bids them enter into the joy of their Lord; into the joy which he of his grace and goodness had provided for them, and not which they had merited and procured for themselves.

It is not to be inferred from hence that true grace once given or implanted may be taken away or lost; for the parable speaks not of what is wrought and implanted in men, but of goods and talents, meaning gifts, bestowed on them, committed to their trust, and received by them; which may be lost, or taken, away, or be wrapped up in a napkin, and lie useless by them; when true grace is the incorruptible seed which never dies, but always remains that good part which will never be taken away nor lost, but is inseparably connected with eternal glory.

Section 27—Luke 19:41, 42.

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace: but now they are hid from thine eyes.

These words are often made use of to disprove any decree of reprobation in God, Christ's dying intentionally, for some only, the disability of man, and in favour of a day of grace. But,

It should be observed that they are not spoken of all mankind, only to Jerusalem and its inhabitants, and regard not their spiritual and eternal salvation, but their temporal peace and prosperity; and therefore ought not to have a place in our controversies about these things. That the words relate only to Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof, will not be disputed; and that they design their temporal prosperity, which Christ was concerned for, and was almost at an end, appears from the following verses, 43, 44, For the days shall come upon thee, etc. Add to this, this one observation more, that Christ here speaks as a man, expressing his

human affection for the present temporal good of this city, as is evident from his weeping over it on his near approach to it. Hence,

There is no foundation in this text for such an argument as this: "Christ here taketh it for granted that the people of Jerusalem, in the day of their visitation by the Messiah, might savingly have known the things belonging to their peace. Now, either this assertion, that they might savingly have known these things, was according to truth; or his wish, that they had thus known the things belonging to their peace, was contrary to his Father's will and decree; which is palpably absurd. And seeing the will of Christ was always the same with that of his Father, it follows also that God the Father had the same charitable affection to them; and so had laid no bar against their happiness by his decrees, nor withheld from them any thing on his part necessary to their everlasting welfare." But it was not their everlasting welfare, or that they might savingly know the things which belong to eternal peace, but their outward prosperity, which he as a man, and one of their own nation, was concerned for; and such a human compassionate regard for them he might have and show, notwithstanding any decree of his Father's, respecting the, eternal state of some or all of these people, or any other part of mankind. It does not follow that, because Christ as a man had a charitable affection for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, God the Father bore an everlasting love to them; or, because he showed a goodwill to their temporal welfare, that the Father had at heart their eternal salvation. Christ's human affections and will were not always the same with his Father's: he beheld the young man mentioned by the evangelist (Mark 10:21), and he loved him, as man; but it does not follow from hence that God the Father loved him, and gave him or did every thing necessary to his everlasting welfare. The sufferings and death of Christ were absolutely and peremptorily decreed by God, and yet Christ as man desired that, if it was possible, the cup might pass from him; and so he might wish as man for the temporal happiness of this city, though he knew that the desolations determined would be poured upon the, desolate (Dan. 9:26, 27), both in a temporal spiritual sense; and yet his tears over them are tears of charity and true compassion, and not crocodile's tears, as they are impiously called, on a supposition of God's

decree of reprobation, or act of preterition. Hence,

We shall not meet with so much difficulty to reconcile these words to the doctrine of particular redemption, as is suggested, when it is said, “You may as well hope to reconcile light and darkness, as these words of Christ with his intention to die only for them who should actually be saved;” unless it can be thought irreconcilable, and what implies a contradiction, that Christ as man should wish temporal good to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and yet not intentionally die for all mankind: should he intentionally die for them who are not actually saved, his intentions would be so far frustrated, and his death be in vain.

It does follow from hence that, because these people might have known the things which belonged to their temporal peace, though they were now in a judicial way hid from their eyes, therefore men may of themselves, and without the powerful and unfrustrable grace of God working upon their hearts, and enlightening their understandings, know the things that belong to their spiritual and eternal peace, seeing it is slid of natural men, the way of peace they have not known (Rom. 3:17); and could these words be understood of the things belonging to spiritual and eternal peace, they would only prove that these Jews had the means of the knowledge of them, which they despising, God had given them up to blindness of heart; and so Christ’s words are to be considered not so much as pitying them, but as upbraiding them with their ignorance, unbelief, neglect, and contempt of him, his miracles, and doctrines; therefore God was just:, and they inexcusable.

The time in which Christ was on earth was a day the light, of great mercies and favours, to the Jews; but it does not follow that, because they had such a time, therefore all men have a day of grace, in which they may be saved if they will. Besides, the phrase this thy day may respect the time of her (Jerusalem’s) visitation (v. 44), which was a day of vengeance, and not of grace, that was hastening on, and near at hand, though hid from her, and was the occasion of Christ’s compassionate tears and wishes.

Section 28—John 1:7.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe.

A considerable argument in favour of the extent of Christ’s death to all men is thought to arise from the

obligation which is, and always was, upon all persons to whom the Gospel is or was revealed, to believe in Christ, that he came to save them, and died for them; for if he died not for them, they are bound to believe a lie; and if condemned for not believing, they are condemned for not believing an untruth. I observe,

That the argument is most miserably lame and deficient. The thing to be proved is, that Christ died for every individual man and woman that have been, are, or shall be in the world. The medium by which this is attempted to be proved is, the obligation that lies on such to whom the Gospel is revealed, to believe that Christ died for them; and the conclusion is, that therefore Christ died for all men. Now the Gospel has not been nor is it revealed to all men, only to some; wherefore was there any truth in the medium, the conclusion would not follow. The argument stands thus: all men to whom the Gospel is revealed are bound to believe that Christ died for them; some men have the Gospel revealed to them, therefore Christ died for all men. The weakness and fallacy of such an argument must be seen by every one; a most miserable argument this, which proceeds upon a partial revelation of the Gospel to an universal redemption. I observe,

That the obligation to believe in Christ, and so the faith to which men are obliged are in proportion, and according to the nature of the revelation of the Gospel, which obliges them Now the Gospel revelation is either external or internal: the external revelation is by the word, and the ministry of it; which respecting Christ, lies in these things, that he is really and properly God, and truly man; that he is the Son of God, and the Mediator between God and men; that he is the Messiah, who is actually come in the flesh; that he died and rose again the third day; is ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, and will come a second time to judge the world in righteousness; and that by his obedience, sufferings, and death, he is become the Savior of sinners, and that none can be saved but by him. Now let it be observed, that this revelation is general and not particular, and does not necessarily oblige persons to whom it comes to believe that Christ is their Redeemer and Savior, and that he died for them particularly, though the Spirit of God may and does bless it to many for the begetting special faith; and it may and does lay a

general foundation for special and appropriating acts of that grace, yet it only requires an historical faith, or bare assent to the truth of the said propositions. Now such a faith is not saving; men may have this, and yet be damned; yea, the devils themselves have it. It follows that men may be obliged to believe, and yet not to the saving of their souls, or that Christ died for them. Besides, this revelation is not made to all men; and therefore all men, such as Indians, and others, are not obliged to believe in Christ, nor even to give a bare assent to the truth of the above said things, much less to believe that Christ died for them; and indeed, How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (Rom. 10:14). And perhaps all are not obliged to believe who live in a land where this revelation does come; as those who have not their natural reason and hearing, or the due and proper use and exercise of the same, such as infants, idiots, madmen, and those who are entirely deaf; only such to whom this revelation is made, and are capable of hearing and understanding it, are obliged to have faith in Christ by it, as were the Jews of old, who were condemned for their unbelief, not because they did not believe that Christ died for them, to which they were not obliged, but because they did not believe him to be God, the Son of God, the true Messiah, and Savior of sinners. The internal revelation of the Gospel, and of Christ through it, is by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; whereby a soul is made sensible of its lost state and condition, and of its need of a Savior; is made acquainted with Christ as the alone Savior, both able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him; whence it is encouraged to venture on him, rely upon him, and believe in him to the saving of it: now such an one ought to believe, and none but such, that Christ died for them. This faith all men have not; it is the faith of God’s elect, the gift of God, the operation of his Spirit, and the produce of almighty power.

Now, according to the revelation is the faith men are obliged to, and what is produced by it: if the revelation is external, or the Gospel comes in word only, the faith men are obliged to is only an historical one, nor can any other follow upon it; and that Christ died for every individual man is no part of the revelation. If the revelation is internal, a special

spiritual appropriating faith is the result of it; but then this revelation is not made to all men, nor are God’s elect themselves, before conversion, bound to believe that Christ died for them; and when they are converted, to believe that Christ died for them is not the first act of special faith; it is the plerophory, the full assurance of faith, to say, He hath loved me, and hath given himself for me (Gal. 2:20). Hence,

Since there is not a revelation of the Gospel made to all men, and all men are not bound to believe in Christ, much less to believe that Christ died for them; it follows that no such absurdity can attend the denial of universal redemption, that some more are bound to believe a lie; nor will it be the condemnation of the heathens that they believe not in Christ, but that they have sinned against the light, and broken the law of nature; nor will any persons enjoying a revelation be condemned for not believing that Christ died for them, but for the breach of God’s laws, and neglect and contempt of his Gospel; nor is there any danger of any one believing a lie, since all those who believe in Christ, and that he died shall certainly be saved, which is the fullest proof that can be of his dying for them. Christ dying for an unbelieving Christian, and a Christian being under a condemnatory decree, are unintelligible phrases, mere paradoxes, and contradictions in terms.

John the Baptist’s bearing witness of Christ, the light, and true Messiah, that all men through him might believe, respects not all the individuals of human nature, since millions were dead before he began his testimony, and multitudes since, whom it never reached; nor can it design more than the Jews, to whom alone he bore witness of Christ; the faith which he taught, and required by his testimony, was not to believe that Christ died for them, who as yet was not dead, but an assent unto him as the Messiah. This was the work, will, and command of God, that they should believe on him, in this sense, whom he had sent. This is what Christ often called for from them, declaring, that if they believed not that he was the Messiah, they should die in their sins; and this was what the Spirit of God reproved the world of the Jews for, by bringing down the wrath of God in temporal ruin and destruction, upon their persons, nation, city, and temple. Since then this text, with multitudes of others, which speak of believing in Christ, only

regards the people of the Jews, and designs only a bare assent to him as the Messiah, which would have preserved that people and nation from temporal ruin; it does not follow that all men are bound to believe in Christ, that he died for them, and consequently can be of no service to the doctrine of universal redemption.

Section 29—John 5:34.

But these things I say, that ye might be saved.

This passage of Scripture is often produced as proof of Christ's serious intention to save some who are not saved, to whom he gave sufficient means of salvation, which they refused; and consequently that his Father had made no decree, whereby they stood excluded from salvation; that he did not die intentionally only for such who are actually saved, and that the work of conversion is not wrought by an irresistible and insuperable power. To which I reply,

It is certain that the Jews, to whom Christ here speaks, had not, means sufficient to salvation; for though the testimonies of his Father, of John the Baptist, and of his own works and miracles, which he produced, were proper means to induce them to believe that he was the Messiah, yet not means sufficient to salvation; for to salvation, an internal work of grace, the regeneration of the Spirit,. are absolutely requisite and necessary; without which no man can be saved. Now it is evident, that they wanted these, since they had not the love of God in them (v. 42); nor his word abiding in them (v. 38); nor so much as the knowledge of Christ's divinity, or of his being the true Messiah (v. 18).

It is taken for granted, that these words regard a spiritual and eternal salvation; whereas they may very well be understood of a temporal one; and the sense of them be this; these things I say, that is, these testimonies of my Father, and of John, I produce, not so much for my own honor and glory, as for your good; that ye, through these testimonies of me, may believe that I am the true Messiah, and so be saved from the temporal run and destruction, which will otherwise come upon you and your nation, for your disbelief, neglect, and contempt of me. But,

Admitting that Christ spoke these words with a view to the spiritual and eternal salvation of his audience; it should be observed, that he is here to be considered as a preacher, a minister of the circumcision, sent to the

lost sheep of the house of Israel, for whose welfare he had a compassionate regard and concern; and therefore published the things concerning his person, office, and grace, indefinitely to them all, that he might gain some, not knowing as man, though he did as God, who were chosen, and who were not; which consideration of him is neither injurious to God nor to him. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to prove, that the persons to whom Christ spoke these words, were not eternally saved; though at the present time they were unbelievers, and destitute of the grace of God, yet might hereafter be converted and enabled to go to Christ, for life and salvation; or at least, there might be some among them who were the elect of God, and sheep of Christ; for whose sake Christ might express himself in this manner, in order to bring them to the knowledge of him, and salvation by him; and therefore do not militate either against; any decree or act of preterition passed by God, respecting any part of mankind, or the doctrines of particular redemption and unfrustrable grace in conversion.

Section 30—John 5:40.

And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

These words are usually cited together with the former, and are urged for the same purposes; particularly to show that Christ seriously intended the salvation of such who would not come to him for it; and that man does not lie under any disability of coming to Christ for life; did he, his not coming to Christ would not be criminal in him; nor would he be blame-worthy for what he could not help. To which I answer,

That what Christ intends, he intends seriously; but it does not appear from these words, that he did intend the salvation of these persons who would not come to him, but rather the contrary; since they look more like a charge exhibited against them, for their neglect of him, as the way of life and salvation, and trusting to the law of Moses, and their obedience to it, and therefore did not receive him, or believe in him; and though Christ declined bringing in an accusation directly and in form against them, yet he acquaints them that there was one that accused them, even Moses, in whom they trusted; and therefore their future condemnation would be justifiable upon their own principles, and by the very writings they had

such an opinion of; since these testified of him, and of eternal life by him, which they rejected.

These words are so far from being expressive of the power and liberty of the will of man to come to Christ, that they rather declare the perverseness and stubbornness of it; that man has no desire, inclination, or will, to go Christ for life; but had rather go any where else, or trust to any thing else, than to him. Man is stout-hearted, and far from the righteousness of Christ, and submission to it; is not subject to the law of God, nor the Gospel of Christ; nor can he be, till God works in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure; or until he is made willing in the day of his power. No one can come to Christ, except the Father draw him; nor has he a will to it, unless it be wrought in him.

Though man lies under such a disability, and has neither power nor will of himself to come to Christ for life; yet his not coming to Christ, when revealed in the external ministry of the Gospel, as God's way of salvation, is criminal and blame- worthy; since the disability and perverseness of his will are not owing to any decree of God, but to the corruption and vitiosity of his nature, through sin; and therefore, since this vitiosity of nature is blame-worthy; for God made man upright, though they have sought out many inventions, which have corrupted their nature; that which follows upon it, and is the effect of it, must be so too.

Section 31—John 12:32.

And I, if I be lifted from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

Though this text is not produced by the principal writers in the Arminian controversy, nor by the Remonstrants formerly, nor by Curcellaeus, nor by Limborch, nor by Whitby of late; yet inasmuch as it is urged by others, in favour of universal redemption, that he who draws all men to him by his death, must needs die for all men; it will be proper to consider the import of it, and the argument upon it. And,

It is certain, that the death of Christ, and the very kind of death he should die, is intimated by his being lifted up from the earth; since the evangelist observes in the next verse, that this he said signifying what death he should die; and it must be owned, that the drawing of all men to Christ, is here represented as a fruit of his death, or as what should attend it, or would

follow upon it; and I can say, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to me. And therefore

The sense of these words pretty much depends on the meaning of the word draw: which either designs a collection of a large number of people to him, and about him, when he should be lifted on the cross, some against, others for him; some to reproach, and others to bewail him; or rather of the gathering of the people to him, through the ministry of the apostles; and so of their being enabled, through the power of divine grace, to come unto him, and believe on him for eternal life and salvation; for all those whom God has loved with an everlasting love, and Christ has died for, are, sooner or later, with loving-kindness drawn unto him; in this sense Christ uses the word in this Gospel; no man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him (John 6:44). Now,

It is most evident, that all men, that is, every individual of human nature, every son and daughter of Adam, have not faith, are not drawn, or enabled to come to Christ, and believe in him. There were many of the Jews who would not, and did not come to Christ, that, they might have life; who, instead of being drawn to him in this sense, when lifted up on the cross, vilified and reproached him; nay, at this time, here was a world spoken of in the preceding verse, whose judgment, or condemnation, was now come; and besides, there was then a multitude of souls in hell, who could not nor never will be drawn to Christ; and a greater number still there will be at the last day, to whom, instead of drawing to him in this gracious way and manner, he will say, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity (Matthew 7:23, and 25:41). Christ died, indeed, for all men who are drawn unto him; but this is not true of all men that are, were, or shall be in the world. Add to this that the men is not in the Greek text; it is only panta, all; and some copies read panta, all things; so Austen read it formerly, and so it was in an ancient copy of Beza's. But not to insist on this;

By all men, is meant some of all sorts, all the elect of God, the children of God, that were scattered abroad; and particularly the Gentiles as well as the Jews, as Chrysostom and Theophylact interpret the words; which interpretation is perfectly agreeable with ancient prophecy; that when Shiloh was come (Gen. 49:10; Isa.11:10), to him should the gathering of the people, or Gentiles, be; and with the context,

an occasion of these words, which was this; certain Greeks that were come up to worshiper the feast, desired to see Jesus; of which when he was apprised by his disciples, he answered, that the hour was come in which he should be glorified, and that as a corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, so should he: and though he tacitly intimates, that it was not proper to admit these Greeks into his presence now, yet when he was lifted up from the earth, or after his death, his Gospel should be preached to them as well as to the Jews; and that large numbers of them should be drawn unto him, and brought to believe in him; agreeable to which sense of the words is Dr. Hammond's paraphrase of them: "And I being crucified, will by that means, bring a great part of the whole world to believe on me, Gentiles as well as Jews." And to the same purpose is the note of Dr. Whitby on the text.

Section 32—Acts 3:19.

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

It is concluded from hence, that repentance and conversion are in the power of men, and not wrought by the unfrustrable grace of God; that there is no such thing as an absolute election, nor special redemption of particular persons; since all men are exhorted to repent and be converted, and that in order to procure the remission of their sins. But,

It should be observed, that repentance is either evangelical or legal, and this either personal or national. Evangelical repentance is not in the power of a natural man, but is the gift of God's free grace. Legal repentance may be performed by particular persons, who are destitute of the grace of God, and by all the inhabitants of a place, as the Ninevites, who repented externally at the preaching of Jonah, though it does not appear that they had received the grace of God, since destruction afterwards came upon that city for its iniquities; and such a repentance these Jews are here exhorted to, on the account of a national sin, the crucifixion of Christ, with which they are charged (vv. 14-18), and in the guilt and punishment, of which they had involved themselves and all their posterity, when they said, His blood be upon us, and upon our children (Matthew 27:25). Likewise the conversion here pressed unto us, is not an internal conversion of the soul to God, which is the work of almighty power,

but an outward reformation of life, or a bringing forth fruit in conversation meet for the repentance insisted on. Besides, exhortations to any thing, be it what it will, do not necessarily imply that man has a power to comply with them. Men are required to believe in Christ, to love the Lord with all their heart, to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit, yea, to keep the whole law of God; but it does not follow that they are able of themselves to do all these things. If, therefore, evangelical repentance and internal conversion were here intended, it would only prove that the persons spoken to were without them, stood in need of them, could not be saved unless they were partakers of them, and, therefore, ought to apply to God for them.

These exhortations do not militate against the absolute election nor particular redemption of some only, since they are not made to all men, but to these Jews, the crucifiers of Christ; and were they made to all men, they should be considered only as declarations of what God approves of, commands, and requires, and not what he wills and determines shall be; for then all men would repent and be converted; for who hath resisted his will? Besides, in this way God may and does bring his elect to see their need of repentance, and to an enjoyment of that grace, and leaves others inexcusable. It is said, that if Christ died not for all men, God could not equitably require all men to repent: and it is asked, What good could this repentance do them? what remission of sins could it procure? and therefore must be in vain; yea, that it would follow from hence, that no impenitent person can be justly condemned for dying in his impenitent estate. To which I reply; it does not become us to fix what is, and what is not equitable for God to require of his creatures, on supposition of Christ's dying or not dying for them; this is limiting the Holy One of Israel. Supposing Christ had not died for any of the sons of men; have they not all sinned and transgressed the commands of God? and should they not be sorry for these sins, and repent of the same, being committed against the God of their mercies? and might not God equitably require this at their hands, though he had not given his Son to die for them? and though such a repentance would not procure remission of sins, which is not to be procured by any repentance whatever; nor is it by the repentance of those for whom Christ has

died, but by his precious blood, without which there is no remission; yet it might be the means of enjoying a present temporal good, and lessening the aggravation of future punishment; as in the case of the Ninevites. Nor does it follow from Christ's not dying for all men, that no impenitent person can be justly condemned for dying in his impenitent estate; since the providential goodness of God leads to repentance; (Rom. 2:4, 5) and therefore such who despise the riches of his goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, do, after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and righteous judgment of God; and since, as many as have sinned without law, (Rom. 2:12) and consequently without the Gospel and the knowledge of Christ, his sufferings, and death, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. Besides, as has been observed, the exhortation to repent here made, is not made unto all men, but to the Jews, on a very remarkable occasion, and was blessed to many of them, to the turning them away from their iniquities; for many of them which heard the word, believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand (Acts 4:4). If it should be replied, that though the exhortation to repentance is not here made to all men; yet it is elsewhere expressly said, that God commandeth all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Let it be observed, that as this command to repentance does not suppose it to be in the power of man; nor contradicts its being a free-grace gift of God; nor its being a blessing in the covenant of grace, and in the hands of Christ to bestow; so neither does it extend, as here expressed, to every individual of mankind; but only regards the men of the then present age, in distinction from those who lived in the former times of ignorance: for so the words are expressed: and the times of this ignorance God winked at; overlooked, took no notice of, sent them no messages, enjoined them no commands of faith in Christ, or repentance towards God; but now, since the coming and death of Christ, commandeth all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, everywhere to repent; it being his will, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations (Luke 24:47): but admitting that it has been God's command in all ages, and to all men that they repent; as all men are indeed bound, by the law of nature, to a natural repentance, though all men

are not called by the gospel to an evangelical one; yet I see not what conclusions can be formed from hence against either absolute election or particular redemption. Though there is a close connection between evangelical repentance, true conversion, and pardon of sin; that is to say, that such who are really converted and truly repent, have their sins pardoned; yet not repentance and conversion, but the free grace of God and blood of Christ are the causes of pardon. Forgiveness of sin is indeed only manifested to converted penitent sinners, who are encouraged and influenced to repent of sin, and turn to the Lord from the promise of pardoning grace; hence the most that can be made of such an exhortation is only this; that it is both the duty and interest of men to repent and turn to God, that they may have a discovery of the remission of their sins through the blood of Christ, and not that they shall hereby procure and obtain the thing itself: though, after all, neither evangelical repentance and internal conversion, nor the grace of pardon are here intended; not evangelical repentance and internal conversion, as has been before observed, nor the spiritual blessing and grace of pardon; for, though pardon of sin is signified by blotting it out, Psalm 51:1,9; Isaiah 43:25, and Isaiah 44:22; yet forgiveness of sin sometimes means no more than the removing a present calamity, or the averting of a threatened judgment, Exodus 32:32; 1 Kings 8:33 to 39; and is the sense of the phrase here. These Jews had crucified the Lord of glory, and for this sin were threatened with miserable destruction; the apostle therefore exhorts them to repent of it, and acknowledge Jesus to be the true Messiah; that so when wrath should come upon their nation to the uttermost, they might be delivered and saved from the general calamity; which, though these would be terrible times to the unbelieving Jews, yet would be times of refreshing to the people of God from troubles and persecutions. Though the last clause may be considered, not as expressing the time when their iniquities should be blotted out, but as a distinct additional promise made to penitents, and be read with the other thus: that your sins may be blotted out, that the times of refreshing may come; as they are by the Syriac and Arabic versions, and to which the Ethiopic agrees, and is the reading preferred by Lightfoot; and the sense is this, "Repent of your sin of crucifying Christ, acknowledge Jesus as the true

Messiah, and you shall not only be saved from the general destruction of your nation, but shall have the gospel and the consolation of Israel with you. Jesus Christ, who was first preached unto, you, shall be sent down unto you in the refreshing consolatory ministry of the word, though he in person must refrain in heaven, until the times of restitution of all things.”

Section 33—Acts 7:51.

Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

Though these words are not once cited or referred to by Dr. Whitby, as I remember, yet, inasmuch as the Remonstrants have never failed to urge them in favour of the irresistibility of God’s grace in conversion, and to prove that that work is not wrought by an irresistible power; and that men may have sufficient grace for conversion who are not converted, it will be proper not to omit them; their argument from them stands thus. If the Holy Spirit may be resisted when, he acts in man with a purpose and will to convert him, then he does not work conversion by an irresistible power; but the Holy Spirit may be resisted when he acts in man with a purpose and will to convert him: therefore, etc. But,

That the Spirit of God in the operations of his grace upon the heart in conversion, may be resisted, that is, opposed, is allowed; but that he may be so resisted as to be overcome, or be hindered in, or obliged to cease from the work of conversion, so as that it comes to nothing, where he acts with purpose and will to convert, must be denied, for who hath resisted his will? who, in this sense, can resist it? No one instance of this kind can ever be produced.

It should be proved that the Spirit of God was in these persons, and was acting in them with a design to convert them, and that they had sufficient grace for conversion given them, and that that grace was the same with that which is given to persons who are only converted; whereas it does not appear that they had any grace at all, since they are said to be stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears.

Supposing the Spirit of God was acting in them with a purpose and will to convert them, it will be difficult to prove that they so resisted, and continued to resist him, as that they were not hereafter converted by him; we are sure that one of these persons, namely

Saul, was afterwards really and truly converted; and how many more were so, we know not.

The resistance made by these persons was not to the Spirit of God in them, of which they were destitute, but to the Spirit of God in his ministers, in his apostles, and particularly Stephen; not to any internal operation of his grace, which does not appear to have been in them, but to the external ministry of the word, and to all that objective light, knowledge, evidence, and conviction, that it gave of Jesus being the Messiah; in which sense they are said to reject the counsel of God against themselves (Luke 7:30); and to put from them the word of God (Acts 13:46). Such who resist Christ’s ministers resist him; and such who resist him may be said to resist his Holy Spirit. Once more, The word *anipiptete*, signifies a rushing against, and falling upon, in a rude and hostile manner; and fitly expresses their ill-treatment of Christ and his ministers, by falling upon them and putting them to death, which is the resistance here particularly designed, as is manifest from the following words (v. 52).

Section 34—Romans 5:18.

Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life.

These words stand as a proof of general redemption; and the sense given of them is, that Christ died for the justification of all men; and that justification of life was procured by him for, and is offered unto, all men; it being apparent that the apostle is comparing the condemnation which is procured by the sin of Adam, with the free gift of justification procured by the second Adam, as to the extent of persons concerned in both; all men, in the first clause, being to be taken in the utmost latitude, the same word in the latter clause must be taken in the same manner, or the grace of the comparison is wholly lost. To all which I reply;

These words say nothing at all about the death of Christ, or of his dying for any persons or any thing, but speak of his righteousness and the virtue of it, to justification of life; by which righteousness is meant his active obedience, as appears from the following verse: nor do the Scriptures anywhere say, that Christ died for our justification, but that he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. It is true indeed

that justification is procured by the death, as well as the obedience of Christ; as that we are justified by his blood as well as by his righteousness; but it cannot be said, with any propriety, that justification of life is offered to any; since justification is a forensic, a law term, and signifies a sentence pronounced, or declared, and not offered. A judge, when he either acquits or condemns, he does not offer the sentence of justification or condemnation, but pronounces either: so God, when he justifies, he does not offer justification to men, but pronounces them righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and when Christ procured justification, it was not an offer of it, but the blessing itself. These words then are not to be understood either of Christ’s dying for justification for any, especially for every individual man; since all men, in this large sense, are not justified; many will be righteously condemned, and eternally punished; and consequently his death, respecting them, must be in vain, were this the case; nor of the procuring of justification, still less of the offer of it, but of the application of it to the persons here mentioned.

It is apparent, that the apostle is here comparing the first and the second Adam together, as heads and representatives of their respective offspring, and the effects of sin, to the condemnation of those that sprang from the one, with the grace of God to the justification of such that belong to the other, and not the number of persons concerned in these things. His plain meaning is, that, as the first Adam conveyed sin, condemnation, and death, to all his posterity; so the second Adam communicates grace, righteousness, and life, to all his posterity; and herein the latter has the preference to the former, and in which lies the abundance of grace here spoken of; that the things communicated by the one are, in their own nature, to be preferred to the other; and particularly, that the righteousness, which Christ gives to his, not only justifies from the sin of the first Adam, and secures from all condemnation by it, but also from all other offenses whatever, and gives a right to eternal life, wherefore it is called the justification of life, which the first Adam never had. Were the comparison between the numbers of such who are condemned by the sin of the one, and of those who are justified by the righteousness of the other, the numbers being the same, the grace of the comparison would be wholly lost; for where would be

the exuberance when there is perfect equality?

Admitting that the apostle is comparing the condemnation which, was procured by the sin of Adam with the free gift of justification procured by the second Adam, as to the extent of persons concerned in both; this extent cannot be thought to reach to more than such who respectively spring from them, and belong to them. No more could be condemned by the sin of Adam than those who naturally descended from him by ordinary generation. The angels that fell are not condemned for Adam’s sin, from whom they did not spring, but for their own personal iniquities. This sin reached not to the man Christ Jesus, nor was he condemned by it for himself, because he descended not from Adam by ordinary generation; so no more can be justified by the righteousness of Christ, nor does that reach to the justification of more than those who are Christ’s, that belong to him, and who are in time regenerated by his Spirit and grace, and appear to be his spiritual seed and offspring.

All men, in the latter clause of this text, can never design every individual of mankind; for if the free gift came upon all men, in this large sense, to justification of life, every man would have a righteousness to be justified, be secure from wrath to come, have a right to eternal life; and at last be glorified and everlastingly saved; for such who are justified by the blood of Christ, shall be saved from wrath through him (Rom. 5:9; 8:30); and whom God justifies, them he also glorifies. Now it is certain, that all men, in the utmost latitude of this phrase, have not a justifying righteousness; there is a set of unrighteous men who shall not inherit the kingdom of God, are not, nor will they ever be justified; but the wrath of God abides on them, and will be their everlasting portion: could it be proved that the righteousness of Christ is imputed by the Father, and applied by the Spirit, to the justification of every man, and that every man will be saved, we shall readily come in to the doctrine of universal redemption by the death of Christ. But,

The apostle is the best interpreter of his own words, and we may easily learn, from this epistle, who the all men are, to whom the free gift by Christ’s righteousness comes, to justification of life; they are the elect whom God justifies, through the righteousness of his Son, and secures from condemnation by his death (Rom.8:33, 34); they are

all the seed to whom the promise of righteousness and life belongs, and is sure (Rom. 4:16); they are the all that believe, upon whom and unto whom the righteousness of Christ is manifested, revealed, and applied by the Spirit of God (Rom. 3:22); and they are such who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness (Rom. 5:17); and, in a word, the gift comes upon all those that are Christ's, and belong to him to justification, even as judgment came upon all to condemnation, through the offense of Adam, that belong to him or descend from him. The text in 1 Corinthians 15:22, for as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive, in which the same comparison is made between the two heads, Adam and Christ, and their different effects, and which is sometimes used, in favour of general redemption, is foreign to the purpose, since it speaks not of redemption by Christ, nor of spiritual and eternal life through him, but of the resurrection of the dead, as is evident from the whole context; and that not of every individual man, only of such as are Christ's, and who sleep in him, of whom he is the first-fruits, verse 20, 23; who will be raised by virtue of union to him, and come forth unto the resurrection of life; which all will not, for some will awake to shame and everlasting contempt, yea, to the resurrection of damnation, which, by the way, is a proof that the word all does not always design every individual of mankind.

Section 35—Romans 11:32.

For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

This passage of Scripture is produced as a proof of God's will, that all men should be saved, and to show that he has rejected none from salvation by an absolute and antecedent decree, and consequently that Christ died for all men; seeing as God hath concluded all men in unbelief, none excepted, so, by the rule of opposition, he hath mercy on all, none excepted. To which I answer:

That God shows mercy to all men in a providential way, is granted, for his tender mercies are over all his works; (Psalm 114:9.) but that all men are partakers of his special mercy through Christ, must be denied, since the vessels mercy are manifestly distinguished from the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction (Rom. 9:22, 23); and certain it is, that there are some whom he that made them will not have mercy on them, and

he that formed them will show them no favour (Isa. 27:11); and where God does extend his special mercy, it is wholly owing to his sovereign will and pleasure, for he hath mercy on whom, he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth (Rom. 9:18).

By the rule of opposition, no more can be thought to be the objects of God's mercy than those whom he has shut up in unbelief; which is not true of all men that ever were in the world; for, though all men are, by nature, unbelievers, yet they are not all shut up by God in unbelief. To be shut up in unbelief, is the same as to be concluded under sin, the meaning of which phrases is, not that God makes men sinners and unbelievers, or puts them into the prison of sin and unbelief, but that he proves, demonstrates, and convinces them, that they are in such a state and condition, as Chrysostom on the other place observes, and which is the sense that Grotius and Vorstius, who were both on the other side of the question, give of these words; for such who are savingly convinced of sin, are held and bound down by a sense of it in their consciences, that they can find no by-way to creep out, or make any excuse for it. Now, all men are not in this sense concluded under sin, or shut up in unbelief, none but those whom the Spirit of God reproves and convinces of these things; which convictions are wrought in them, on purpose that they may flee, not to their own merits, but to the mercy of God, which they may hope to share in, since with the Lord is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption (Ps. 130:7).

It is not said absolutely, God hath concluded, *pantaV*, all in unbelief, that he might have mercy, *pantaV*, on all; but God hath concluded, *touV pantaV*, them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy, *touV pantaV*, on them all, which limits and restrains the all to the persons the apostle is speaking of in the context; were the elect of God among the Jews and Gentiles, and so designs the fullness of the Gentiles, whom God determined to bring in, (v. 25), and especially that all Israel, (v. 26), that shall be saved, not by their own righteousness, but by the pure mercy and free grace of God. In short, by the all whom he has mercy on, and in order to bring them to a sense of their need thereof, concludes in, and convinces of, unbelief, are to be understood all believers, that is, who are eventually so, be they Jews or Gentiles, as Vorstius observes, and which is manifest from a parallel text, The scripture

hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe (Gal.3:22). Hence this passage neither militates against an absolute election, nor special redemption of particular persons.

Section 36—Romans 14:15.

Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

These words are frequently used in favour of universal redemption, and to prove that Christ died not only for the elect, for his sheep, and true believers, but also for them that perish; and the argument from them is formed thus: "If Christ died for them that perish, and for them that do not perish, he died for all. But Christ died for them that perish, and for them that do not perish; ergo, he died for all men. That he died for them that do not perish, is confessed by all; and that he died for such as may, or shall perish, is intimated in this injunction; destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." But whether so much is intimated hereby, will be seen when the following things are considered;

That the injunction, destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died, does not intend eternal destruction; since that can never be thought to be either in the will or the power of those on whom this is enjoined. Such a degree of malice and wickedness surely can never arise in the heart of any to wish for, desire, and take any steps towards the eternal damnation of others; what comes nearest to such an instance, is the Jews' prohibition of the apostles, to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved (1 Thess. 2:16); which discovered implacable and inveterate malice indeed; but surely nothing of this kind could ever be among brethren of the same faith, and in the same church state; and were any so wicked as to desire the eternal destruction of another, yet it is not in his power to compass it; none can eternally destroy but God; fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28). Besides, is it reasonable to suppose, or conclude, that eternal damnation should follow upon eating and drinking things indifferent, as herbs, meat and wine, or be caused by an offense given and taken through these things? Therefore, unless it can be proved, that eternal destruction did or might

ensue upon the use of things indifferent; or that weak brethren might or were so ensnared, offended, and stumbled hereby, as to perish eternally, there is no force in the argument.

It will appear from the context, that the destruction of the weak brother dehorted from, is not the eternal destruction of his person; but the present destruction, interruption, or hindrance of his peace, and comfort. To destroy the brother with meat, is, by eating it, to put a stumbling, or an occasion to fall in his way (v. 13); not to fall from the grace and favour of God; but so as that the peace of his mind may be broken, his affections to the brethren wax cold, and he be staggered in the doctrines of the gospel: hence says the apostle, It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended, or is made weak (v. 21); to do which, is contrary to Christian charity; if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably; yea, it is destroying the work of God (v. 20); not the Christian convert, who is God's workmanship; nor the good work of grace, which will be performed until the day of Christ; nor the work of faith, which will never fail; but the work of peace in churches, and particular persons, which God is the author of, and which the things that make for it, saints should follow after (v. 19). Now a weaker brother, for whom Christ has died, may be thus grieved, distressed, wounded, his peace destroyed, and yet not eternally perish; and so can be no instance of Christ's dying for such as may be or are eternally lost. The apostle's design in this dehoration, is manifestly this; partly from the interest Christ has in, and the love he has showed to such brethren in dying for them; and partly from the hurt that may be done to their weak minds and consciences, to deter stronger believers from giving them any offense by their free use of things indifferent; though he knew their eternal salvation could not be in any danger thereby.

Section 37—1 Corinthians 8:11.

And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

These words are commonly joined with the former, and produced for the same purposes, both to prove that Christ died for such as perish, and that true believers may totally and finally fall away. What has been said under the preceding section, might be

sufficient to lead us into the true sense of this text, which is parallel with the other, and so remove any argument or objection taken from hence. But not to let it pass without particular examination, let it be observed;

That as the text in Romans 14:15, is a dehortation, or an injunction not to destroy him with meat, for whom Christ died; this is delivered out in the form of all interrogation; and neither the one nor the other prove matter of fact, supposing they could be understood of eternal destruction and ruin; as that any one brother, who was a true believer, was destroyed, or perished eternally this way; and at most, only imply the danger and possibility thereof, through their own corruptions, Satan's temptations, and the offenses given by stronger brethren; were they not preserved by the grace and power of God, through Christ, who died for them, and so will not suffer them to perish.

The perishing of this weak brother, is to be understood of, and is explained by, a defiling of his conscience (v. 7); a wounding of it (v. 12); and making him to offend, (v. 13), by the imprudent abuse of Christian liberty in those who had stronger faith, and greater knowledge, and by a participation in things offered to idols, in an idol's temple (vv. 7, 10); and not of his eternal damnation in hell, which could never enter into the apostle's thoughts; since he says (v. 8), Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. Hence we have no need to return for answer, to arguments formed on these texts; that these weak brethren, of whom it is supposed that they might perish, being under a profession of religion, men were obliged, from a judgment of charity, to believe that Christ died for them, though he might not, or that others may be said to destroy, or cause them to perish, though their destruction followed not; because they did all that in them lay towards it, and what in its own nature tended to it; and therefore we are not concerned with the replies made unto such answers, which we shall not undertake to defend. This text proves, that Christ died for weak brethren, whose consciences may be defiled, wounded, and offended, through the liberty others might take, and in this sense, perish; but does not prove that Christ died for any besides his sheep, his church; or those who are eventually true believers; for which the Remonstrants

cite it; for surely a brother who is truly one, though weak, is a sheep of Christ, a member of his church, and a believer; and therefore can be no instance of Christ's dying for any reprobates, and still less for all mankind.

Such for whom Christ died, can never finally, totally, and eternally perish; since he has, by his death, procured such blessings for them, as a justifying righteousness, pardon of sin, peace with God, reconciliation to him, and eternal salvation; which will for ever secure them from perishing. Besides, should any of them perish in this sense, his death would be so far in vain; nor could the death of Christ be thought to be a sufficient security from condemnation; whereas the apostle says, Who shall condemn? it is Christ that died: nor a full satisfaction to the justice of God; or God must be unjust to punish twice for the same faults.

Section 38—1 Corinthians 10:12.

Therefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

It is observed, that "the apostle here speaks to the whole church at Corinth, and to such who truly thought they stood; and plainly supposes, that he who truly stood, might fall, and would do so, if he used not great diligence to keep his standing; for had not this taking heed been the condition of their standing; had they been of the number of those who, by God's decree, or promise, infallibly were assured of standing, this exhortation to take heed, must have been superfluous; since men can need no admonitions to do that which God's decree and promise secure them they cannot omit; much less to do it to prevent what cannot possibly befall them." To which I reply;

That the apostle does not speak these words to the whole church at Corinth; for though the epistle is in general directed to the church, yet there are several things which only respect some particular persons; as the incestuous person; such who went to law with their brethren before unbelievers; some that behaved disorderly at the Lord's table, and others that denied the resurrection of the dead, of and to whom some particular things are spoken, which did not belong to the whole church; and here the apostle exhorts, not such who truly thought they stood; for such do stand in the grace of God, in Christ, and by faith, and shall never finally and totally fall away; but such o

dokwn, who seemeth to himself and others, to stand; and manifestly designs such who were swelled with a vain opinion of themselves, of their knowledge and strength, tempted God, and trusted to themselves, as the Ethiopic version reads it, and despised weak believers: now such as these may fall, as they often do, from that which they seemed to have, from the truths of the Gospel, and a profession of it, and into scandalous sins, and at last, into condemnation. If it should be asked, why should the apostle concern himself about these persons, or exhort them to take heed to their standing? would it not have been as well, if they had thrown off the mask at once, and have appeared to be what they really were? I answer that the apostasy of formal professors, is injurious both to the honor and interest of true religion; for the ways of God are evil spoken of, the name of Christ blasphemed, profane sinners hardened, and weak believers stumbled by the falls of formal professors, as of real Christians: besides, it must be worse for themselves, their defection being the means of a more severe punishment: for it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them (2 Pet. 2:21).

Supposing that such who truly taught spoken to; it will be allowed that these may fall into temptation, into snares, into sin, from a degree of steadfastness in the Gospel, and from a lively and comfortable exercise of grace, but not finally, totally, and irrecoverably; since they are enclosed in the arms of everlasting love, secured in the hands of Christ, built on a foundation that will never give way, and kept by an almighty power, which can never be overcome: and though taking heed is not the condition of their standing, but that is secured unto them by the purpose and promise of God, which can never fail; yet such an exhortation is not superfluous; since though they cannot finally and totally fall, they may fall to the dishonor of God, the reproach of the Gospel of Christ, the grieving of the Spirit, the wounding of their own souls, the stumbling of weak believers, and the strengthening of the hands of the wicked; all which are so many strong reasons and arguments why they should take heed lest they fall; though they can never so fall as to perish eternally: nor are the admonitions needless to that which God's decree and promise secure; since these

are often the means in and by which God executes his decree, and makes good his promise; see Acts 27:22, 24, 31. To add no more, these words should never be made use of against the saints' final perseverance, since they are so closely connected with the following verse, which so fully expresses that doctrine: there hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. By this, way we may judge of the nature, design, and use of cautions given to the saints not to fall away; which are represented as evidences and suppositions that they may do, so; such as the caution Christ gave all his disciples, in these words; Take heed unto yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting etc. (Luke 21:34, 36.). Which only implies, that the apostles, like other men, were subject to infirmities, sins, snares, and temptations: and therefore caution, watch-fullness, and prayer, were incumbent on them, that they might not be found in a supine, negligent, sleepy frame, when not the day of judgment, but of the destruction of Jerusalem, came on; and so they might escape the general calamity, and stand before the Son of man, and carry his Gospel into the Gentile world: and is no proof of the possibility or danger of their final falling away; who were chosen of Christ, given him by his Father, and so kept by him, as that none were lost, but the son of perdition.

When the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews cautions the believers he writes unto, to take heed, lest there be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God, and fall from the promised rest; and to look diligently lest any man fail, of the grace of God (Heb.3:12; 4:1; 12:15); his design is to expose the sin of unbelief, as what bereaved the saints of much comfort, and God of much glory; every degree of it in that, being a partial, though not a total departure from God, and therefore should be watched against: and it should be observed, that he does not caution them to take heed lest they fell from the rest promised them, but lest they should seem to come short of it; which they might do, and yet enjoy it: and when he exhorts them, to take heed lest any man fail of the grace of God; this is not to be understood of the grace and favour of God towards them, nor of

the grace of God in them, but of the doctrines of grace which they had received; the duty enjoined them being a mutual one, in which they were episkopein, to act the part of a bishop or overseer over each other.

When the apostle Paul cautions the Colossians, to beware, lest any man should beguile them with enticing words, spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, and beguile them of their reward (Col. 2:4, 8, 18); he does not design a final and total seduction of them from Christ their head, in whom they were complete, verse 10; not a destruction of grace in them but a corruption of the doctrine of grace received by them; which might be unawares introduced by false teachers, under the specious pretenses of humility and holiness.

When the apostle Peter exhorts those he wrote to, to beware, lest being led away with the error of the wicked, they fall from their own steadfastness (2 Pet. 3:17): his meaning is, not as though there was danger or a possibility of falling from the like precious faith they had obtained: but that they might be in danger of falling from some degree of steadfastness in the doctrine of faith, through the ensnaring errors of wicked men; and therefore should guard against it.

Lastly. When the apostle John saith to the children of the elect lady, Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things that we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward (2 John 1:8), it does not follow, that such who have the true grace of God, may lose those things which they have wrought; for it is not what ye, but what we, have wrought; much less lose what the Spirit of God has wrought; but the caution regards the doctrines and ministry of the apostles, lest that should be in any respect in vain; or a veil be drawn over the glory of it, through those persons any way giving heed to the doctrines of deceivers (vv. 7, 9, 10).

Section 39—2 Corinthians 5:14,15.

For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

This scripture never fails to have a place in the controversy about the extent of the death of Christ. Universal redemption is concluded from hence, by the following arguments, now to be examined.

The first is taken from the word all here used, if, or since one died for all. But it ought to be observed,

That the text does not say that Christ died for all men, but for all; and therefore, agreeable to other scriptures (Matthew 1:21; John 10:15; Eph. 5:25; Heb. 2:9, 10), may be understood of all the people whom Jesus saves from their sins; of all the sheep for whom he laid down his life; of all the members of his church, whom he loved, and for whom he gave himself; or of all the sons for whom he tasted death, and, as the Captain of their salvation, brings to glory.

That it is said in the latter part of the text, that those for whom Christ died, for them also he rose again; who therefore ought to live tw uper autwn apoqanonti kai egerqenti, to him that died and rose again for them. Christ died for no more nor for others than those for whom he rose again; such for whom he rose again, he rose for their justification; if Christ rose for the justification of all men, all men would be justified, or the end of Christ's resurrection would not be answered; but all men are not, nor will be justified; some will be condemned: it follows, that Christ did not rise from the dead for all men, and consequently did not die for all men.

That the all for whom Christ died, died with him, and through his death are dead both to the law and sin; then were all dead. Besides, the end of his dying for them was, that they might live, not to themselves, but to him that died for them; neither of which is true of all mankind; not to take any notice of the nature and manner of Christ's dying for these all; which was for, in the room and stead of them; and denotes a substitution made, a satisfaction given, which issues in the full discharge, acquittance, and justification of them, and is not the case of every individual of human nature.

That the context (2 Cor. 5:17, 18, 21), explains the all of such who are in Christ, are new creatures, reconciled to God, whose trespasses are not imputed to them, for whom Christ was made sin, and who are made the righteousness of God in him; which cannot be, said of all men.

It is observed, "the words, all were dead, must certainly be taken in their greatest latitude; wherefore, the words preceding, if or since Christ died for all, from which they are an inference, ought also to be taken in the same extent." To which I reply,

The latitude in which the words all were dead, are to be taken, must be according to that in which the preceding words, if one died for all, are to be taken; by these the extent of the other is fixed, and not the extent of these by them. The apostle does not say, nor is it his meaning, that Christ died for all that were dead; but that all were dead for whom he died; if one died for all, then oi panteV apeqaion, those all were dead; for the article oi is anaphorical or relative, as Beza and Piscator rightly observe: supposing, therefore, that the words all were dead, are capable of being taken in such a latitude as to comprehend every individual of mankind, there is no necessity that they should be so taken here, unless it be first proved, that the preceding words, if one died for all, by which the extent of these is fixed, are to be understood in so large a sense; which is the thing in question, and cannot receive any proof from hence; till this is done, it is enough to say, that all for whom Christ died were dead: from whence it does not follow, by any just consequence, that Christ died for all that were dead.

It is proper to consider the sense of these words, then were all dead. The Remonstrants understand them of a death in sin, which is common to all mankind; and because all men are dead in sin, they conclude that Christ died for all men. Admitting this sense of the words, they prove no more, than that all for whom Christ died were dead in sin; which is very true; for the elect of God are dead in trespasses and sins, whilst in a state of nature, as well as others; but not that Christ died for all that were dead in sin: and therefore, even according to this interpretation, they conclude nothing in favour of universal, or against particular redemption. Though it does not appear that this is the sense of the words, since to be dead in sin is no consequence of the death of Christ, that is, such an one as is depending on it; for it would have been a truth, that all men descending from Adam, were dead in sin, if Christ had never died; or if he had died for some or for none; much less is a death in sin the fruit of Christ's death, or what puts persons in a capacity of living to Christ, which the death here spoken of is intimated to be and do; but, on the contrary, this death is the fruit of sin, and what renders persons incapable, whilst under the power of it, to live to Christ. And therefore,

When those for whom Christ died, are said to be

dead through his dying for them, the meaning is, either that they were dead with him, or in him, as the Ethiopic version reads it, their head and representative; when he was crucified they were crucified with him, and so was their old man, that the body of sin might be destroyed; that henceforth they should not serve sin; or that they were dead to the law by the body of Christ, as to the curse of it, and condemnation by it; and dead to sin, as to its damning power, so that they were acquitted, discharged, and justified from it; the consequence of which is, a deliverance from the reigning power and dominion of it. Hence, being thus dead to the law and sin, they are capable, through the assistance of divine grace, of living unto righteousness, and to the glory of Christ; all which is the saints' privilege, and the fruit and effect of Christ's death. Now as the former sense of the words concludes nothing in favour of Christ's dying in for every individual of mankind; this latter sense, which is most genuine, strongly concludes against it; since all men are not, nor will be, dead to the law and to sin.

Universal redemption is pleaded for from the end of Christ's death; which is, that they which live, should not live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them. Upon which it is observed, "This sure must be the duty of all Christians in particular (unless there be any Christians not obliged to live to Christ, but rather at liberty to live unto themselves), and so that death, which is the motive to it, must be intended for them all." To this I add, instead of answering, that this is a way of reasoning which cannot be contradicted, certainly it is the duty of all Christians to live to Christ, nor are any at liberty to live to themselves: and it will not be denied, that the death of Christ was intended for them all, since all Christians, who are really such, are the believers, and these are the elect of God. But then there is a wide difference between these two propositions, Christ died for all Christians, and Christ died for all men; unless it can be thought, that all men, Turks, Jews, and Indians, are Christians. The argument from the end of Christ's death, here mentioned, is formed in a much better manner, and to better purpose, by the Remonstrants, thus "Those who ought to live to Christ, for them Christ died; but not the elect only ought to live to Christ, therefore Christ did not die for the elect only." To which I answer, that however plausible this argument may seem to be,

yet it has no foundation in the text, which does not say, that Christ died for all them who ought to live to him; but only, at most, proves, that those for whom he died, ought to live to him: all men ought to live to Christ as God, as their Creator, they are obliged to it by the laws of Creation, and ties of nature, whether he died for them or no, and indeed, supposing he had never died for any; bat besides the obligation from creation, there is a fresh one upon such for whom he died to live to him: hence it follows not that “to say that Christ died for some only of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, is to exempt all others of those nations from living to Christ;” for though they are not bound to live to Christ on the account of redemption by him; yet, because they are his creatures, and are supplied with temporal mercies from him: and as to what is further observed, that “to say he died for all the elect, that they of them who live, might not live to themselves, is to suppose that some of the elect might live, not to Christ, but to themselves; which cannot truly be imagined of the elect of God.” I reply, that there is a proneness in all the elect of God, even after they are made spiritually alive, to live to themselves, and not to Christ; and therefore, such an argument, taken from Christ’s dying for them in particular, is a very proper one to quicken them to their duty, and engage them with all readiness and cheerfulness to seek the glory and honor of their Redeemer.

That Christ died for all men, is argued for from the love of Christ constraining the apostles to preach the Gospel to all; and it is said, the apostle “declares, that the sense of this love of Christ prevailed upon them to persuade men to believe in him. Now this persuasion they used to every man to whom they preached; and therefore they persuaded all men to believe that Christ died for them (Col. 1:28).” To which I answer; that it was not the love of Christ, but the terror of the Lord, that prevailed upon them to persuade men (v. 11), and that it is not said, that they persuaded all men, but men; for it was not all men they preached unto. Moreover, this persuasion was not to believe in Christ, but a general judgment, to which all will be summoned (v. 10), much less to believe that Christ died for all to whom they preached; of which kind of persuasion we have no instance, neither here nor in Colossians 1:28, nor in any other passage of scripture.

Section 40—2 Corinthians 5:19.

To wit that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

This text is produced to confirm the truth of. general redemption; and it is said. to do it beyond exception; which, whether it does or no, will better appear, when,

It is considered, that the word world cannot be understood of every man or woman that have been, are, or shall be in the world. For,

All and every one of these, are not reconciled to God. The text says, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; which must be understood of his doing it either intentionally, or actually; if intentionally only, that is, if he intended to reconcile the world to himself by Christ, and drew the scheme of reconciliation in him, can intentions be frustrated? Shall not his counsel stand? will he not do all his pleasure? shall a scheme so wisely laid by him in his Son, come to nothing; or at least, only in part be executed? which must be the case, if it was his design to reconcile every individual of mankind to himself, since a large number of them are not reconciled: but if the words are to be understood of an actual reconciliation by Christ, which is certainly the sense of the preceding verse, all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ; then it is beyond dispute, that the word world cannot be taken in so large a sense as to include every man and woman in the world; since there are multitudes who die in their sins, in a state of enmity to God and Christ, whose peace is not made with God, nor they reconciled to his way of salvation by his Son. It is indeed said, that; “the import of these words is plainly this; he was offering through Christ a reconciliation to the world, and promising them who would believe in him, absolution from their past offenses.” To which I answer; Admitting the ministry of the word is here designed, that is not an offer of reconciliation to the world; but a proclamation or declaration of peace, made by the blood of Jesus, of reconciliation by the death of the Son of God: nor is this ministry of reconciliation sent to all men; millions of people were dead and gone before and since the word of reconciliation was committed to the apostles, who never so much as heard of this ministry; nor did it reach to all that were alive at that present time.

Besides, the text does not speak of what God did by the ministry of his apostles, but of what he himself had been doing in his Son, and which was antecedent, and gave rise unto, and was the foundation of their ministry. There was a scheme of reconciliation drawn in God’s counsels before the world began, and an actual reconciliation by the death of Christ, which is published in the gospel by the ministers of it, and which is not published to all mankind; nor did the apostles entreat all men to whom they preached, to be reconciled to God; the exhortation in the following verse, be ye reconciled to God, is given not to all men, but to the believing Corinthians, for whom Christ was made sin, and they made the righteousness of God in him.

It cannot be said of every man and woman in the world, that God does not impute their trespasses to them; whereas this is said of the world here: Blessed indeed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin; but does this blessedness come upon all men? Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment and some they follow after (1 Tim. 5:24). To say that God is here “promising to them who would believe in him, an absolution from past offenses,” is putting a wrong construction on the words; which are not a promise of what God would do, did men believe, but a declaration of what he had been doing: besides, if only an absolution from past offenses is promised, what must be done with after ones? And after all, they who would or do believe, are not every man and woman in the world.

There is good reason to conclude, that the whole world, is to be restrained to the elect of God; since these are the persons whose peace Christ is, who are reconciled to God by his death, whose sins are not imputed to them, and against whom no charge of any avail can be laid; and perhaps the people of God among the Gentiles, may be more especially designed; since,

They are called by the world, who are said to be reconciled (Rom. 11:12, 15), yea, the whole world, for whose sins Christ is the propitiation (1 John 2:2). Nor was any thing more common among the Jews than to call the Gentiles *ulw[j] twmwa*, the nations of the world. Dr. Hammond, by the world, in this place, understands the greater and worse part of it, the Gentiles.

This sense well agrees with the context. In verses 14, 15, the apostle asserts that Christ died for all, Gentiles as well as Jews, and adds, in verse 16, Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh. Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more; that is, we make no difference in our ministry, nor in our esteem, value, and affections for men, with respect to their carnal descent, whether they be born of Jewish or Gentile parents: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh; had a value for him, as a Jew, as one of our own country, entertained gross notions about him, and about a temporal deliverance from the Romans, and a temporal kingdom to be erected amongst us by him; yet now henceforth know we him no more; we have quitted our former carnal apprehensions of him, and only look upon him as a spiritual Savior of Jews and Gentiles; therefore, verse 17, if any man, Jew or Gentile, be in Christ, he is a new creature, or let him be a new creature; which is the main thing we regard; old things are passed away; the Old Testament economy is abolished; behold all things are become new, under the Gospel dispensation; hence now in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature; for this is the subject of our ministry, God was in Christ reconciling the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, unto himself. That reconciliation was made for Gentiles as well as Jews, was not only a reason why the apostles, to whom the word of reconciliation was committed, carried it among the Gentiles, but was also a noble argument to engage the believing Gentiles at Corinth to regard the exhortation made unto them, verse 20, be ye reconciled to God, that is, to his providential dispensations towards them, to the order and ordinances of his house, to the form of discipline he had fixed in the church, and to all the laws of Christ, as King of saints, since he had been reconciling them to himself by his Son, the blessed effects of which they then enjoyed. This exhortation, was not made to unconverted sinners, much less to the non-elect; but to the church of Christ, professing faith in him, and who were reconciled to God’s way of salvation by him.

Section 41—2 Corinthians 6:1.

We therefore, as workers together with him; beseech you also, that ye receive not the grace of

God in vain.

This scripture usually stands among the proofs of the saints' defectibility or apostasy, from whence it is concluded, that a man may receive the true grace of God in regeneration in vain, which may become useless and of no avail, may be lost, and he himself everlastingly perish. But,

We are not to understand by the grace of God, that grace which is implanted in the souls of men at the time of their regeneration, for that cannot be received in vain; it always produces its proper fruit and designed effect; it begins, carries on, and finishes the work of sanctification; it is an immortal, incorruptible, never-dying seed; it cannot be lost in any part or branch of it; it is a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life; it is closely and inseparably connected with eternal glory; to all those to whom God gives grace he gives glory; whom he calls and justifies, them he also glorifies.

The grace of God is sometimes to be understood of gifts of grace, and particularly such as qualify men for the work of the ministry, in which sense it is used by the apostle Paul, in Romans 1:5, and Romans 12:6; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 15:10; of which he had a large measure; nor was the grace which was bestowed on him in vain, seeing he labored more abundantly than all the rest of the apostles. And it will appear reasonable to take the phrase in the same sense here, if we consider the words as they stand in connection with the latter part of the preceding chapter, and some following verses in this, after this manner; seeing the word and ministry of reconciliation is committed to us, and we are ambassadors for Christ; we not only pray you, the members of the church at Corinth, to be reconciled to the order of the Gospel, and the laws of Christ in his house, but as workers together, (not, with him, that is, God or Christ, which is not in the text,) as fellow-laborers in the Lord's vineyard, as jointly concerned in the same embassy of peace; we beseech you also, the ministers of the word in this church, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain; that is, that you be careful that the gifts bestowed on you do not lie neglected and useless, but that you use and improve them to the advantage, of the church and glory of Christ, by giving up yourselves to study, meditation, and prayer, and by laboring constantly in the word and doctrine; and also, that you have a

strict regard to your lives and conversations, giving no offense in any thing, laying no stumbling-block in the way of such you are concerned with, that the ministry be not blamed, verse 3 (for verse 2 is included in a parenthesis), and then adds the apostles, but in all things approving, eautouV, yourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, etc.

The grace of God often designs the doctrine of grace, or the Gospel of the, grace of God, as in Titus 2:11, Hebrews 12:15; Jude 1:4; which may be truly so called, since it is a declaration of the love and grace of God to sinful men; it ascribes the whole of salvation to it, and is the means of implanting the grace of God in the hearts of his people in regeneration. Now the grace of God, in this sense, that is, the doctrine of grace, may be received in vain, so as that it may become useless, take no real effect, produce no real fruit; as was the ease of such who received seed by the way-side, into stony places, and among thorns; and is the case whenever it comes in word only; is received, not into the heart, but into the head only; when the life and conversation is not becoming it; and especially when it is abused to vile purposes, that is, when men turn this doctrine of the grace of God into lasciviousness; and when besides, they drop, deny, and fall off from those truths of the Gospel they have before professed; and since this too often is the case, an entreaty, an exhortation of this kind made to a visible church, consisting of real and nominal professors, cannot be improper, without supposing that true believers may fall from or lose the true grace of God in regeneration.

Section 42—2 Corinthians 11:2, 3.

For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy! For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

The fears of the apostle, expressed in these words, and in Galatians 4:11, 1 Thessalonians 3:5, lest pious persons should miscarry, are thought to add farther strength to the argument against the saints' final perseverance; "for, it is said, if the apostles, by the dictates of the Holy Spirit, had declared, that God had absolutely promised, that men once truly pious, should

persevere to the end, how could they reasonably express their fears, lest it, should be otherwise?" To which I reply,

That the fears of the apostle about the persons referred to in these several passages, were not lest they should fall from the love and favour of God, nor from the grace which was implanted in them, and so miscarry of heaven and eternal happiness; but lest, through the subtlety of Satan, and his instruments, false teachers, their minds and judgments should be in any degree corrupted from the purity and simplicity of the Gospel of Christ, and they should any way give into erroneous doctrines, or comply with Judaizing practices, and so the labor of him and his fellow-ministers, in instructing and establishing them in Gospel truths, be so far in vain.

The fears of the apostle, lest these persons should fall in this sense, yea, even if they could be extended further, are no proofs of fact that these persons did fall away; but only, at most, declare his apprehensions of their danger. And it is certain, that the most eminent saints are in danger through the wiles of Satan, the cunning of false teachers, the persecutions of the world, and the corruption of their own hearts, of falling from their steadfastness in the faith; and it is owing to the mighty power and grace of God, that they are in any measure preserved. The apostle might express his fears on account of these things without any contradiction to or hesitation about God's absolute promise of the saints' final perseverance, and his faithfulness in the performance of it.

The jealousies and fears of the apostle about these persons, expressed with such a tender and affectionate concern for them, might be purposely directed and powerfully blessed to them by the Spirit, by whom he was assisted, as a means of their preservation from false principles and practices they were in danger of falling into, and thereby God's absolute promise of their final perseverance be accomplished. Nor does the apostle's fear, jealousy, caution, and watchfulness of himself, expressed in 1 Corinthians 9:27, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be cast away imply, any possibility or danger, or supposed danger, of his eternal damnation; since the word *ajdo>kimov*, does not design a reprobate, as that is opposed to an elect person; for the apostle knew in whom he had believed, and was persuaded

that nothing could separate him from the love of God; but his concern was, lest he should do any thing that might bring a reproach on the Gospel, and his ministry be justly blamed, and brought under contempt, and so be rejected and disapproved of by men, and become useless.

Section 43—Philippians 2:12.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

These words are represented as militating against God's decree of reprobation, man's passiveness, and the unfrustrableness of grace in conversion, and the final perseverance of the saints.

It is asserted, that "to say God seriously invites, exhorts, and requires all men to work out their salvation, and yet, by his decree of reprobation, hath rendered the event, to most of them, impossible, is to make the gospel of Christ a mockery." But it should be observed, that this exhortation is not given to all men, and particularly not to reprobates, but to men already believing and converted, as is elsewhere owned, even to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which were at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, in whom a good work of grace was begun; to whom it was given both to believe on Christ, and suffer for his sake; who were beloved by the apostle, had always obeyed the Lord, and in whose hearts he was then working both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Now to exhort these, and such as are in the like state and condition, to work out their salvation, who have a principle of spiritual life in them, and have measures of grace and strength given them, answerable to what they are exhorted to, is not to make the gospel of Christ a mockery, since these can never be thought to be reprobates; nor does this contradict the decree of the reprobation of others, which springs from the sovereign and righteous will of God, and which is not, but sin, the cause of man's damnation.

It is asked, "If some physical and irresistible operation were required on God's part, which makes it necessary for us to will and to do, why are we then commanded to work out our own salvation? for can we act where we are purely passive?" To which I reply, that these words are spoken to men already converted, in whom the work of regeneration was wrought, in

which work they were purely passive; though now, having a principle of spiritual life, and under the influences of the grace of God, were capable of being active in working out their own salvation, which is something distinct from conversion and regeneration, and is to be understood, not in such a sense, as though men could procure and obtain spiritual and eternal salvation by their own performances, which is contrary to the Scriptures, which ascribe salvation in whole, and in part, to the free grace of God; contrary to the glory of the divine perfections of wisdom, grace, and righteousness, and inconsistent with the weakness and impotence of believers themselves; besides, the best works of men are imperfect, and, were they perfect, could not be meritorious, since the requisites of merit are wanting in them. Add to this, that salvation is obtained alone by Christ, and is already finished, and not to be wrought out now, either by Christ or believers; and, were it procured by the works of men, the death of Christ would be in vain; boasting in the creature would not be excluded, and men's obligations to God and Christ would be greatly weakened; and, since this sense of the words is attended with such insuperable difficulties, it can never be the true meaning of them. Let it be observed, that the words may be rendered, work about your salvation, that is, employ yourselves in things which, though not essential to, yet do accompany salvation, and are to be performed by all those who expect it, though not do be expected for the performance of them; such as hearing of the word, submission to gospel ordinances, a discharge of every branch of spiritual and evangelical obedience, for which the apostle commends them in the beginning of this verse, since they had always obeyed, not only in his presence, but much more in his absence, he exhorts them to go on in a course of cheerful obedience to the close of their days, when they should receive the end of their faith, that which they were aiming at, and looking for, even the salvation of their souls. The Syriac version, if not a strict translation, yet gives the just sense of the words, by rendering them *anhlwp wjwlp do the work or business of your lives, that is, your generation work, what God has cut out and appointed for you in this life; do all that with fear and trembling, with all humility, not trusting to your own strength, but depending on the grace of God,*

who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

This exhortation to work out salvation with fear and trembling, being directed to such who were, at present, in a state of favour with God, and in whom God had begun the good work, with others, directed to churches and persons, to fear, lest they should fall away, and finally miscarry, such as Proverbs 23:17, and 28:14, Romans 11:20, Hebrews 4:1, and 12:28, 1 Peter 1:17; are improved into an argument against any absolute decree or promise of God, in favour of the saints' final perseverance: for it, is said, "What ground of fear can there be, where God hath absolutely decreed to confer this salvation, and stands obliged by promise to afford those means, which will infallibly produce it?" To which I answer:

The exhortation to the Philippians to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, is not to be understood of a slavish fear of hell and damnation, or lest they should fall away and finally miscarry; since this would have been a distrust of the power and faithfulness of God, and so criminal in them. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that the apostle would exhort to such a fear when he himself was confident of this very thing, that he which had begun a good work in them would perform it until the day, of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6). Besides, the exhortation would be very oddly formed, if this were the sense of it, work out your salvation with fear of damnation, but as the phrase with fear and trembling always designs, wherever used, so here, modesty and humility, and stands opposed to pride and vain confidence; as in Romans 11:20, Be not high-minded, but fear, which sense perfectly agrees with the apostle's general design in this chapter, which is to engage the saints to a modest and humble deportment in the whole of their conversation with each other, and in every branch of duty; and which he enforces by the example of Christ, in his incarnation, humiliation, and death; and in imitation of him, urges to a constant and cheerful obedience, with all humility of soul, without dependence on it, or vain-glory in it; but ascribing it wholly to the grace of God, who works in us both to will add to do of his good pleasure.

Several of the passages referred to, such as Proverbs 23:17, and Proverbs 28:14, Hebrews 12:28, 1 Peter 1:17, are to be understood not of a fear of

apostasy, but of a filial, spiritual and evangelical fear of God; which is a grace of the Spirit of God, a branch of the new covenant, and of considerable moment to secure the saints from a total and final departure from God; I will put my fear into their hearts, says God, that they shall not depart from me (Jer. 32:40).

The apostle, in Hebrews 4:1, speaks indeed of a cautionary fear of falling; but yet in that does not exhort the believing Hebrews to fear lest any of them should fall short of entering into rest, as Dr. Whitby cites the words, but lest any of them should seem to come short of it. Now, between coming short and seeming to come short is a great difference; and though there was no danger of their coming short of heaven, yet, inasmuch as through the disagreeableness of conversation, they might seem to others to come short; therefore, for the glory, of God, the honor of the gospel, the credit of religion, and the good of others, it became them to be cautious, wary, and jealous of themselves, and watchful over their conversations, that they gave no occasion to any one to entertain such an opinion of them. Hence it appears that all the reasoning against the doctrine of the saints' perseverance to the end, founded on these scriptural exhortations, to fear, are vain and impertinent.

Section 44—1 Timothy 1:19, 20.

Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander.

Among the instances of the saints' apostasy, stand, Hymeneus, Alexander, and their associates, who are here said to put away a good conscience and make shipwreck of faith. "Now," it is said, "to put away a good conscience belongs to them alone who once had, and ought to have retained it; and to make shipwreck of the faith, so as to blaspheme the doctrine which they once professed, is surely to fall off from the in profession of it." And these instances are represented as a sufficient confutation of all the arguments produced from Scripture for the doctrine of perseverance. But,

It should be proved that these men were once good men, and had the truth of grace in them; otherwise they are no instances of the apostasy of saints. Hymeneus and Alexander, who are mentioned by name, were vile, wicked men; the one was a profane and vain

babbler, who went not from the truth of grace to a course of sin, but from a lesser degree of impiety (1 Tim. 2:16, 17) to more ungodliness; the other, who seems to be the same with Alexander the coppersmith (1 Tim. 4:14, 15) did the apostle Paul much evil, and not only withstood his words and doctrines, but also those of others.

Their putting away a good conscience, does not necessarily imply that they formerly had one, since that may be rejected and put away which was never had. Thus of the Jews, who contradicted and blasphemed the word of God, never received it, nor gave their assent to it, the apostle says, ye put it from you, *pwqei~aqe* (Acts 13:45, 46), ye rejected it; the same word which is here used, and signifies to refuse, reject anything with detestation and contempt. These men always had an abhorrence to a good conscience among men, and to a good life and conversation, the evidence of it, and at last threw off the mask, and dropped the faith they professed, as being contrary to their evil conscience and practices. But admitting that this phrase does suppose that they once had a good conscience, this is not to be understood of a conscience really purged and cleansed by the blood of Christ; but of a good conscience in external show only, or in comparison of what they afterwards appeared to have. Besides, some men, destitute of the grace of God, may be said to have a good conscience in some sense, or with respect to some particular facts, or to their general conduct and behavior among men; so the apostle Paul, whilst unregenerate, lived in all good conscience (Acts 23:1) and it is said of the unenlightened heathens, that their conscience also was bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another (Rom. 2:15). Now, these persons had put away, rejected, and acted contrary to the very dictates of natural conscience; theirs was become seared with a hot iron, and so spoke lies in hypocrisy, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils (1 Tim. 4:1, 2).

It will be granted, that to make shipwreck of faith, so as to blaspheme the doctrine which they once professed, is to fall off from the profession of it; but then to fall from the doctrine of the Gospel, and a profession of it, and to fall from the grace and favour of God, or from the grace of faith, are different things. Man may fall totally and finally from the one,

but not from the other; and it is not the grace, but the doctrine of faith, that is here designed, and is the sense in which it is often used in this epistle; (See 1 Tim. 3:9; 4:1; 5:8; 6:21.) though supposing faith as a grace was intended, the phrase, to make shipwreck of it, is not strong enough to prove the total and final falling away of true believers, could such be thought to be here meant, since persons may be shipwrecked and not drowned or lost. The apostle Paul thrice suffered shipwreck (2 Cor. 11:25), and yet was each time saved. Besides, as there is a true and unfeigned, so there is a feigned and counterfeit faith, which may be in persons who have no true grace, and may be shipwrecked so as to be lost. The next instances of the saints falling away are Hymeneus and Philetus, of whom the apostle says, that they erred concerning the truth, and overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:18, 19). Now,

As was before observed, it should be proved that these men were once good men, true believers in Christ; whereas, on the contrary, it appears that they had only a form our godliness, but denied the power thereof, were evil men and seducers, who waxed worse and worse.

When it, is said of them, who, concerning the truth, have erred; or, as Dr. Whitby renders the words, have fallen off from the truth, for about such a rendering we will not contend; the meaning is not that they fell from the truth of grace in their hearts, which it doth not appear they ever had, but from the truth of the gospel in the profession of it, and particularly from that branch of it which respects the resurrection, saying, that the resurrection is past already.

When they are said to overthrow the faith of some, this is not to be understood of the true grace of faith, the end of which is the salvation of the soul, and is not to be overthrown by men or devils, but of a doctrinal faith, or an historical one, which is a bare assent of the mind to some doctrinal proposition, as here, to the resurrection of the dead, and which had a place in some nominal professors, who were ever learning and never able to come to the saving knowledge of the truth; and after all these instances of falling from the truth, and of the subversion of faith, the apostle says, Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his: so that these are no instances of the

apostasy of real saints.

Many Judaizers in the church of Galatia, appear next much suspected to be in the black list of apostates, of whom it is said (Gal. 5:4), that they were fallen from grace; from whence it is argued, that they therefore must have been formerly in a state of grace, and consequently, that such who were once known of God might fall from his grace and favour. But it should be observed,

That as on the one hand, all that is said in this epistle, to that church in general, is not to be applied to every member in particular; as that they had received the Spirit through the hearing of faith, were all the children of God, and the like; so, on the other hand, it is not to be thought that all of them were fallen from grace, but only whosoever of them were justified by the law, that is, who sought for justification by the, works of it; so that they were not the same individual persons who fell, to whom the best characters in the epistle belong.

The grace from whence they fell was not the grace and favour of God in his own heart towards them, nor any grace of God wrought in their hearts; but the doctrine of grace, particularly that of

justification by the grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, which they had formerly professed, but were now going off from it, and embracing the doctrine of justification by works.

To this head of instances of apostasy are referred the predictions of the Scripture concerning persons who should fall away; such as,

The words of our Lord, in Matthew 24:12, 13, are thought to be, because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Now these many are either hypocrites and formal professors, liable to be deceived by false teachers, verse 11, and so not the elect of God, who cannot be seduced (v. 24), and their love is no other than a flashy zeal for religion, which in time, through the subtlety of false teachers, the corruptions of men, and persecutions of the world, abates, waxes cold, and at last disappears, and so no instance of the falling away of the saints; or else these many are true believers whose love to Christ, though it may wax cold in bad times, yet shall not be lost even as the church at Ephesus left, abated in the fervency of her first love, though she did not

lose it; which, though a proof of declension, yet not of final and total apostasy.

The words of the apostle Paul, in 1 Timothy 4:1, are produced for the same purpose; Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith; but this is to be understood, not of a falling away from the true grace of God, but of a departure from the doctrine of faith; since it follows, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats; which manifestly point at the general falling away (2 Thess. 2:3) from the truths of the gospel, when the man of sin, and son of perdition, the Pope of Rome, was revealed.

This would be a proper place to consider the instances of David, Solomon, Peter, Demas, and others, who are usually alleged as proofs of the saints' apostasy; but these are not mentioned by the celebrated writer I chiefly attend to. However, I shall just observe, that as to David, though, by his fall, his bones were broken, and the joy of salvation was gone, yet his salvation was safe and secure; and though the graces of the Spirit might lie unexercised by him, yet the Spirit itself, was not taken from him, as appears from his own words, when most sensible of his case: Take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit (Ps, 51:11, 12). As for Solomon, though his backsliding was great, and attended with aggravating circumstances, yet it does not appear to be total, from some qualifying expressions in the account of it; as, that his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father; and that he went not fully after the Lord as did David his father (1 Kings 11:4, 6); nor was it final; which is not reasonable to suppose of one who was so eminent a type of Christ: and besides would be contrary to the promise God made concerning him, saying, I will be his father, and he shall be my son: If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men but my mercy shall not depart away from him (2 Sam. 7:14, 15); Besides, he had repentance for his sins, and the book of Ecclesiastes was penned by him in his old age, as an acknowledgment and retraction of his former follies: and after his death, some persons are

spoken of with a commendation for walking in the way of David and Solomon (2 Chron. 11:17). As for Peter, his fall was not total; Christ prayed for him, that his faith failed not; nor final, for he was quickly restored by repentance. And as for Demas, who, very probably, was a good man, since he is mentioned with such who were so, Colossians 4:14, Philemon 4:24; what the apostle says of him (2 Tim. 4:10), as that he had forsaken him, having loved this present world, is not sufficient to prove him an apostate, any more than Mark's departure from Paul, as others at Pamphylia; or that too much love of the world, which is to be observed in many otherwise valuable good men, would prove them to be so; however, these instances are recorded in Scripture for our admonition; that he that thinks he stands, should take heed lest he fall.

Section 45—1 Timothy 2:4.

Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

These words are often used to oppose God's decree of reprobation, and in favour of universal redemption; but with what success will be seen when it is observed, That the salvation which God here wills that all men should enjoy, is not a mere possibility of salvation for all, nor putting all men into a salvable state, nor an offer of salvation to all, nor a proposal of sufficient means of it to all in his word; but a real, certain, and actual salvation, which he has determined they shall have, has provided and occurred in the covenant of his grace, sent his Son into this world to effect, which is fully effected by him.

That the will of God, that all men should be saved, is not a conditional will, or will that depends upon the will of man, or anything to be performed by him: for if this was the case, none might be saved; and if any should, salvation would be of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, and not of God that sheweth mercy, contrary to the express words of scripture (Rom. 9:16) but this will of God, respecting the salvation of men, is absolute and unconditional, and what infallibly secures and produces it: nor is it such a will as is distinguishable into antecedent and ill consequent: with the former of which it is said, God wills the salvation of all men, as they are his creatures, and the work of his hands; with the latter he wills or not wills it, according to their future conduct and behavior: but the will of God, concerning man's salvation, is one

entire, invariable, unalterable, and unchangeable will; He is in one mind; and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth even that he doth (Job 23:13). Nor is it merely his will of approbation or complacency, being only expressive of what is grateful and well pleasing to him; but it is his ordaining, purposing, and determining will, which is never frustrated, but is always fulfilled. I know it is observed by some, that it is not said that God will *sw~sai salvos facere*, save all men, as implying what he would do; but that he would have all men *swq~nai salvos fieri*, to be saved, as signifying their duty to seek after salvation, and use all means for the obtaining of it, which, when effected, is well pleasing to him. But the other sense is to be abundantly preferred.

That the all men whom God would have to be saved, are such whom he would also have to come to the knowledge of the truth; that is, not a mere nominal, but experimental knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as the way, the truth, and the life, or of the true way of life and salvation by him; and all those whom God saves, they are brought by his Spirit and grace to an acquaintance with these things, which is an act of his sovereign will, and an instance of his distinguishing favour; for whilst he hides these things from the wise and prudent, he reveals them to babes: even so, Father, says Christ, for so it seemed good in thy sight (Matthew 11:25, 26). Hence,

By all men whom God would have to be saved, we are not to understand every individual, of mankind, since it is not the will of God that all men, in this large sense, should be saved; for it is his will that some men should be damned, and that very justly, for their sins and transgressions; ungodly men, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation (Jude 1:4); and to whom it will be said, go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. Moreover, if it was the will of God that every individual of mankind should be saved, then every one would be saved; for who hath resisted his will? or can do it? Does he not do according to His will in the armies of the heavens, and among the inhabitants of the earth? (Rom. 9:19; Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11). Nay, does he not work all things after the counsel of his own will? and it is certain that all men, in this large sense, are not saved, for some will go away into everlasting punishment, when the righteous shall go into eternal life (Matthew 25:46). Besides, the same persons

God would have saved he would have come to the knowledge of the truth; but this is not his will with respect to every individual of mankind; were it his will, he would, no doubt, give to every man the means of it, which he has not done, nor does he; for many hundred years he suffered all nations to walk in their ways, and overlooked the times of their ignorance. He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them (Acts 14:16; 17:30; Ps. 147:19, 20). From many to whom the Gospel does come, it is hid; some are given up to strong delusions to believe a lie, and few are savingly and experimentally acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus.

There are indeed many things urged in favour of this large sense of the phrase all men. As,

The exhortation of the apostle, in verse 1, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men. But surely by all men, is not meant every in, individual man, that has been, is, or shall be, in the world; millions of men are dead and gone, for whom prayer is not to be made; many in hell, to whom it would be of no service; and many in heaven, who stand in no need of it; nor should we pray for such who have sinned the sin unto death (1 John 5:16). Besides giving of thanks, as well as prayers, were to be made for all men; but surely the apostle's meaning is not that the saints should give thanks for wicked men, and persecutors, and particularly for a persecuting Nero; nor for heretics or false teachers, such as Hymeneus and Alexander, whom he had delivered to Satan; the phrase is therefore to be taken in a limited and restrained sense, for some only, as appears from verse 2, for kings and for all in authority; that is, for men of the highest, as well as of the lowest rank and quality.

This sense is contended for, from the reason given in verse 5, for there is one God, "who is the God of all, the common Father and Creator of all men." Now, "it is said, thus he is the God of all men in particular; and so this argument must show, he would have all men in particular to be saved." To which may be replied, that God is the God of all men, as the God of nature and providence, but not as the God of grace, or in a covenant way, for then it would be no distinguishing favour or happiness to any person, that the Lord is

their God; he is indeed the one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all, meaning believers, to whom the apostle writes (Eph. 4:6; Rom. 10:12); the same Lord is rich unto all, but then it is to them that call upon him.

This is argued for from the one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; but it should be observed, that he is not said to be the Mediator between God and all men, and much less every individual man; and since he is expressly called, the Mediator of the new covenant (Heb. 12:24), he only can be a Mediator for those who are in that covenant; and it is plain, that he has not performed the several branches of his meditorial office, the oblation of himself on the cross, and his intercession in heaven, for every man; and though the nature he assumed common to all men, was endued with the best of human affections, and subject to the common law of humanity; yet, since it was assumed with a peculiar view to the elect of God, the seed of Abraham, they share all the peculiar blessings and favours arising from the assumption of such a nature.

It is observed that Christ is said, in verse 6, to give himself a ransom for all, which is understood of all men in particular; but it should be observed also, that this ransom is *ajnti>lutron uJper pa>ntwn*, a vicarious ransom substituted in the room and stead of all, whereby a full price was paid for all, and a plenary satisfaction made for the sins of all, which cannot be true of every individual man, for then no man could be justly condemned and punished. The sense of these words is best understood by what Christ himself has said, The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28). So the Hebrew word *lk*, all, to which this answers, signifies sometimes many, a multitude; and sometimes only a part of a multitude, as Kimchi has observed. Wherefore, It is better by all men to understand some of all sorts, as Austin did long ago, and is the sense in which the word all is to be taken in many places; as in Genesis 7:14; Matthew 4:23, 24; Joel 2:28; and is the meaning of it in verse 1, and well agrees with the matter of fact; since Christ has redeemed some of all nations, some out of every kindred, tongue, and people; and God saves and calls some of every rank and quality, as kings and peasants: of every state and condition, as rich and poor, bond

and free; of every sex, male and female; of every age, young and old; and all sorts of sinners, greater and less. It is indeed said, that, according to this limitation and sense of the words, God is willing some of all kindred and people should be saved; it may more truly and properly be said, that God would have all men to be damned, and that Christ died for none; since they for whom he died are none, according to this doctrine, comparatively to the greater number for whom he died not. To which I answer, it does not become us to say what might be more truly and properly said by God, or an inspired writer. However, this is certain, that as there is a whole world that lies in wickedness (1 John 5:19), so there is a world that shall be damned; which agrees with what the apostle Paul says in so many words, that the world shall be condemned, We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned or damned with the world (1 Cor. 11:32). Moreover, though they for whom Christ died are but few comparatively, yet they cannot be said, in a comparative sense, or in any sense at all, to be none; and indeed, when considered by themselves, are a number which no man can number. But, I rather think that by all men are meant the Gentiles, who are sometimes called the world, the whole world, and every creature (Rom. 11:12, 15; 1 John 2:2; Mark 16:15); which is the sense, I apprehend, in which it is used in verse 1, where the apostle exhorts, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all in authority; which was contrary to a notion that obtained among the Jews, of whom there were many in the primitive churches, that they should not pray for heathens and heathen magistrates. The apostle enforces this exhortation from the advantage which would accrue to themselves; that we may lead a peaceable and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty; besides, says he, This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men, Gentiles, as well as Jews, to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and therefore has sent his ministers to preach the gospel among them; and the doctrine of the grace of God has appeared to these, all men, in order to bring them to it; for there is one God of Jews and Gentiles, who, by his gospel, has taken out of the latter a people for his name and glory; and there is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,

who, not like Moses, who was the Mediator for the Jews only, but is for the Gentiles also; and is become our peace, that hath made both one, reconciled both in one body on the cross; preached peace to them that were afar off, and to them that were nigh; through whom, as the mediator, both have an access by one Spirit to the Father; who also gave himself a ransom for all (Eph. 2:14-18), to redeem the Gentiles as well as Jews; which was to be testified in due time to them, as it was by the apostle, who adds, Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity; and then concludes, I will therefore that men pray everywhere, and not be confined to the temple for public prayer, another Jewish notion and practice, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. Seeing then there are some Jewish notions pointed at in the context, and the whole is adapted to the state and case of the Gentiles, under the Gospel dispensation, there is a good deal of reason to conclude that they are designed here; whereby another principle of the Jews is confuted, which is, that the Gentiles should receive no benefit by the Messiah when he came; and is the true reason of most, if not of all, those universal expressions, relating to the death of Christ, we meet with in Scripture. From the whole, since these words cannot be understood of every individual man, they cannot be thought to militate against God's righteous decree of reprobation, nor to maintain and support universal redemption.

Section 46—1 Timothy 4:19.

For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe.

These words stand among others, which are said to contain, in express terms, the doctrine of general redemption. But,

If these words represent God, as the Savior of all men, in the sense of a spiritual and eternal salvation, they prove more than any, unless Origen and his followers contend for, namely, an universal salvation. To say that Christ is the Savior of all men, with respect to the impetration of salvation for them, though not with respect to the application of it to them all, is a distinction which must, in part, make the death of Christ in vain; nor can a mere possibility of salvation, nor a conditional one, nor a putting of

men into a salvable state, be intended; for then they that believe, would be only in such a precarious and uncertain state; whereas it is certain that he that believeth shall be saved. Besides, if God is the Savior of all men, in the sense of eternal salvation, then he must be the Savior of unbelievers, contrary to many express passages of Scripture; such as John 3:18, 36, Mark 16:16, Revelation 21:8.

The words are to be understood of providential goodness and temporal salvation; which all men have a share in, more or less, God the Father and not Christ, is here called the living God, who is the Savior of all men, that is, the preserver of all men; who supports them in their being, and supplies them with all the necessities of life, and especially them that believe, who are the particular care of his providence; for though he is good, and does good to all men, yet more especially to the household of faith; which was the foundation. Of the apostles' trust in him, under all their labors and reproaches, winch attended the preaching of the Gospel. Which sense of the words is perfectly agreeable both to the analogy of faith, and to the context, and is owned by some who are on the other side of the question.

Section 47—Titus 2:11, 12.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

This scripture also appears among the very many clear and express ones, in which the doctrine of universal redemption is thought to be contained. It is observed, "That the grace here mentioned, is the grace of God, even of that God who spared not his Son, but freely gave him up for us; that it is styled *hJ ca>riv hJ soth>riov*, saving grace: and that this grace hath appeared to all men;" all which is readily granted. The argument formed on these observations stands thus; "If the apostles did in their preaching tender it (salvation) to all without exception, they either tendered it to them, to whom, by God's intention it did not belong, and so exceeded their commission, or else it belongs to all men; and since it could only belong to them by virtue of Christ's passion, it follows that the benefit of his passion must belong to all," What foundation there is in the text for such kind of reasonings, will be seen when it is considered,

That, by the grace of God, we are not to understand the grace which lies in his own heart, or his free love, favour, and goodwill to any of the sons of men through Christ; which, though it is productive of salvation, and instructive in real piety, yet does not appear, nor has it been, nor is it made manifest to all men; neither is that grace designed by it, which lies in the hearts of believers, being implanted there by the Spirit of God; for though this also brings salvation, or has it strictly connected with it, and powerfully influences the lives and conversations of such as are partakers of it; yet it neither has appeared to, nor in all men; for all men have not faith, nor hope, nor love, nor any other graces of the Spirit! but, by the grace of God, is meant the grace which lies in the Gospel, or which is the Gospel of the grace of God, in which sense it is often used; as in Acts 20:24, 2 Corinthians 6:1, and Hebrews 12:15; and is indeed owned to be the sense of it here by the learned author I am concerned with. Now,

This doctrine of the grace of God bringeth salvation: it brings the news of it to the ears of men, in the external ministration of it, and brings that itself to the hearts of men, under the powerful influences and application of the Spirit of God; and so may be rightly called saving grace, as being the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe; though it is not, nor was it designed to be so, to all to whom it is externally preached; nor does the text say that it brings salvation to all men; and if it did, or if it should be rendered, as it is by some, the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men; to which agrees the: Syriac version, *lk tyjm*, that quickeneth or saveth all; so the Arabic; this cannot be understood of every individual person, every man and woman; for the Gospel has not brought salvation to every one, in any sense; not in the external ministry of it, for there have been multitudes who have never so much as heard the outward sound of salvation by Jesus Christ, and fewer still who have had an application of it to their souls by the Spirit of God: to many to whom it has come, it has been a hidden gospel, and the savior of death unto death.

It is indeed said, that this doctrine of the grace of God hath appeared to all men; but by all men cannot be meant every man and woman that has been in the world, for it would not be true that the grace of God

has appeared to all in this sense. The whole Gentile world, for many hundred years, was in darkness, without the light of the Gospel; it neither shined upon them, nor in them: in the times of the apostles, when the doctrine of the Gospel appeared the most illustrious, and shone out most extensively, as well as most clearly, it reached not every individual person, nor has it in ages since, nor does it in ours, no, not in our own nation; nor in this great city, where the Gospel is most fully preached; for of preachers, they are the fewest who preach the doctrine of the grace of God; and so of hearers, they are the fewest who attend unto and embrace this doctrine; multitudes know nothing of it, are under neither the form nor power of it. Since then, matter of fact stands incontestably against this sense of the words, we must look out for another. By all men, therefore, may be meant all sorts of men, men of every rank and condition of life, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, masters and servants; which sense of the phrase well agrees with the context, in which the apostle charges Titus to exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again, nor purloining, but showing all fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things (Titus 2:9, 10); and gives this as the reason of all, for the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, servants as well as masters; teaching us who have believed, whether we be masters or servants, of whatsoever state or condition, to live a godly and religious life, whilst we are in this world: or by all men, we may, with Dr. Hammond, understand the Gentiles, before the times of the apostles. The Gospel was like a candle lighted up in one part of the world, in Judea only; but now it shone out like the sun in its meridian glory, and appeared to all men, Gentiles as well as Jews; it was no longer confined to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but preached to every creature under heaven; but though it appeared to all, it was not applied to all, though it shined out upon them all, yet not into the hearts of them all; nor is this universal appearance of the Gospel, in the external ministration of it, any proof of universal redemption, nor was it so designed by the apostle; and it is easy to observe, that when he comes to speak of redemption, and the persons redeemed in verse 14, he makes use of a different form of expression; where

he says, who gave himself for us, not for them, or for all; that he might redeem us, not them, or all men, from all iniquity; and purify unto himself a peculiar, distinct people, zealous of good works. The argument above cited, is founded on a manifest falsehood, that the apostles tendered the saving grace of God to all men, without exception whereas they tendered it to none, but preached the Gospel to all, without any distinction of persons who came to hear it. The Armenians frequently argue from an universal offer of the Gospel to an universal redemption; such whose ministrations run in he strain of offers and tenders, would do well to consider this, and deliver themselves from this argument, who only are pinched by it.

The doctrine of the grace of God is represented as teaching us to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Observe, the apostle does not say, teaching them, all men, to whom it appeared, which is the sad mistake of a learned writer; but teaching us, to whom it has come, not in word only, but in power; and so taught them not only doctrinally, but influentially, both negative and positive holiness; which lesson, all who learn will be undoubtedly saved, though not by learning this lesson, or doing these things, but by our Lord’s salutary passion; to which things they are obliged by the grace of God and sufferings of Christ; though all men are not obliged by them, of which many are ignorant, but by the law of nature; from whence this absurdity therefore does not follow, “that there are some yet, yea, the greatest part of Christians, who are not, on the account of this grace appearing to them, or of these sufferings, obliged to the performance of these duties.” Since all men are not Christians, and all that are true and real Christians Christ suffered for, and the grace of God appeals to with powerful influences, engaging them to the discharge of these things.

Section 48—The Epistle to the Hebrews.

It is said, “That the Epistle to the Hebrews was manifestly written to prevent the apostasy of the believing Jews: and that as the excellent Dr. Barrow used to say, it was written against the doctrine of perseverance, and that it certainly contains many cogent arguments, against that doctrine, as is evident from the exhortations, cautions, promises, declarations, and threats, to true believers, of whom

the apostle there speaks; which suppose that they unquestionably might fall away, both finally and totally.”

It is very awkwardly expressed, and sounds a little oddly, that this epistle should be written to prevent the apostasy of believing Jews, and yet written against the doctrine of the saints’ perseverance, since all means to prevent apostasy tend to establish and secure perseverance, and can never be contrary to the doctrine of it; and among the means of perseverance may be reckoned the exhortations, cautions, promises, declarations, and threats mentioned, and, therefore, ought not to be considered as so many cogent arguments against the doctrine of it. Besides, this church of the Hebrews, like other churches, no doubt, consisted of real and nominal professors, true believers, and hypocrites; and, perhaps, with a particular view to the latter, many of these exhortations, cautions, promises, and threats are given out; and, supposing them to be all true believers, these directions were not unseasonable and improper, but very useful to stir them up to duty, diligence, care, and watchfulness, since there might be danger of a partial, though not of a total and final falling away; and, at most, these can only imply a possibility or danger of such a falling, considered in themselves, and if left to themselves, through sin, Satan, and false teachers, but prove no matter of fact, or furnish out any instance of any one true believer that ever did finally and totally fall away.

It seems strange that this epistle should be written against the doctrine of perseverance, when there are so many strong proofs of this doctrine in it; the author of represents the unchangeableness of God’s counsel, purpose, and promise, respecting the salvation of his people, in the strongest light, when he says, Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us (Heb. 6:17, 18); but where would be the immutability of God’s counsel, or the strong consolation of the saints, if the heirs of promise could possibly perish? In it, also, Christ is set forth as having, by one offering, perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Heb. 10:14; 7:25; 2:10, 13); as able, and as one that will save to the

uttermost, all that come unto God by him; as one that ever lives to make intercession for the saints; and, as the Captain of their salvation, who has brought, and will bring, many sons safe to glory, even all the sons of God; for, at the great day, he will say, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me, which he would not be able to do should any of them be lost and perish. The graces of the Spirit are spoken of as sure and certain things, faith is said to be the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen; and hope, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast (Heb. 11:1; 6:19); yea, the apostle says of these believing Hebrews (Heb. 12:28; 10:34, 38, 39; 6:9), as well as of himself, that they had received a kingdom which cannot be moved, and knew in themselves that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance; that they were not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul: and that the just shall live by faith. He was persuaded better things of them, and things that accompany salvation, when such who were not true believers, finally and totally fell away, to whom alone the threats in this epistle are directed. From all which it is plain, that this epistle was not written against the doctrine of perseverance; nor are the exhortations, cautions, promises, and declarations, made to true believers, cogent arguments against it, since these were designed as means to promote and secure it, and do not in the least imply that any of the true believers in this church might, or should, finally and totally fall away.

Section 49—Hebrews 2:9.

That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

The doctrine of universal redemption is said to be contained in express terms in these words, and it is observed upon them, that “here is no restraint at all, nor any seeming limitation of the comprehensive phrase, he tasted death for every man, distributively taken;” and that there is something “which doth seem to strengthen the general intendment of the phrase, for this is said to magnify the grace of God in sending his Son to die for men; now sure the grace of God will be more magnified by this general extent of our Savior’s death, than by contracting the intentment of it to a few; for, if the grace of God be great in sending his Son to die for a few chosen persons, it must be a

greater in sending him to die for many, and greater still in giving him up to die for us all.” To which I reply;

That the word man is not in the original text; which says not that Christ should taste death, uJper panto<v ajnqrw>pou, for every man, but uJper panto<v, which may be taken either collectively, and be rendered for the whole, that is, for the whole body, the church (Eph. 4:16), for which Christ died, and of which he is the Savior; or distributively, and be translated for every one, that is, for every one of the sons, Christ, the Captain of salvation, brings to glory, (v. 10); for every one of the brethren, whom he sanctifies, is not ashamed to own, and to whom he declares the name of God (vv. 11, 12); for every one of the members of the church, even the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, in the midst of which he sang praise (v. 12), for every one of the children God has given to him, and for whose sake he took part of flesh and blood (vv. 13, 14); and for every one of the seed of Abraham, taken in a spiritual sense, which are Christ’s, whose nature he assumed (v. 16). Moreover, supposing there is a change of number, and that uJper panto<v, is instead of uJper pantw~n, for all, that is, for all men, there is, in the context, a plain restraint and limitation of the phrase, to all the sons, the brethren, the members of the church, the children, the seed of Abraham, for all whom Christ tasted death, that is, he really died, and became the author of eternal salvation to them, which does not in the least help the cause of general redemption.

It deserves consideration, whether the words uJper panto<v geu>shtai qana>tou, may not be rightly rendered, that he should taste of every death, or of the whole of death. This hint I have received from an author referred to in the margin. If this reading of the words can be established, as I think it may, agreeably to their grammatical construction, the context, and the analogy of faith, the argument, and any color of or pretense for one from hence, in favour of the universal scheme, are entirely removed: should it be objected, that if this were the sense of the words, they would have been placed thus, geu>shtai uJper panto<v qana>tou, and not the verb between the adjective and substantive; it may be observed, that there is in the very text itself a like position of words,

as *hjlattwme>non ble>pomen Ihsou~n*; therefore, such an objection would have no weight in it; *uJper* is sometimes put for *peri<*, and signifies *de*, of, instances of which the lexicons themselves will furnish us with; and, though the verb *geu>omai* governs a genitive case without a preposition, yet it is well known that the Greek language abounds in pleonasms of this kind. The context also favours this sense of the words; for if they be considered in connection with the phrase, made a little lower than the angels, or that other, crowned with glory and honor, they contain a reason for either; for if it should be asked, Why was Christ so greatly depressed and humbled in the human nature? the answer is ready, that he might be capable of tasting of every death, or of the whole of death; and should it be inquired, wherefore he is exalted in such a glorious manner, it may be replied, Because he has tasted it; for, as in verse 10, the Captain of salvation is made perfect through sufferings. And it is certain, that Christ has tasted of every death, or of the whole of death, the law required he should, in the room and stead of his people: hence we read of his deaths in the plural number (Isa. 53:9). He made his grace with the wicked, and with the rich, *wytmb* in his deaths; he tasted of the death of afflictions, being all his days a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; of a corporal death, being put to death in the flesh, in the body or human nature; and of eternal death, or what was equivalent to it, when his Father hid his face from him, poured out his wrath upon him, as the surety of his people, whereby his soul became exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; he tasted of the whole of death, of the agonies, miseries, bitterness, and curse of it, and so has delivered his people from the sting of it, and from all the wrath which follows upon it.

Whereas it is observed, that the scheme of general redemption more magnifies the grace of God than that of particular redemption does; the contrary is most true; for surely that scheme of redemption which provides for the certain salvation of some, which some are a number that no man can number, more magnifies the grace of God, than that scheme which provides a precarious, uncertain salvation for all, giving only a mere possibility of it, with a probability that all of them may perish; leaving multitudes of them without so much as the means of salvation, and entirely without the Spirit of God to apply it to them; putting them only

in a salvable state, so that they may be saved if they will; which, if it is effected, must depreciate the grace of God and sufferings of Christ, and exalt the power and freewill of man. The instance of a prince affording an act of grace and indemnity to some rebels, leaving others under condemnation, who would assuredly conceive his grace and favour would be greater were it extended to them also, and not think it, the more magnified for being so discriminating, is not to the purpose; for the prince's grace is not to be judged of by the conceptions of such rebels, who are justly left under condemnation; and whatever they think of it, it is certain, that those who are comprehended in the act of grace, look upon their prince's favour to be the greater for being so discriminating, seeing they were equally guilty with such who are left out. The grace of God is magnified, not so much by the number of persons on whom it is conferred, as by the sovereignty of it, the circumstances of the persons interested in it, and the manner in which it is bestowed.

Section 50—Hebrews 6:4-6.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

This scripture is often used to contradict the final perseverance of the saints: and it is said, that “The doctrine of the possibility of the final departure of true believers and penitents from the faith, is fully contained in these words; that it is evident they are spoken of such from the word *fwtiaqe>ntev*, enlightened, used by the same apostle, speaking to the same persons, in Hebrews 10:32, who were so enlightened as to know they had an inheritance in heaven; and from the words, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, which imply, that they had once truly repented, and were once truly in that state to which they were to be renewed, and their loss of it; and that these must fall totally and finally, because the apostle does pronounce it a thing impossible to renew them to repentance, and, on this account, that they crucified to themselves afresh the Son of God, and put him to an open shame. But,

Admitting that these words are spoken of true believers, they will bear such a version and sense as will be so far from furnishing out an argument against the saints' perseverance that they will conclude one for it; for they may be rendered thus: it is impossible that there should be any who have been once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, *parape>sontav*, and yet all away, that is, it is impossible that such should fall away; agreeable to which is the Syriac version of the words, it is impossible, etc., *^fjn bwtd*, that they should sin again, so as to die spiritually, or lose the grace of God, and stand in need of a new work of grace upon them, which would require the crucifying of Christ again, and a re-exposing him to public shame which latter things are impossible; and, therefore, the former, namely, that they should sin in such a manner; for, according to this version, the several other things mentioned, are connected with the word impossible, as it is impossible that they should be renewed again to repentance, that they should again crucify the Son of God, and put him to shame. This sense of the words is also confirmed by the Arabic version. Moreover, should we read the words, if they fall away, they do but at most contain a supposition of the saints falling; et suppositionil ponit in esse, a supposition puts nothing in being, proves no matter of fact; nor can it be concluded from hence that any such have fallen away, and are, at most, only expressive of the danger they are in, and of the difficulty of restoring them when fallen even partially; a total and final falling away being prevented by the grace and power of God.

It is not evident, from the characters of those persons, that they were true believers; they are said to be once enlightened, which some understand of their being once baptized; and it is certain, that *fw>tismov* and *fw>tisma*, illumination, were used by the ancients for baptism, and *fwtizo>menoi*, enlightened once, for baptized persons; accordingly, the Syriac version reads the words thus, who once *atydw[m]l wtjn* have descended into baptism, the Ethiopic, after they are baptized; and it will not be denied that some such, as Simon Magus, may totally and finally fall away; but not to insist on this sense of the words. There are two sorts of enlightened persons, some who are savingly enlightened by the Spirit of God, to see their lost state and condition, their need of salvation by

Christ, and their interest in it, who shall never perish; others are enlightened only into the doctrines of the Gospel, and some to such a degree as to be able to preach them unto others, and yet entirely destitute of the grace of God; and when such fall away, they are no proofs nor instances of the apostasy of real saints. The enlightened persons in Hebrews 10:32, are not the same with these here mentioned; for the believing Hebrews are manifestly distinguished from these (v. 9); But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak; and therefore, though the Hebrews were so enlightened as to know that they had an inheritance in heaven, it does not follow that these were enlightened in the same manner, and so sincere Christians and true believers. They are also said to have tasted of the heavenly gift, by which, whether we understand eternal life, or any of the blessings of grace, as a justifying righteousness, or, with the Greek fathers, *a[fesin tw<n aJmartiw~n*, the remission of sins; the meaning is, that they had some speculative notions about these things, and some desires after them, arising from a natural principle of self love; or should Christ himself he intended by it, tasting of it, stands opposed to eating his flesh and drinking his blood, which is proper to true believers, who feed upon him, internally receive him, and are nourished by him; while hypocrites, and formal professors, only taste of him, have a superficial knowledge of him, and gust for him. In the same sense are they said to have tasted the good word of God, the Gospel, in the bare form and notion of it, and the powers of the world to come, meaning either the state of the church, and the glorious things relating to it, after the first resurrection, which they might have some notional apprehensions of, or the joys and glories of heaven, on which they might be able to make some natural and pleasing reflections; or rather, the *duna>meiv*, miracles and mighty works in the former part of the Gospel dispensation, or times of the Messiah, the Jews, *akh slw[* world to come, which many, as Judas and others, were able to perform, who were not sincere Christians, nor true believers, and yet might be said to be partakers of the Holy Ghost; not of his person, nor his grace, but of his extraordinary gifts, in which sense not only Dr. Hammond but Dr. Whitby himself, understand the phrase. Now it may be observed, that here is nothing said of these persons

but what may be applied to hypocrites, nor any thing that is peculiar to true believers; these are not said to be regenerated, nor sanctified, nor justified, nor adopted, nor sealed by the Holy Spirit of God, all which are true of real saints. Besides, true believers are in the context, manifestly distinguished from them, and are compared to the fruitful earth, when others are only likened to the barren land, verse 8, 9; their case is mentioned with a view to stir up the saints to industry and diligence (vv. 11, 12); and so be the means of their final perseverance, which they had reason to expect and believe, from the immutability of God's counsel, the safe refuge in Christ, the nature of hope, the anchor sure and steadfast, and the entrance of Christ, their forerunner for them, into heaven (vv. 17- 20).

The phrase, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, does not imply that they had once truly repented, and their loss of true repentance; that cannot be lost, it is inseparably connected with life and salvation, and therefore is called repentance unto life, and unto salvation. The repentance of these persons, like that of Cain, Pharaoh, and Judas, was only a show of one, a counterfeit one; and consequently, the renewing them again to repentance designs a renovation of them to that which they only seemed to have, and to make pretensions to.

It will be granted, that these persons might, and such as these may, fall finally and totally; but inasmuch as it does not appear that they were true penitents and believers, they are not to be mentioned as, nor allowed to be, instances of the final departure of such from the faith.

Section 51—Hebrews 10:26-29.

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

This passage is used on a double account, both to prove that Christ died for some that perish —

otherwise, it is asked, “in what tolerable sense can it be said, that no farther sacrifice for sin remains to them, for whom no sacrifice was ever offered or intended; and who were, by God's own decree, excluded from any interest in Christ's death before they came into the world? how were they sanctified by the blood of the covenant, from which they were inevitably excluded from the beginning of the world?” —and also to prove that true believers, such as these are said to be, from their being sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may finally and totally fall away, since they so sinned, and there remained no more sacrifice for their sin, and did despite to the Spirit of grace. But,

It is not evident from what is said of these persons, that they were true believers; not from the apostles speaking in the first person plural, we, which may seem to include himself, who was a true believer, and a chosen vessel of salvation; since the apostle frequently makes use of this way of speaking, not so much with regard to himself as others; that so what he delivered might come with greater weight upon them, and be more readily received by them, when they observed he entertained no hard thoughts or jealousies of them; which would greatly distress the minds of those who were truly gracious; (see Hebrews 2:1; 4:1). Besides, it may be observed, that sometimes, when the apostles express themselves in this manner, they do not design themselves at all, but others, who were under the same visible profession of religion, and belonged to the same community of believers as they did; (see 1 Pet. 4:3; Titus 3:3; Eph. 2:3; compared with Acts 22:3; Acts 26:5; Phil. 3:6). But admitting that the apostle and other true believers are included in these words, they are not a categorical but hypothetical proposition; which may be true when one or both parts of it are impossible; the truth of such a proposition consisting in the connection of the antecedent and consequent; as when our Lord said to the Jews, If I should say I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you (John 8:55); the proposition is true, when both the parts of it were impossible; it was impossible that Christ should say, he knew not the Father; and it was equally impossible that he should be a liar like unto them. So the proposition in the text is true, though it is impossible that true believers should so sin as to perish eternally; when I say impossible, I do not mean that it is impossible

considering their own weakness, and the power of Satan, and should they be left to their own corruptions, and the temptations of the evil one; but impossible, considering the grace of God, the power of Christ, their security in an everlasting covenant, &c. Hence it follows, that such a proposition neither proves that they could or should, or did sin in this manner. It may be said, that then such a proposition is delivered in vain, and answers no purpose. I reply; It may be of service, though the condition is impossible, as to illustrate and certify the just punishment of apostates; for if true believers themselves would be so severely punished, should they, or were it possible they should sin after this manner; such hypocritical wicked persons, and vile apostates, could not expect to escape divine vengeance; yea, such declarations may be made use of by the Spirit of God, to stir up true believers to diligence in duty, and watchfulness, against every degree of apostasy, and so be the means of their final perseverance; and after all, it is plain that the apostle distinguishes true believers (vv. 38, 39); from these apostates, whose custom it had been to forsake the assembling of themselves together (v. 25). Nor does it appear that these were real saints, from their having received the knowledge of the truth; whether by the truth we understand Jesus Christ, or the Scriptures, or the Gospel, or some particular doctrine of it, especially the principal one, salvation by Christ; which I am inclined to think is intended; since, besides a saving knowledge of these things, which is peculiar to true believers, there is a notional one common to them with others; who may not only give their assent to them as true, but have much light into them, be able to explain them, and preach them to others, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; and therefore if such persons sin, and finally and totally fall away, they are no instances nor proofs of the final and total apostasy of real saints; nor is it manifest that such were the persons here spoken of, from their being sanctified by the blood of the covenant, supposing the words are to be understood of them; seeing they have no relation to the inward sanctification of our nature by the Spirit of Christ, as Dr. Whitby himself owns; who contends that they should be understood of remission of sins, and justification by the blood of Christ, which these persons had received. It is true indeed, that the blessings of pardon and justification, are by and

through the blood of the covenant; and are sometimes expressed by sanctifying, purging, and cleansing (see Heb. 9:13, 14; 10:10; 13:12; 1 John 1:7); yet cannot be designed here; for either these persons received a partial remission of sins, and a partial justification from them, or a full remission of all their sins, and a plenary discharge from them, not a partial one; for when God forgives for Christ's sake, he forgives all trespasses, and justifies from all sin: if then these persons had received the forgiveness of all their sins, and were justified from all their iniquities, they would have stood in no need of any more sacrifice for sin; (see Heb. 10:18), nor would there be any foundation for punishment of any kind, much less for one so severe as is here represented; (see Rom. 8:1, 30, 33). If then these words are to be considered as spoken of these apostates, the meaning of them is, either that they were sanctified, or separated from others, by a visible profession of religion, had given themselves up to a church to walk with them in the ordinances of the Gospel, had submitted to baptism, and partook of the Lord's Supper, and drank of the cup, the blood of the New Testament, or covenant; though they did not spiritually discern the body and blood of Christ in that ordinance but counted the bread and wine, the symbols thereof, as common things; or that they professed themselves, and were looked upon by others, to be truly sanctified by the Spirit, and justified by the blood of Christ. Persons are often described, not by what they really are, but by what they are thought to be. Thus the apostle writing to the Corinthians says of them all, that they were sanctified in Christ Jesus, and by his Spirit, because the professed themselves to be so, and in the opinion of others, were so; though it cannot be thought that they were all of them really so. But after all, it seems most probable, that not he that trod the Son of God under foot, but the Son of God himself, is said here to be sanctified by the blood of the covenant; which is mentioned as an aggravation of the wickedness of such that count that blood unholy, by which the Son of God himself was sanctified, that is, set apart, hallowed, and consecrated; as Aaron and his sons were by the sacrifices of slain beasts, to minister in the priest's office: Christ, when he had offered himself, and shed his precious blood, whereby the covenant of grace was ratified and confirmed, was, through the blood of that covenant, brought again

from the dead, and declared to be the Son of God with power; and being set down at God's right hand, ever lives to make intercession for us; which is the other part of his priestly office he is sanctified by his own blood to accomplish.

The crimes which are supposed of these persons, or they are charged with, such as sinning willfully; which is not understood of the common infirmities of life, even grosser acts of sin, which may be voluntarily committed by the saints after regeneration, as were by David, Peter, and others; but of a denial of the truth of the Gospel, that salvation is by Christ, against all the evidence of it, and convictions of their own minds: treading under foot the Son of God, as much as in them lay, pulling him from his throne, and trampling on him, stripping him of the glory of his person and sacrifice, denying him to be the eternal Son of God; counting the blood of the covenant an unholy or common thing, putting it upon a level with the blood of a bullock, or at most, counting it, *çglkd dya*, according to the Syriac version, as the blood of any other man, yea, reckoning it as unclean and abominable; and doing despite to the Spirit of grace rejecting him as a lying spirit, and his gifts, and miracles, as illusions, as Dr. Whitby observes; I say such crimes as these, are what can never be thought to have been committed, or capable of being committed, by such who have truly tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The declaration made to these persons, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; no more typical sacrifices at Jerusalem, nor any more real sacrifice of the same kind, that has been offered up by Christ, who will not come and die again, and repeat his sacrifice; and therefore, they having denied salvation by him, and the virtue of his former sacrifice, can never expect another; but that when he appears a second time, he will bring on an awful judgment, which will issue in the devouring flames of his wrath and indignation, and be a sorer punishment than the transgressors of Moses' law endured; which was but a temporal, this an eternal death; such a declaration of wrath and vengeance, I say, proves indeed that these persons fell finally and totally; but inasmuch as they cannot be proved to be true believers, it will not be evident from hence, either that Christ died for such as perish; or that those who have truly believed may totally and finally fall away.

Section 52—Hebrews 10:38.

Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

The doctrine of the possibility of the final departure of true believers from the faith, is said to be still farther evident from these words: Wherefore,

For the right understanding of this passage it will be proper to consult the original text in Habakkuk 2:4, from whence it is taken. The word *hlp*[, which the Septuagint have rendered by *uJpostei>lhtai*, here used by the apostle, and in our version translated draw back, is, according to R. David Kimchi, *nyn[^wdzw blh twhbg*, expressive of pride and haughtiness of heart: and according to Jarchi is *twz[nwçl*, a word that has the signification of impudence in it; R. Moses Kimchi takes it to be the same with *lp*[, which signifies a tower or fortified place; and thinks it designs one that betakes himself to such a place for shelter from the enemy, and seeks not to God for deliverance; from all which senses or the word we may conclude that such an one is intended who is proud, haughty, vain, and conceited, lifted up with his own righteousness, in which he trusts, and in which he imagines himself to be safe from all evil; and so stands opposed to the just man who lives by faith, walks humbly with God, in a dependence, not on his own, but Christ's righteousness, in which he is safe from all wrath and condemnation, and secure of the divine favour; while the other will be so far from being the object of God's delight and pleasure, that he will lie under his sad displeasure, and feel his keen and just resentment. The Greek word *uJpostei>lhtai*, used by the Septuagint and the apostle, signifies a withdrawing through fear, as Peter withdrew because of the circumcision (Gal. 2:12), and may here intend a forsaking the assemblies of the saints (v. 25, which was the manner of some), and all the ordinances of public worship, through fear of reproach, scandal, and persecution, withholding truth, shunning to declare it, or to maintain a profession of it, contrary to what the apostle Paul says of himself (Acts 20:20, 27), where this word is twice used, and may design one who *uJpokri>netai dolieu>etai*, plays the hypocrite, and deals deceitfully, as a late writer observes, the word is rendered by Hesychius and Suidas; than which, to do in religious affairs especially, nothing is more abominable to God; and, in short, may be expressive

of an entire departure and total apostasy from the faith, not from true saving faith, but from a mere profession of the grace and doctrine of faith. But then,

It must be observed, that *eja<n uJpostei>lhtai*, if he or any one draws back, does not refer plainly, as it is said, to the just man who lives by his faith; for as the drawer back, in verse 39, stands opposed to him that believes to the saving of his soul; so the drawer back, in verse 38, stands opposed to the just that lives by faith, which is owned by the author I refer to, and consequently cannot be the same person; this will still more fully appear from the order of the words in Habakkuk 2:4, he that is lifted up, or withdraws himself or fails, his soul, that is, God's, shall have no pleasure in him; but the just shall live by his faith; therefore the words do not plainly suppose, as is asserted, that the just man who lives by that faith, in which, if he persisted, he would save his soul, may draw back to perdition; nor is this evident from the ensuing words, my soul shall have no pleasure in him, for they do not plainly intimate, as is affirmed, that God took pleasure in him before his drawing back; since it is not said, my soul shall have no more, or no further pleasure in him, but shall have no pleasure in him; which does not necessarily suppose that he had any pleasure in him before, but that he should have none in him hereafter. Besides, such who are the objects of God's delight and pleasure are always so; nothing can separate from the love of God, which is always joined with delight in his people.

Admitting that the words do plainly refer to the just man that lives by faith, such a one cannot draw back to perdition; for that is denied in the following verse; is contrary to an express declaration, a just man falleth seven times a day, and riseth up again (Prov. 24:16); and consistent with a divine promise, the righteous shall hold on his way (Job 17:9); and even with this in the text, the just shall live by faith; and therefore shall not die the second death, or so draw back as to be eternally lost; though his zeal may abate, his love grow cold, and he fall from some degree of steadfastness in faith; but allowing that drawing back to perdition is here supposed of the just man, it is no more than an hypothetical proposition, which proves not that ever any just man did, could, or should so draw back. The nature and use of such conditional propositions, in which the condition, or

thing supposed is impossible, has been shown under the foregoing section. But it is observed, that *kai< eja<n*, may be rendered not hypothetically, and if, but and when he draweth back: be it so, it is well known that a condition is as well and as frequently expressed by when, the adverb of time, as by the conjunction if, of which numerous instances might be given. The objection from the impossibility of the condition, and the uselessness of threats founded thereon, is answered in the preceding section.

I see not why the supplement any man, should not stand, made by our translators, which the grammatical construction of the words seems to require. Grotius owns the justness of it. Now this carries off the sense from the just man that lives by faith, to any of those who had made an external profession of religion, but were withdrawing themselves from the communion of the saints, through fear of persecution, who are threatened with the just resentment and displeasure of the Almighty; but lest this should be startling and surprising to true believers, the apostle adds, but we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. So far is this from proving the final and total apostasy of real saints, that it establishes the doctrine of their final perseverance; for he that is just or righteous by the everlasting righteousness of Christ, will ever remain so; who will live spiritually, and that by that faith which will never fail, and is inseparably connected with salvation, and so he shall never die.

Section 53—2 Peter 1:10.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

It is said, "That the election mentioned in the Holy Scriptures is not that of particular persons, but only of churches and nations; that it is to the enjoyment of the means of grace, which puts them in a capacity of having all the privileges and blessings which God hath promised to his church and people, and is only a conditional one, upon our perseverance in a life of holiness, and is to be made sure unto us by good works, according to this exhortation." But,

Though it will be granted that there was a national election of the Jews, who enjoyed the means of grace, the word and ordinances of God, and had peculiar blessings and privileges in consequence of this

special choice of them as a nation; yet this was not an election to salvation elsewhere spoken of, and about which our controversy is, and therefore in vain are so many passages produced by Dr. Whitby, out of the Old Testament, to prove what nobody denies. And though sometimes whole communities or churches are by the apostles styled the elect of God, as the churches of Colosse, Thessalonica, Babylon (Col. 3:12; 1 Thess. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 5:13), and others, yet they were not chosen as such; nor is it to be thought that all of them were ordained to eternal life, though the apostles speak of them in the bulk as the elect of God, being under a visible profession of religion; just as they call them all saints, the sanctified, and faithful in Christ Jesus; though it is not to be supposed that an individual members of these churches were real saints. However, it does not appear that the persons the apostle Peter wrote his epistles to were either a nation or a church, being the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (1 Pet. 1:1); they are indeed called a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people (2 Pet. 2:9); but that is only in allusion to typical Israel, and the shadowy election of that people as a nation. It is certain that these persons were chosen not merely to external means and outward blessings and privileges, but to grace here, and glory hereafter; for they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and in consequence of this were begotten again to a lively hope of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, and were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (1 Pet. 1:2-5). They were a set of particular persons, who had obtained like precious faith with the apostles (2 Pet. 1:1), and were, every one to use diligence to make sure their own, and not another's calling and election; and so not a national or church election, but a personal one.

This election it not a conditional one, depending on perseverance in a life of holiness. The text does not say, if ye do these things ye shall be elected, or your election shall remain firm and sure, but ye shall never fall; meaning, not into lesser sins and infirmities of life, for in many things we offend all, ptaio>men a{pantev, we all fall; but into the great evil of a final

and total apostasy; or ye shall never fall (Jam. 3:2) so as to be lost and perish. The final perseverance of the saints is secured by electing grace; that is not the cause, but the fruit of election; election does not depend upon that, but that upon election.

Election and calling here mentioned with it, are to be made sure; not that they can be made surer in themselves, nor with respect to God, than they are, being both not according to our works, but according to the purpose, and grace of God, which cannot be frustrated; and so stand upon a sure foundation, which can never fail, and are inseparably connected with glorification (Rom. 8:30). Nor are these to be made sure by the saints to themselves, for, though they may have some doubts and scruples in their minds about their interest in these things, and an assurance of which may be attained; yet it is not their work, but the work of the Spirit of God, to certify or assure them of their vocation and election of God. But diligence is to be used by the saints, to make sure their calling and election to others; either to their fellow Christians, which they may do by conversing with them about the work of grace upon their souls, or rather to the world, and that dia< tw n kalwn ejrgwn, by good works; as these words are read in two manuscript copies of Beza's, and by the Syriac, Ethiopic, and Vulgate Latin; and then the meaning is, be careful to maintain good works, be diligent in doing these things, which, through the grace of God, will not only be the means of your final perseverance, but also of making your calling and election sure to others; you will hereby certify and assure others, give the best evidence to the world you are capable of giving, or they of receiving, that you are the called and chosen of God you profess yourselves to be.

Section 54—2 Peter 2:1.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

This passage of scripture is often produced as a proof both of the saints' final and total apostasy, and of universal redemption; or that, besides those that are saved, Christ died also for them that perish. Dr. Whitby mentions the several answers which different men give to these words: one says, Christ bought

these persons only to be slaves; another, that he died to rescue them from temporal, but not eternal punishments; a third, that he died for them because he gave a sufficient price for them; a fourth, that they denied that Lord whom they professed to have bought them; and a fifth, that they denied him, who, in the judgment of other men, had bought them. Upon which he observes, that they are so extravagant, that it is as easy to confute as to recite them.

I do not think myself concerned to defend any of these senses of the text mentioned, judging neither of them to be the meaning of the words, and so have nothing to do with the reasonings made use of in the confutation of them; though, perhaps, the two latter are not so extravagant as represented. However, in order to give the genuine sense of this text, let it be observed,

That Christ is not here at all spoken of; nor is there one syllable of his dying for any persons, in any sense whatever. The word despo>thv, Lord, does not design Christ but God the Father of Christ. The only places besides this where this word is used, when applied to a divine person, are Luke 2:29, Acts 4:24, 2 Timothy 2:21, Jude 1:4, Revelation 6:10, in all which places God the Father is plainly intended, and in most of them manifestly distinguished from Christ; nor is there anything in this text or context which obliges us to understand it of the Son of God; nor should this be thought any diminution of the glory of Christ, since the word despo>thv is properly expressive only of that power which masters have over their servants; whereas the word ku>riov, which is used whenever Christ is called Lord, signifies that dominion and authority which princes have over their subjects. Besides, Christ is called King of kings, and Lord of lords, and the only Potentate; yea, God over all, blessed for ever. Moreover,

When these persons are said to be bought, the meaning is, not that they were redeemed by the blood of Christ, for, as is before observed, Christ is not intended. Besides, whenever redemption by Christ is spoken of, the price is usually mentioned, or some circumstance or another which fully determines the sense of it; (see Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 14:3-4), whereas here is not the least hint of anything of this kind. Add to this, that such who are redeemed by Christ, are never

left to deny him, so as to perish eternally; for could such be lost, or bring on themselves swift destruction, Christ's purchase would be in vain, and the ransom price be paid for naught. But,

The word buying regards temporal deliverance, and particularly the redemption of the people of Israel out of Egypt; who are therefore called the people the Lord had purchased. The phrase is borrowed from Deuteronomy 32:6; Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee and established thee? Nor is this the only place the apostle Peter refers to in this chapter; (see vv. 12, 13, compared with Deuteronomy 32:5). Now the persons the apostle writes to, were Jews, the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithyna, a people who, in all ages, valued, themselves upon, and boasted mightily of their being the bought, purchased people of the Lord; wherefore Peter makes use of this phrase much in the same manner as Moses had done before him, to aggravate the ingratitude and impiety of these false teachers among the Jews; that they should deny, if not in words, at least in works, that mighty Jehovah, who had of old redeemed their fathers out of Egypt, with a stretched out arm, and, in successive ages, had distinguished them with peculiar favours; being ungodly men, turning the grace, the doctrine of the grace of God, into lasciviousness Hence, Nothing can be concluded from this passage in favour of Christ's dying for them that perish; since neither Christ, nor the death of Christ, nor redemption by his blood, are here once mentioned, nor in the least intended. Nor can these words be thought to be a proof and instance of the final and total apostasy of real saints, since there is not anything said of these false teachers, which gives any reason to believe that they were true believers in Christ, or ever had the grace of the Spirit wrought in their souls.

Section 55—2 Peter 2:20-22.

For if after that they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome; the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is

happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.

This Scripture generally stands among the proofs of the apostasy of real saints; and it is said, that the possibility of the final and total falling away of true believers, may be strongly argued from these words. It will be allowed that the persons here spoken of, finally and totally fell away; since they are not only said to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them, but to be again entangled in the pollutions of the world, and overcome; yea, to turn like the dog to his vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire: so that the latter end with them is worse than the beginning. Yet,

Nothing is said of them which discovers them to have been true believers. They might have externally escaped the pollutions of the world, reformed in their outward lives and conversations, through the national knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; professed the way of righteousness, and for a while, visibly walked in it, and submitted to the holy commandments and ordinances of Christ, and yet not have been partakers of the grace of God; nor is it evident that the apostle here speaks of such who had obtained like precious faith with them; but of some third persons distinct from them. Perhaps the highest character given them is in verse 18, which is, that they were such who were clean, *ontwv*, truly and really, as Dr. Whitby renders the word, escaped from them who live *ejn tla>nh* in error; which, he observes, is to be understood not of judgment, but of deceitful lusts. But let it be considered that there are different readings of this text; some copies, instead of *o]ntwv* read *ojli>gwg* within a little, or almost, so the Alexandrian MS. in the Polyglott Bible, and two books of Beza's; others *ojli>gon*; so the Complutensian edition, and the King of Spain's Bible; agreeably the Vulgate Latin renders it *paululum*, a very little, or a very little time. The Syriac version reads it *lylq almb*, in a .few words, or almost; and, according to the Ethiopic version, a few persons are designed. From all which, this sense of the words may be collected, that there were some few persons, who, in some few instances, had almost, or within a very little, or for a little time, escaped from such who lived in error, being carried away with divers and strange doctrines. But admitting that *o]*

ntwv is the true reading, and that *pla>nh* signifies not error of judgment, but deceitful lusts; it is possible that men may truly and really escape, not only from idolaters and false tethers, and so have the form of sound doctrine, whilst they deny the power of it, but also reform and withdraw from openly profane and scandalous sinners, and yet not be true believers, as it appears these were not; since they openly turned to, and appeared to be what they really were; as the dog turns to his own vomit, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire.

Section 56—2 Peter 3:9.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (as some men count slackness), but is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

This scripture appears among those which are said to be very many clear and express ones for the doctrine of universal redemption; and it is observed, “that *ti>nev*, opposed to *pa>ntev*, is a distributive of all, and, therefore, signifies, God is not willing that any one of the whole rank of men should perish” But, It is not true that God is not willing any one individual of the human race should perish, since he has made and appointed the wicked for the day of evil, even ungodly men, who are foreordained to this condemnation, such as are vessels of wrath fitted for destruction; yea, there are some to whom God sends strong delusions, that they may believe a lie, that they all might be damned, and others whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not (Prov. 16:4; Jude 1:4; Rom. 9:22; 2 Thess. 1:12; 2 Pet. 1:3). Nor is it his will that all men, in this large sense, should come to repentance, since he withholds from many both the means and grace of repentance; and though it is his will of precept, that all to whom the preaching of the Gospel is vouchsafed should repent, yet it is not his purposing, determining will, to bring them all to repentance, for who hath resisted his will? (Rom. 9:19.)

It is very true that *ti>nev*, any, being opposed to *pa>ntev*, all, is a distributive of it; but then both the any and the all are to be limited and restrained by the *us*, to whom God is longsuffering; God is not willing that any more should not perish, and is willing that no more should come to repentance than the *us* to whom his longsuffering is salvation. The

key, therefore, to open this text lies in these words, *eijv hJma~v*, to us ward, or for our sake; for, these are the persons God would not have any of them perish, but would have them all come to repentance. It will be proper, therefore, To inquire who these are. It is evident that they are distinguished from the scoffers mocking at the promise of Christ's coming, (*vv.* 3, 4), are called beloved, (*vv.* 1, 8, 14, 17), which is to be understood either of their being beloved by God, with an everlasting and unchangeable love, or of their being beloved as brethren by the apostle and other saints; neither of which is true of all mankind. Besides, the design of the words is to establish the saints in, and comfort them with the coming of Christ, until which, God was longsuffering towards them, and which they were to account salvation (*v.* 15). Add to this, that the apostle manifestly designs a company or society to which he belonged, and of which he was a part, and so can mean no other than such who were chosen of God, redeemed from among men; and called out of darkness into marvelous light; and such were the persons the apostle writes to. Some copies read the words *diJ uJma~v*, for your sakes; so the Alexandrian MS. the Syriac version, *^wktlfm*, for you, or your sakes; the same way the Ethiopic. Now these persons were such who were elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:2); and such, as these, or who belong to the same election of grace they did, God is unwilling that any of them should perish, but wills that all of them should have repentance unto life; and, therefore, he waits to be gracious to them, and defers the second coming of Christ. The case stands thus: there was a promise of Christ's second coming, to judge the world, delivered out; it was expected that this would have been very quickly, whereas it has been a long time deferred. Hence scoffers shall arise in the last days, charging the Lord with slackness and dilatoriness concerning his promise, though he is not slack with respect to it, but is long-suffering towards his elect, waiting till their number is completed in effectual vocation, and for their sakes bears with all the idolatry, superstition, and profaneness that are in the world; but when the last man that belongs to that number is called, he will stay no longer, but descend in flames of fire, take his

own elect to himself, and burn up the world and the wicked in it.

It is indeed said, “that the apostle, by the elect, to whom he writes, does not mean men absolutely designed for eternal happiness, but only men professing Christianity, or such as were visible members of the church of Christ: since he calls upon them to make their calling and election sure, exhorts theta to watchfulness, seeing their adversary the devil goes about seeking whom he may devour, and to beware lest they fall from their own steadfastness; yea, he speaks of some of them as having forsaken the right way; and also prophecies that false teachers should make merchandise of them, neither of which, it is observed, can be supposed of men absolutely elected to salvation; and, also, that the church at Babylon was elected, together with these persons, which could not be known and said of all its members.” To all which I reply, that calling upon them to make their election sure, does not suppose it to be a precarious and conditional one, as I have shown in a preceding section that exhortations to sobriety, and vigilance against Satan, and cautions about falling, are pertinent to such who are absolutely elected to salvation; for, though Satan cannot devour them, he may greatly distress them; and, though they shall not finally and totally fall from the grace of God, yet they may fall from some degree of steadfastness, both as to the doctrine and grace of faith, which may be to their detriment as well as to the dishonor of God: that it is not true, that the apostle speaks of any of these elect he writes to, that they had forsaken the right way, but of some other persons; and though he prophecies that false teachers should make merchandise of them, the meaning is, that, by their fine words and fair speeches, they should be able to draw money out of their pockets, not that they should destroy the grace of God wrought in their hearts. As to the church at Babylon being said to be elected with them, the apostle might say this of the church in general, as he does, in a judgment of charity, of the church at Thessalonica, and others, though every member of it in particular was not elected to salvation, without any prejudice to the doctrine of absolute election. Besides, the persons he writes to were not visible members of any one particular church or community, professing Christianity, but were strangers scattered abroad in several parts of the

world, and, were such who had obtained like precious faith with the apostles, and is a strong evidence of their being men absolutely designed for eternal happiness. And whereas it is suggested, that these persons were come to repentance, and therefore cannot be the same to whom God is longsuffering, that they might come to repentance; I answer, that though they are not the stone individual persons, yet are such who belong to the same body and number of the elect, on whom the Lord waits, and to whom he is longsuffering, until they are all brought to partake of this grace, having determined that not one of them should ever perish.

Hence it follows, that these words do not furnish, out any argument in favour of universal redemption, nor do they militate against absolute election and reprobation, or unfrustrable grace in conversion; but, on the contrary, maintain and establish them, since it appears to be the will of God, that not one of those he has chosen in Christ, given to him, and for whom he died, shall ever perish; and, inasmuch as evangelical repentance is necessary for them, and they cannot come at it of themselves, he freely bestows it on them, and, by his unfrustrable grace, works it in them; and, until this is done unto and upon every one of them, he keeps the world in being, which is reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.

Section 57—1 John 2:2.

And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

A very considerable argument for the universal extent of Christ's death is thought to arise from this passage of scripture, as well as from all those which represent Christ as the Savior of the world; and it is observed, that whereas these scriptures are all, save one, in the writing of St. John, the sense which the world beareth in St. John's gospel and epistles, must be esteemed., in reason, the proper import of the word, where it never signifies the elect only, in opposition to the wicked of the world, but the wicked of the world in opposition to the faithful Christian. To which I answer,

That there would be some weight in this observation if the word world was always used in one uniform and constant sense in the writings of the apostle John, whereas it admits of a variety of senses; and, therefore, the sense of it in one place cannot be

the rule for the interpretation of it in another, which can only be prefixed as the text or context determine: sometimes it signifies the whole universe of created beings, (John 1:10); sometimes the habitable earth (John 16:28); sometimes the inhabitants of it, (John 1:10); sometimes unconverted persons, both elect and reprobate, (John 15:19); sometimes the worse part of the world, the wicked, (John 17:9); sometimes the better part of it, the elect, (John 1:29; 6:33, 51); sometimes a number of persons, and that a small one in comparison of the rest of mankind, (John 12:19); in one place it is used three times, and in so many senses, (John 1:10); he, that; is, Christ, was in the world, the habitable earth, and the world, the whole universe, was made by him, End the world, the inhabitants of the earth, knew him not; and which is not to be understood of them all, for there were some, though few who did know him: and I will venture to affirm, that the word world is always used in the apostle John's writings, in a restricted and limited sense, for some only, unless when it designs the whole universe, or habitable earth, senses which are out of the question, for none will say Christ died for the sun, moon, and stars, for fishes, fowls, brutes, sticks, and stones; and that it is never used to signify every individual of mankind that has been, is, or shall be in the world; in which sense it ought to be proved it is used, if any argument can be concluded from it in favour of general redemption.

It is most manifest that the word world, used by the apostle John when speaking of redemption and salvation by Christ, is always used in a limited and restrained sense, and signifies some persons only, and not all the individuals of human nature, as will appear from the consideration of the several passages following, as when the Baptist says (John 1:29), Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world! By the world cannot be meant every individual of mankind; for it is not true, it is not fact, that; Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, takes away the sin or sins of every individual man, since there are some who die in their sins, whose: sins go beforehand to judgment, and others they follow after, for which they will be righteously and everlastingly condemned; which can never be, if Christ taken away their sin Should it be said, as it is, "That the Baptist speaks this in allusion to the lambs daily offered up for the sin of the whole Jewish nation; and, therefore, intimates,

that as they were offered up to expiate the sins of the whole nation, so was this Lamb of God offered to expiate the sins of the whole world in general;" I reply, that as the lambs daily offered were typical of Christ, the Lamb of God, so the people, for whom they were offered, were typical, not of the whole world in general, but of the true Israel and church of God, for whom Christ gave himself an expiatory sacrifice, and whose sins he so takes away as they shall not be seen any more.

When our Lord says, that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16),—by the world he cannot mean every son and daughter of Adam; for this world is represented as the object of God's love, even of his special love, which all men are not: as such to and for whom God has given his only-begotten Son, which is not true of all mankind; who are brought to believe in Christ, in consequence of God's love, and the gift of his Son, but all men have not faith; as such who shall never perish, though it is certain that some men will; and as such who shall have everlasting life, whereas some will go into everlasting punishment, and die the second death. The similitude of the brazen serpent lifted up for the preservation of the Jews, is insufficient to prove the redemption of all mankind: nor is it supposed, of this world, so beloved of God, that some would not believe, and therefore perish; and that others would, and be saved; for the phrase whosoever believeth, does not design a division of different persons, but a distinction of the same persons; who, in their unconverted state, believe not, but, through the power of divine grace, are brought to believe in Christ for life and salvation; and so it points out the way in which they are secured from perishing, and have everlasting life. Nor win it be the condemnation of infidels among the Heathens that they believed not in Christ, but their transgressions of the law of nature; nor of the unbelieving Jews, that they believed not Christ dies for them, but because they did not believe him to be the Messiah: nor do these words, taken in the universal sense, more magnify the love of God than when taken in a more restrained one; since according to this general scheme, men may be the objects of God's love, and have all interest in the gift of his Son, and yet finally perish, and come short

of everlasting life. The words in the following verse (John 3:17; John 12:47), and which are elsewhere in the same manner expressed, that Christ came into the world not to condemn it, but to save it, are designed to point out the different ends of Christ's first and second coming. Again,

When the Samaritans declared their belief in Christ, that he was the Savior of the world (John 4:43; 1 John 4:14); and the apostle John says, that we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world; by the world, cannot be intended every man and woman that has been, is, or shall be in the world, since every one is not saved; and Christ cannot be the Savior of more than are saved. Besides, was he the Savior of the world in this universal sense, he must be the Savior both of believers and unbelievers, contrary to his own words; He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16). Moreover,

When Christ says, The bread of God is he that cometh down from heaven and giveth life to the world (John 6:33); no more can be designed by the world than those to whom this bread of God gives life. Now it is certain, that spiritual life here, and everlasting life hereafter are not given to all men, and therefore all men cannot be intended here; only such who are quickened by the Spirit of God, and shall enjoy eternal life; and these are the world, for the life of which Christ promised to give his flesh, in this same chapter (John 6:51). Now from this consideration of all these passages, it will appear how weak, trilling, and inconclusive is the argument taken from hence in favour of universal redemption. But,

It may be said, if the world does not include every individual person in it, yet surely the phrase, the whole world, must: and when the beloved disciple says, And he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2); these, his words, will not admit of a restrained sense, but must extend to all men. To which I reply:

The phrase, the whole world, is frequently used by the Jews in a limited and restrained sense; as when they report, "That it happened to a certain high priest, that when he went out of the sanctuary, aml[ylwk, the whole world went after him;" which could only design the multitude in the temple; and where it is said, "aml[ylwk, the whole world has left the Misnah and gone

after the Gemara;” which at most can only intend the Jews, and perhaps only a majority of their doctors; and in another place, aml[ylwk, the whole world fell upon their faces; but Raf did not fall on his face;” where it means no more than the congregation. Once more, It is said, “When R. Sirecon Ben Gamaliel entered, that is, into the synagogue, aml[ylwp, the whole world, that is, all the synagogue, stood up before him.” Such phrases as these ygylp al aml[ylwk, the whole world does not dissent; ydwm aml[ylwk, the whole world confesseth; and yrbs aml[ylwk, the whole world are of opinion, are frequently met with in the Talmud; by which is designed an agreement among the Rabbins in certain points; nay, sometimes two doctors only are meant by amy[ylwk, the whole world.

This phrase in scripture, unless where it signifies the whole universe, or habitable earth, is always used in a limited and restrained sense; a decree went out theft all the world should be taxed; which was no other than the Roman empire, and such countries as were subject to it. The faith of the church at Rome, was spoken of throughout the whole world, that is, throughout all the churches, and among all the saints in the world. All the world is said to become guilty before God by the law; which can be said of no more than were under that law, and so not true of all mankind; who, though all guilty by the law of nature, yet not by the law of Moses. The apostle tells the Colossians, that the gospel was come into all the world, and bringeth forth fruit; which, can design only real saints and true believers, in whom alone it brings forth fruit. An hour of temptation is spoken of, which shall come upon all the world, to trig them which dwell upon the earth; who can be no other than such who will then be in being, and cannot be thought to include all the individuals that have been in the world. All the world wondered after the beast; and yet there were some who did not receive his mark, nor worship him. Satan deceiveth the whole world; and yet it is certain, that the elect cannot be deceived by him. The whole world will be gathered together to the: battle of the great day of God Almighty; who are distinct from the saints, whom they will oppose (Luke 2:1; Romans 1:8; 3:19; Col. 1:6; Rev. 3:10; Rev. 12:9, 13:3).

This phrase in the writings of the apostle John, is used in a restrained sense, and does not extend to every individual of human nature, that has been,

is, or shall be in the world, as it should be proved it does, to conclude an argument from it in favour of universal redemption. Now it is used but in one place besides the text under consideration, when it designs men, in all his writings, and that is in 1 John 5:19. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness; where the whole world lying in wickedness, is manifestly distinguished from the saints, who are of God, and belong not to the world; and consequently the whole world is not to be understood of all the individuals in it. And it is easy to observe the like distinction in the text before us; for the sins of the whole world are opposed to our sins, the sins of the apostle, and others to whom he joins himself; who therefore belonged not to, nor were a part of the whole world, for whose sins Christ was a propitiation, as for theirs. That the whole world, for whom Christ is a propitiation, cannot intend every man and woman that, has been, is, or shall be in the world, appears from his being their propitiation; for whose sins he is a propitiation, their, sins are atoned for and pardoned, and their person: justified from all sin, and so shall certainly be glorified; which is not true of the whole world, taken in the large sense contended for. Besides, Christ is set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood (Rom. 3:25). The benefit of his propitiatory sacrifice, is only received and enjoyed through faith; so that in the event, it appears that Christ is a propitiation only for believers, a character which does not agree with all mankind. Add to this, that for whom Christ is a propitiation, he is also an advocate (v. 1), but he is not an advocate for every individual in the world; yea, there is a world he will not pray for, and consequently is no propitiation for. Once more, the design of the apostle in these words, is to comfort his little children, who might fall into sin through weakness and inadvertency, with the advocacy and propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; but what comfort would it yield to a distressed mind, to be told that Christ was a propitiation, not only for the sins of the apostles, and other saints, but for the sins of every individual in the world, even of those that are in hell? Would it not be natural for persons in such circumstances, to argue rather against than for themselves; and conclude, that inasmuch as persons might be damned, notwithstanding Christ’s propitiatory sacrifice, that this might and would be

their case? But,

For the better understanding the sense of this text, it should be observed, that the apostle John was a Jew, and writes to Jews, as Dr. Whitby himself observes, and them chiefly, if not altogether, who were distinguished from the Gentiles, commonly called the world: now, says the apostle, He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, the sins of us Jews, but also for the sins of the whole world, the Gentiles. Nothing is more common in the Jewish writings, than to call the Gentiles aml[, the world; and μlw[lk, the whole world; and μlw[j twmwa, the nations of the world; hence the apostle Paul calls them ko>smov, the world, in Romans 11:12,15. It was a controversy agitated among the Jewish doctors, whether when the Messiah crone, the Gentiles, the world, should have any benefit by him; the majority was exceeding large on the negative of the question, and determined they should not; only some few, as old Simeon and others, knew that he should be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as the glory of the people of Israel. The rest concluded, that the most severe judgments and dreadful calamities would befall them; yea, that they should be cast into hell in the room of the Israelites. This notion John the Baptist, Christ, and his apostles, purposely oppose, and is the true reason of the use of this phrase in the Scriptures which speak of Christ’s redemption. Thus John the Baptist, when he pointed out the Messiah to the Jews, represents him as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, the Gentiles as well as the Jews; for by the blood of this Lamb, men are redeemed to God, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. When our Lord was discoursing with Nicodemus, one of their Rabbins, he lets him know that God so loved the world, the Gentiles, contrary to their rabbinical notions, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever of them that believeth on him, should not perish, as they had concluded every one of them should; but have everlasting life: and that God sent not his Son into the world, to conform the world, the Gentiles, as they imagined, but that the world through him might be saved. When the Samaritans believed in Christ, they declared him to the Savior of the world, the Gentiles, and so of themselves, who were accounted by the Jews as Heathens; Christ sets forth himself as the bread of life, preferable to the

manna, among other things, from its extensive virtue to the world, the Gentiles: and here the apostle John says, that Christ was not only the propitiation for the sins of the Jews, but for the sins of the whole world, the Gentiles (John 1:29; 3:16,17; 4:42; 6:33; 1 John 2:2). This puts me in mind of a passage I have met with in the Talmud, a saying of Rabbi Jochanan,” We, says he, twmwal lsw[h, to the nations of the world, who are lost, and they know not that they are lost; whilst the sanctuary stood, the altar atoned, or was a propitiation for them; but now who shall be a propitiation for them?” Blessed be God, we know who is the propitiation for us, the nations of the world, one that was typified by the altar, and is greater than that, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 58—Jude 1:21.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the money of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

These words are thought to represent the saints’ continuance in the love and favour of God, as conditional, depending on their obedience, care, and keeping of themselves; and that them is a possibility of their falling from it, and consequently that they are not absolutely elected to everlasting life. To which I reply;

That the saints’ continuance in the love and favour of God, does not depend on their obedience, or on any thing done by them; since his love to them is an everlasting one, which commenced from everlasting, and will continue to everlasting; is prior to all their obedience; was in his own heart towards them, and expressed by several acts before they had done either good or evil; and continued, notwithstanding all their disobedience, in an unregenerate state, and is the source and spring of all their love and obedience to him; nor is there anything in their best works that can entitle them to his favour, or secure the continuance of it; since, when they had done all they can, they are but “unprofitable servants.” Nor is there any possibility or danger of real saints falling from the love and favour of God. They may, and sometimes are, left to do those things which are displeasing to him, and, was he a man or should he act men usually do such cries, would at once, and effectually turn them out of his favour; but the case is, he is the Lord, and not man, and changes not in his affections as men do; “and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.” (Mal.

3:6.) In his severest providences towards his people, his love always remains the same, as when he hides his face from them, or chides and chastises them in a fatherly way; should it be otherwise, his love would not be everlasting, unchangeable, and from which there is no separation, as the Scriptures represent it; and besides, would be contrary to the assurances he has given of the continuance of his love, both by word and oath (Isa. 54:9,10).

By the love of God, in this text, we are not to understand the love which God bears in his own heart to his people, or with which they are loved by him, but rather that love with which they love him, and of which he is the object; see Luke 11:42, which is a sense some interpreters on the other side of the question readily allow of; and then the meaning of the 214th exhortation, keep yourselves, *ἐλθούτων*, one another, as it may be rendered, in the love of God, is, that though this grace of love cannot be lost, yet, inasmuch as the fervor of it may be shared, and the saints grow cold and indifferent in their expressions of it, it becomes them to make use of all proper means to maintain, increase, and inflame it, both in themselves and others, such as are mentioned in the context, as conversing together in an edifying way, about either the grace or doctrine of their most holy faith; praying either separately or together, under the influences of the Holy Ghost, and looking forward for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life. All which, with many other things, by the blessing of God, may serve to maintain and revive the grace of love, and flow it up into a flame. Though, perhaps, this phrase may chiefly design that love, peace, and concord, which ought to subsist among saints as brethren, and which they should be careful to preserve. This may be called the love of God, just as the same thing is styled the peace of God (Col. 3:15), because he calls them to it, it is of him, what they are taught by him, and in which he causes them to abound; and then the sense of the exhortation, keep yourselves, or one another in the love of God, is, endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the hold of peace; provoke one another to love and good works (Eph. 4:3; Heb. 10:24; Eph. 5:2); walk in love, both to God and among yourselves, as ye have Christ for an example; which sense is strengthened by the following words, of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear. And hence it

will appear that this text neither militates against the doctrine of absolute election, nor countenances the doctrine of the possibility of real saints falling from a state of grace and favour with God. But,

Admitting that by the love of God, is meant the grace and favour of God: the exhortation to the saints, to keep themselves in it, is, to set it always before them, to keep it constantly in view, to exercise faith on it, firmly believing their interest in it, and hence keep looking and waiting for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life; or to keep themselves in it, is to meditate on it, give themselves up wholly to the contemplation of it, and employ their thoughts constantly about this delightful subject, the love of God; which is the foundation of all grace here, and glory hereafter. Once more the words *ἐλθούτων ἑαυτοὺς ἐν ἀγάπῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ* may be rendered, preserve yourselves by the love of God, that is, against Satan's temptations, the snares of the world, and the lusts of the flesh. Whenever Satan solicits to sin, any snare is laid to draw into it, and the flesh attempts to be predominate, betake yourselves to the love of God, as a strong hold, or preservative against sin; and reason thus, as Joseph did, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? (Gen. 39:9) who, when I look backward, has loved me with an everlasting love: and when I look forward there is the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Consider the words in either light, they neither prove a conditional election, nor a possibility of the saints falling from grace; against which, provision is made in Christ, who, in verse 24, is represented as "able to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

Section 59—Revelation 2 and Revelation 3.

Several passages are produced from the epistles to the seven churches of Asia, in favour of the delectability and total apostasy of real saints. It should be observed, that the churches in all ages, have more or less consisted of true believers and hypocrites, wise and foolish virgins, sheep and goats, wheat and tares, and sometimes are denominated from the better, and sometimes from the weaker part; some things in the epistles to them particularly regard true believers and others formal professors among them. This Observation will help us to understand the reason and meaning of many commands, cautions, exhortations,

and threatenings, not only used in these epistles, but in the rest of the epistles sent to the several churches. Besides, it may be observed, that the whole in churches may be unchurched, their church state be dissolved, and yet not one true believer among them be lost or perish, as has been the case of these seven churches, and many others; which is brought about by removing true believers by death, withholding a blessing from the means of grace to the conversion of others; and at length, taking the Gospel wholly from them, and so at last the candlestick is removed out of its place. It is, therefore, to no purpose to urge passages and instances of this kind against the saints' final perseverance; however, we shall consider the several scriptures urged and referred unto. And, The first of this kind to be examined, is in the epistle to the church at Ephesus. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But neither the complaint lodged against this church, that she had left her first love, proves that she had totally and finally fallen away from grace; since she might leave, that is, abate in the fervency of her love to Christ, though not lose it; which sometimes waxes cold through the prevalence of corruption and the snares of the world, when it is not lost, as it was not in this church; nor can it be lost in any true believer, notwithstanding their desertions, temptations, falls, and backslidings: nor does the exhortation, to remember from whence she was fallen, prove it, seeing she might be fallen partially, though not totally; and the design of this exhortation be to put her upon comparing her former and present condition together; that her desires, after a restoration to her former lively and comfortable frame, might be quickened, and she be humbled under a sense of her backslidings, and brought to an acknowledgment of the same, which would appear by her doing her first works: nor does the threatening to come unto her, and remove her candlestick out of his place, in ease of non-repentance, prove it, seeing this may be understood of his coming to her in a providential way, and either shaking her church state, by suffering persecution or heresy to come in upon her, or by wholly removing it, through withholding a

blessing from the means of grace, and entirely taking them away; which might be done without the loss of one true believer, as has been observed. Besides, this church is greatly commended in verses 2,3, for her labor, and patience, and zeal against false apostles; a plain case, that she was not finally and totally fallen from grace.

The next passage to be considered is the promise made to the church at Smyrna, be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life (Rev. 3:4, 5:4). It is represented as incongruous with an absolute promise of God, that believers should persevere to the end, or suspend their happiness on condition of their perseverance, which is said to be done in these words. But it should be observed, that the crown of life, or eternal happiness, is not a blessing suspended, since it never was promised nor ever expected to be enjoyed before death, much less suspended on any condition whatever to be performed by us; since it is a gift, a gift wholly of free grace. In faithfulness unto death is not here made the condition of enjoying the crown of life; but the gift of the crown of life is made the encouragement to faithfulness unto death. In the same light are we to consider James 1:19, and the words of our Lord in Matthew 24:12, 13. Because iniquity shall abound (not because tribulations abound, as Dr. Whitby cites the words,) the love of many shall wax cold: but he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved; where enduring to the end, is not the condition of salvation, but the promise of salvation is the encouragement to endure to the end. A third passage referred to is the exhortation to the church at Pergamos, not Ephesus, as Dr. Whitby, through mistake, calls it: Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth (Rev. 2:16). This church is so far from being an instance of the apostasy of real saints, that she is commended for holding fast the name of Christ, and not denying his faith in the worst of places, and in the worst of times, even where Satan's seat was, and wherein Antipas, a faithful martyr, was slain: and though there were some among them who held the doctrines and followed the practices of Balsam and the Nicolaitans, which should have been matter of humiliation, and on the account of which Christ exhorts to repentance; and though he says that he will come to her quickly, that is in a providential way, yet

not to fight against her, but them; for he says I not, I will fight against thee, the church, as Doctor Whitby inadvertently reads the words, but against them, the Balaamites and Nicolaitans; and that not with the temporal sword, but with the sword of his mouth, the word of God. The passage out of the epistle to the church at Thyatira, being much the same with what is alleged from the epistle to the church at Philadelphia, will be considered with it. I proceed,

To examining the instance of the Church at Sardis. There were but few true believers in this church; she had a name to live, but was dead; she had but a few names which had not defiled their garments, and therefore the defection of her is no proof of the apostasy of real saints. The things which remain, she is lied upon to strengthen, are not to be understood of the graces of the Spirit in her embers; since these are never really wanting and declining, they are always, all they were, and never less, but continually on the growing, thriving, and increasing hand; for us good work of grace is daily carrying on, whether the saints are sensible of it or no, and will be performed until the day of Christ nor can the graces of the Spirit die, being immortal and incorruptible seeds; nor are they ever ready to die, unless in the apprehensions of saints under fits of unbelief. Besides, it is God's work, and not man's, to strengthen these; and should these be intended in this passage, it would be no proof of the real loss of true grace, since these are said not to be dead, but ready to die, and recoverable. The *ta-loipa* were the remaining members of this church, which sense is confirmed by the versions of the Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, Vulgate Latin, and others. The majority of the members were already dead, and many others of them were sickly, and ready to die; the angel or pastor of this church is called upon to do his duty, to confirm such as were wavering, and do all that in him lay, by a diligent preaching of the word, and constant administration of ordinances, to preserve them from a more general defection. The threatening, in verse 3, regards the formal and lifeless part of this church; and as for the rest, the few undefiled names in Sardis, a promise of perseverance and happiness is made unto them:— They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will

confess his name before my Father, and before his angels (Rev. 2:25).

When Christ says to the church at Thyatira, That which ye have already, not what thou hast attained to, as Dr. Whitby cites the words, hold fast till I come; (Rev. 3:11) and to that at Philadelphia, Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown; by what they had, and should hold fast, he does not mean the grace, but the doctrine of faith, the faithful word, the form of sound words, which both ministers and members should hold fast, in opposition to wavering about it, cowardice in it, and a departure from it; and such exhortations, though they may imply that saints may have their temptations to and there is a possibility that they may, fall from some degree or steadfastness in the doctrines of the Gospel, and therefore should be on their guard, yet not that they may or shall finally and totally let them go. And whereas the saints are stirred up to regard the more such exhortations from this consideration that no man take their crown: by which may be meant, either the Gospel, which was their own and glory, or the honor they had attained by their faithfulness, and integrity in bidding by it; or if eternal life is intended by it follows not that this is liable to be taken away from or be lost to true believers, though some professors who expect it will be disparated of it; but the design of the expression, in allusion to the Olympic games, in which many ran, but one received the prize, to excite the saints to industry, diligence, and watchfulness. When Christ says to the church of the Laodiceans, Because thou art lukewarm, and either cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth, let it be observed that the state of this church, and the members of it, was such that she was not cold, without a principle of spiritual life and love, and a profession of religion; nor hot, lively, warm, and zealous in the exercise of grace, and discharge of duty; but lukewarm, indifferent, unconcerned about her own condition, and the honor and interest of Jesus Christ, a frame of soul very disagreeable to Christ, and therefore, to show his resentment of it, he threatens to spue her out of his mouth, as men do that which is ungrateful to them: which designs some chastisement or affliction, and that in order to bring her to a sense of her present condition, and out of it; for certain it is he had a love, an unchangeable and everlasting one, to many in this church; wherefore he says, As many

as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent (v. 19).

Section 60—Revelation 3:20.

Behold I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me,

From hence it is concluded, that Christ stands and knocks at the hearts of unregenerate sinners by the ministry of the word, and that they have sufficient grace and strength to open their hearts unto him, or else he knocks in vain; for what wise man would stand at another's door and knock, if he knew there were not any within that could open to him? And since it is required of men in conversion, to open their hearts to Christ, it follows, that the work is not performed by an irresistible power, or without the consent and cooperation of the will of man. But,

It should be proved that the ministry of the word is ever signified by knocking at the hearts of unregenerate sinners, or that God, or Christ, are ever said to knock at men's hearts by the ministry of the word. Men can strike the ear, God only can reach and strike the heart, which is done when the Gospel comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and when God does this, he does not knock and rap, and then wait till entrance is made from within; but he strikes home, and at once opens the door of the heart, as he did Lydia's, by his powerful and efficacious grace. It should also be proved, that God, in conversion, does command and require men to open their hearts unto him, neither of which can be proved either from this text or from any other in the whole Bible; nor is it in the power of unregenerate men, being dead in trespasses and sins, nor in their will, inclinations, desires, and affections, their carnal mind being enmity against God and Christ, to open their hearts and let them in. And supposing that these words do represent Christ standing and knocking at the door of men's hearts, by the external ministry of the word, has he not the key of the house of David, with which he opens and no man shuts, and lets himself in by the power of his grace, without offering any violence to the wills of men, since his people are made a willing people in the day of his power. Hence his knocking is not in vain, since to his elect not only sufficient but efficacious grace is given, by which the door of their hearts is opened to him, and others are

left inexcusable, who are ready to make such shifts as these; had he knocked, I would have opened; had I heard, I would have believed; had I known, I would have done this and the other thing. But,

These words are not spoken to nor of unregenerate sinners, nor have they any reference to the opening of men's hearts in conversion, but are directed to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, and to the members of that church, persons that professed the name of Christ; Who, though they were not hot, yet were not cold, and for whom Christ had a regard, though they were in this lukewarm state; and, therefore, takes every proper method to bring them out of it; which was much the same with the church in Song of Solomon 5:2, I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled — a place parallel to this text, and which is the only one besides in which Christ is said to knock, and require any to open to him. Now his standing at the door may either mean his near approach to judgment, see James 5:8,9; (this church of Laodicea, being the last of the churches, represents the state of the church in the last times, which will bring on and conclude with the general judgment;) or else his attendance on this church is meant, which shows his continued love, care, condescension, and patience towards it. His knocking at the seer is not by the ministry of the word, but by some afflictive dispensation of providence, perhaps persecution. This church was in a sleepy, lukewarm, indifferent, secure frame of spirit, as appears from (vv. 15-18). Christ will not suffer her to continue so, and, therefore, takes his rod in his hand, stands at her door, and gives some severe knocks and raps to bring her to herself, and out of this indolent, supine, and self-confident state and condition she was in; which sense is confirmed by the preceding verse, as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten be zealous, therefore, and repent. The promise he makes to such who hear his voice, that is, the men of wisdom, who hear the rod, and who hath appointed it, when the Lord's voice crieth, to a city, or a church, and open to him, that is, by the lively exercise of faith and love, and which is owing to his putting in his hand by the hole of the door, is, that he will come in, to them, and sup with them, and they with him, which may, in general, design communion and fellowship in his house and ordinances, or in

particular, the marriage-supper of the Lamb, to which they who are called are pronounced blessed

PART II.
CHAPTER 1

OF REPROBATION

The following sections contain an answer to Dr. Whitby’s first chapter concerning the decree of Reprobation, with which he has thought fit to begin his discourse upon the Five Points—a method the Remonstrants formerly were very desirous of taking, though far from being just and accurate, since what is called reprobation is no other than non-election, or what is opposed to election; wherefore, that ought to be considered in the first place, which, if it cannot be supported, the other must drop in course.

But it is easy to observe the design of these men, which is, that by exposing to contempt the doctrine of reprobation, which is sparingly spoken of in Scripture, and left to be concluded from that of election, and being most odious, to carnal minds, they hope to weaken all regards to the doctrine of election, which stands in glaring light, and with full evidence in the word of God. The Doctor pretends to give us the state of the question concerning God’s absolute decrees of election and reprobation out of Bishop Davenant’s Animadversions on Herd, a book deservedly valuable, and which he would have done well to have employed his learning and abilities in the refutation of, before he had written this discourse. But, instead of giving us the true state of the question, relating to these decrees, out of that book, which he might easily have done, he has picked out, some passages here and there, the most exceptionable, and made some rhetorical flourishes upon them. I confess I dislike the Bishop’s notions of a twofold decree, respecting reprobates, the one, eternal and absolute, the other revealed, evangelical, and conditional, and of God’s giving sufficient grace or sufficient means of grace to them, and therefore think myself not obliged to defend them. What is said concerning Adam’s sin, and the imputation of it, will be considered hereafter. The true state of the question before us, and what ought to be attended to, is this, that as God, of his sovereign good will said pleasure, has, from all eternity, chosen some men unto salvation by Jesus Christ, through sanctification of the Spirit, said belief of the truth, so he has, of his sovereign

will and pleasure, from all eternity, passed by others, and determined to leave them to themselves, and deny them that grace which he gives to others, and damn them only for their sin.

This author observes, “That the word, ajdo>kimov, which we render reprobate, hath no relation, in Scripture, to any decree concerning the damnation of men, or withholding from them the means by which they may escape it, but only denotes such actions which will certainly be displayed by God and man.” But then it should also be observed, that in all those places, 2 Timothy 8, Romans 1:28, Titus 1:16, Hebrews 6:8, and 1 Corinthians 9:27, excepting the last, referred to by this author, the word relates not to the evil actions, but to the persons and internal dispositions of the most profligate and wicked among mankind; so that though there is no express mention of any decree of reprobation concerning them, yet there is a great deal of reason to conclude, from the account given of them, that they were such whom God had never chosen in Christ, but had passed them by, and had determined to leave them to their own heart’s lusts, to deny them his grace, and justly damn them for their iniquities. But I proceed to the vindication of those passages of Scripture, in which this writer says, there is nothing relating to this decree, or from which it can reasonably be inferred.

Section 1

Proverbs 16:4.

The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

1. These words are not to be understood of God’s creating all things out of nothing, or of his production of creatures into being for his own glory, nor of his wise ordering and disposing all things in providence for himself which are both truths, but not of this text. It is certain that all things that are made, are made by Jehovah, for himself, and not another; not because he had need of them but to declare his greatness, and communicate his goodness, for his will and pleasure, his praise and glory; yet this is not intended here, for the word here used is neither adb nor tç[, which are commonly used when creation, and the works of it, are spoken of. It is also most certain, that all things in this world, as they are upheld and preserved in their being by God, so they are governed, influenced, ordered, and disposed of by him, for the good of his

creatures, and the glory of his name; yet not this, but the decrees, purposes, and appointments of God, respecting his creatures, are here designed; in which sense the word l[p, here used, is sometimes to be taken, as in Exodus 15:17: Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which tl[p, thou hast appointed for thee to dwelt in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy have established. For the tabernacle, or sanctuary, was not yet made. So in Psalm 31:19: O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which, tl[p, thou hast prepared, provided, and appointed, in thine eternal counsel and covenant, for them that trust in thee before the sons of men. In the same sense the word poie>w is used in the New Testament, particularly in Mark 3:14, And he, ejpoi<hse, made, or ordained twelve. And in Hebrews 3:2, Who was radical, tw~ poi>hsanti, to him that made, or appointed him. Now the sense of these words is this: that all things are appointed by God for his own glory; all things, particularly respecting man, concerning his temporal estate, the time of his birth, the place of his abode, his station and condition of life, the various vintages of it, prosperous and adverse, death itself, and all the means leading on to it; as well as all things respecting his spiritual and eternal state, the provision and mission of a Say tour, both as to the time of his coming into the world, and of his sufferings and death, with all the circumstances thereof, the conversion of a sinner, time, place, said means, all times of darkness, desertion, and comfort; yea, the final state and portion of all men: all these are fixed and appointed by God, and, in one way or another, make for his glory; yea, even he has appointed the wicked for the day of evil, which is mentioned partly to illustrate the general proposition in the text, and partly to obviate an objection, which might be taken from them against all things being made or appointed for his glory. But,

2. It is commonly said, that it is our sentiment, and the sense we give of this text, and what may be inferred from the doctrine of predestination, that God made man to damn him; whereas this is neither our sentiment; nor is it the sense we give of this text, nor is it to be inferred from the doctrine of predestination; for there is a wide difference between God’s making man to damn him, trod his appointing wicked men to

damnation for their wickedness, which is the meaning of this text, and of the doctrine of reprobation we assert. We say, that God made man neither to damn him nor to save him; neither salvation nor damnation were God’s ultimate in making man, but his own glory, which will be answered one way or another, either in his salvation or damnation. It is asked, “What is it that they would lifter from these words? Is it that God made men wicked?” To which I answer, no. We know as well as this interrogator that God made man upright, and that he has made himself wicked; and abhor, as much as he, the blasphemy of God being the author of sin, or of his making his creatures wicked. It is one thing for God to make men wicked, another to appoint a wicked man to eternal wrath on the account of his wickedness. The same author goes on to interrogate, “Is it with Dr. Twiss, that all, besides the elect, God hath ordained to bring forth into the world, in their corrupt mass, and to permit them to themselves to go on in their own ways, and so finally to persevere in sin; and lastly, to damn them for their sin, for the manifestation of his justice on them?” This passage of the Doctor’s is picked out as a very exceptionable one; though for my part, I think it fitly expresses both the sense of this text and of the doctrine of reprobation, and is to be justified in every part of it. He says, that God ordained to bring forth all, besides the elect, into the world in their corrupt mass. And where is the hurt of saying this? Is it not fact that they are brought into the world in this manner? Nor is it repugnant to the perfections of God to produce, bring into being, and multiply the individuals of human nature, though that nature is vitiated and corrupted with sin, which lie may do, and does, without being the author of their wickedness; nor is this injurious to, or any particular hardship on, the non-elect, since the same is true, and is what we, with the Scriptures, affirm of the elect of God themselves. The Doctor proceeds to observe, that God ordained to permit them to themselves to go on in their own ways, and so finally to persevere in sin. That God does give up men to their own hearts’ lust (Ps. 81:11, 12), as he did the Israelites of old, and suffers whole nations to walk in their own ways (Acts 14:16), as he did the Gentiles formerly for many hundreds of years, is certain; and for God to ordain, or determine, to permit them, can be no more contrary to his perfections than the permission itself;

nor does such an appointment infringe the liberty of their wills; nor can it be any injustice in God to suffer them finally to persevere in sin, since they say, we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart (Jer. 18:12). And, whereas the Doctor concludes that God has ordained to damn them for their sin, for the manifestation of his justice on them: this fitly expresses the sense of the text and of the doctrine of reprobation, especially that part of it which divines call pre- damnation. Reprobation may be distinguished into preterition and predamnation. Preterition is God’s act of passing by and leaving some, who are called the rest, when he chose others to salvation; and is the effect of God’s sovereign good will and pleasure, being an act over and above the fall, and without the consideration of it, or of any actual sin or transgression whatever; nor is this unbecoming the moral perfections of God, or doing any injustice to his creatures, since the objects of this act were considered in the pure mass of creaturesship, were found in this pure mass, and left in it, God neither putting nor supposing any wickedness in them. Predamnation is God’s appointing men to damnation, in consideration and on account of sin; not God’s decree, but sin, which interferes between the decree and the execution of it, is the cause of damnation: God damns no man but for sin, nor does he appoint any to damnation but on account of it. Now, if it is not unjust to damn men for sin, it cannot be an unrighteous thing with God to appoint unto damnation for it. These things being considered, the doctrine of reprobation will not appear so horrible and shocking as it is represented to be by our opponents. Our author goes on and observes, “or lastly, they only mean that God, for the glory of his justice, had appointed, that wicked men perishing impenitently in sin, should he obnoxious to his wrath; and then they assert a great truth.” But we mean more than this, we mean not only that such persons who are left to persevere in sin, and remain finally impenitent, are obnoxious to the wrath of God, but that they are appointed to wrath; and which we believe to be the sense of this text, and the truth contained in it. Though,

3. It is observed, that the words should be rendered, the Lord hath made all things to answer to themselves, or airily to refer to one another, even the wicked for the day of evil. But supposing that the word whn[ml is

derived from hn[, to answer, it should not be rendered to answer to themselves but to him, since the affix to it is singular, and not plural, and the meaning will be, that the Lord has made, or appointed all things to answer to himself, that is, to his own will and pleasure, and to subserve the ends of his own glory. Agreeable to this sense of the phrase the Jewish writers interpret it. R. Sol Jarchi explains it by wswlyq lybꝓb for his praise. R. Isaac by wnwrxz zxpj ^[ml, for his will and pleasure. R. Jonah by hxwr wb ^yg[l, for the thing in which he takes pleasure. R. David Kimchi thinks it may be rightly explained by wrwb[b, for himself, or for his own sake. All which confirm our sense of it. Nor is the meaning of the words, that God has made the wicked man to be the executioner of evil to others; though this is sometimes the case, and is such a sense of the words, as is no ways subversive of the doctrine of reprobation. But the plain meaning of them is, that God has appointed all things for his own glory, and which, the will secure even in the destruction of wicked men, to which for their sins they are justly reserved; and this sense of them is confirmed by the Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions.

Section 2

John 12:39, 40.

Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias had said again, lie hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

It is said, that “this text is cited to prove the decree of reprobation, or preterition; and that the inference made from it, contains this strange and uncomfortable doctrine, viz. That the infidelity of God’s own people is to be resolved, not into the perverseness of their wills, or the evil dispositions of their hearts, but into the divine predictions, or into a judicial blindness and obduration, wrought by God upon them; which renders it, though not naturally, yet, morally impossible for them to believe.” But,

1. I do not find that these words are cited by any of our writers to prove the decree of reprobation, or preterition, or any eternal purpose of God to blind the eyes, and harden the hearts of men, by any positive act of his, with a view to hinder their conversion, and that this decree of condemnation might take place. The Contra- Remonstrants, indeed, make use of them

to prove, that the Gospel is preached to many who do not believe, and who cannot believe; because it is not attended with an internal, powerful operation of divine grace, and that very rightly; which is exactly agreeable to the words of Isaiah, cited in the preceding verse, Who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? And, which stand in close connection with these, Therefore, they could not believe, etc.

2. It would be strange and uncomfortable doctrine, indeed, should any make an inference from hence, containing this in it, that the infidelity of God’s own people is owing to divine predictions, or judicial blindness, wrought by God upon them, which renders it morally Impossible for them to believe. Seeing God’s own people are not spoken of in the text, nor are there any predictions in scripture respecting their final unbelief, nor are they ever given up to judicial blindness and hardness; but, being ordained unto eternal life, are enabled, by divine grace, to believe in Christ to the saving of their souls, notwithstanding the perverseness of their wills, and the evil disposition of their hearts.

3. It is evident that the words are to be understood of the unbelieving Jews who rejected the Messiah, though they heard his doctrine, and saw his miracles, whereby the predictions of the prophet Isaiah, were fulfilled; which, though they had no such in- influence on the wills of these men, as to lay upon them a co- active necessity, or force them to do or answer to the things foretold, yet were to have, and had, an infallible event or completion; otherwise, the foreknowledge of God, and the authority of the prophetic writings, could not be maintained: wherefore the Evangelist observes, that though he (Christ) had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him, that the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be judged, etc. Also, Therefore, they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, etc.

4. It is certain, that {he impossibility of their after believing, is to be resolved into the judicial blindness and hardness of their hearts, to which they were justly left, having condemned both the doctrines and miracles of Christ. It is of no great moment whether the he, who is said to blind and harden, be God or Christ, or whether the words be rendered, it hath blinded, etc. that is, malice or wickedness hath blinded, or be read

impersonally, their eyes are blinded, etc. Since God, or Christ, blind and harden, not by any positive act, or putting in blindness or hardness, but by leaving and giving men up to the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and denying them grace; which was the cause of these Jews; so as never to be converted, or turned even by external repentance and reformation, that they might be healed in a national way, or be preserved front national ruin. All which is consistent with God’s command, and Christ’s exhortations to them to believe, which were antecedent to the judicial blindness and hardness of their hearts, and were, with the miracles and doctrines of Christ, aggravations of their unbelief; and therefore, they might he justly objected to them by the evangelist as their great crime, as it certainly was; being owing to the perverseness of their wills, and the evil dispositions of their hearts.

Section 3

1 Peter 2:8.

And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.

These words are spoken of the reprobate Jews, to whom Christ was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, in his birth, parentage, and education, in the mean appearance he made in his earn person and in his apostles, in his ministry, and the audience that attended it, and the company he kept, in his doctrine, miracles, crucifixion, and death; who stumbled at the word of the Gospel, despised, and rejected it, being left to the prevailing infidelity of their corrupt hearts; all, which was not casual and accidental, but pursuant to a divine purpose and appointment. This passage, in connection with the words preceding, plainly shows, that as there were some, whom God had appointed and fore-ordained to believe in Christ, on whom he determined to bestow true faith in the, to whom he is the elect, precious cornerstone; so there were others, whom He determined to leave as children of disobedience, in the infidelity and unbelief in which the fall had concluded them; through which disobedience or infidelity, they stumble at Christ, and his word, and in consequence thereof, justly perish. This also appears from the antithesis in verse 9, where God’s elect are opposed unto, and distinguished from, these persons, but ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, etc. But,

1st. It is said, “That this scripture, to be sure, cannot signify, that God absolutely ordained the unbelieving Jews, *eijv apei>qeian*, to disobedience;” when,

1. As yet they were not, and therefore were not disobedient.” I reply, this scripture certainly signifies, that these persons were appointed to stumble at Christ and his words through unbelief, which is all one as not to believe in him; or, to express our sense and meaning, and also the sense and meaning of his text more fully, God absolutely willed the fall of man, which brought all mankind into a state of infidelity; in which God has determined to leave some, and not give them that grace which can only cure them of their unbelief, whereby they stumble at Christ and his Gospel, being disobedient, to the divine revelation. Now such a deter-urination, or appointment, did not request their present actual existence, only certain future existence, much should be disobedient, previous to this appointment.

2. It is added, as another reason against this sense of the text, “That then their future disobedience was purely a compliance with the divine ordinance or will, and so could not deserve the name of disobedience; because it could not be both a compliance with, and disobedience to the will of God.” To which may be replied, that God’s will is either secret or revealed, purposing or commanding; the one is the rule of his own actions, the other of his creatures: now it oftentimes is so that what accords with the secret and purposing will of God, is a disobedience to his revealed and commanding will. As Dr. Manton observes, “Things that are most against his revealed will, fall under the ordination of his secret will; and, whilst men break commandments, they fulfill decrees: his revealed will sheweth what should be done, his secret will what will be done.” So, for instance it was agreeable to God’s secret will, that man should fall; yet, eating the forbidden fruit by which he fell, was an act of disobedience to his revealed will: The crucifixion of Christ was according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; and yet this act of the Jews was a disobedience to the sixth commandment, Thou shall not kill. The kings of the earth, giving their kingdom to the beast, was a fulfilling of the secret will of God, nay, he put it into their hearts to do it, and yet, giving the beast that support, power, homage, and worship, they did, were all open violation of the

laws of God.

3. It is urged, that, according to this sense of the words, “This disobedience could not be objected to them as their crime; unless compliance with the will of God be so; and it be a fault to be such as God, by his immutable counsel and decree, hath ordained we should be; or it should render men criminal and obnoxious to punishment, that they have not made void God’s absolute decree, or have done what that made it necessary for them to do.” I answer, that God’s decrees, as they do not infringe the liberty of man’s will, so they do not excuse from sin. The selling of Joseph was according to the purpose and decree of God, who, as he meant, So he over-ruled it for good yet it was an evil in his brethren, and so they meant it; and, therefore, might be justly objected, to them as their crime. The Jews, when they crucified Christ, did no other than what the hand and counsel of God determined before to be done: and yet, by their own wicked hands, they crucified and slew him. God’s determinations and decrees about this affair, neither exempted them from being criminals, nor from being obnoxious to punishment.

2ndly The meaning of these words, probably to Dr. Hammond’s sense of them, is said to be this: “That the unbelieving Jews, being disobedient to the Gospel so clearly revealed, and by so many miracles all distributions of the Holy Ghost confirmed to them, were appointed, as the punishment of that disobedience, to fall and perish; for, so the Hebrew word, and the Greek *prosko>mma* and *skanda>lon*, import, namely the ruin and the fall of them who stumble at this stone.” Than let it be observed, that the phrase, to stumble at Christ, and the word; is not expressive of their punishment, but of their sin, being disobedient. As, to stumble at the law, Malachi 2:8, is to offend against, break and transgress it; so to stumble at the word, or Gospel, is to blaspheme and contradict it, reject and put it away, as the Jews of old did, being disobedient, left and given up if to the infidelity and hardness of their hearts. To stumble at the word, and to stumble at Christ, and to be offended in Him, or at him, are one and the same thing; and the latter always signifies a crime, and not punishment (Matthew 11:6; 13:57, Mark 6:3; Luke 17:23). The sin of these persons is expressed by stumbling and falling: and their punishment by being broken (Ps.

8:14,15; Matthew 21:44). So the Hebrew word *lçk*, signifies to stumble and fall; that is, to sin (see Prov. 24:17, Hosea 14:1, Mal. 2:8). Hence *µnw[lwçkk*, the stumbling-block of their iniquity, that which is the occasion of sin (Ezek. 7:19: 14:3,4,7). So the Greek words *prosko>pyw*, *prosko>mma*, *proskoph>* (Rom. 9:32, 33; 14:20,21; 2 Cor. 6:3), *Skandali>zw*, and *skanda>lon* (Matthew 18:6-9, Rom. 14:13,21; 1 Cor. 8:1-5). And, after all, this sense of the words pleaded for proves a fore-appointment of some to punishment, as the fruit of disobedience; which is that part of reprobation, commonly called predation, we contend for.

3rdly It is said, “The words will fairly bear this sense; go them trial believe, belongs *hJ timh<*, the honour (of being built upon this corner-stone into a spiritual house, but to them that are disobedient belongs that of Psalm 118:22,) and (also to them he

is) a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them that stumble at the word, *Eijv o{ kai< ejte>qhsan* for which also these stones were laid, or put, the corner-stone for the building up of believers, the stone of stumbling for the disobedient to stumble at.” But it should be observed, that the corner-stone, and the stone of stumbling, are one and the same stone, and therefore it could not, with propriety, be said of that stone, for which also they were put or laid. Besides, “the word forever *tigenai*, as Dr. Hammond observes, is ordinarily used for appointing, and ordaining, and being applied to God, doth often signify his decree, or destination; thus John 15:16, Acts 13:47, 1 Thessalonians 5:9.” And here, his decree and a appointment concerning reprobates, as appears from the antithesis in verse 9. Moreover, admitting that Christ is here said to be laid, or put, as a stumbling-stone for the disobedient to stumble at; since he is said *kei~aqai ejv ptw~sin*, to be set, that is, as the above- mentioned Doctor observes, decreed by God (the same that *ti>qeaqai*, to be yet or ordained here,) for the falling of many in Israel (Luke 2:34). I say, admitting this, the sense will be much the same, whether we suppose Christ is set or put, that is, ordained, decreed, and appointed, to be a stumbling-stone for men to stumble at; or, whether they are ordained, appointed, to stumble at him; that is, to despise, refuse, and reject him, through infidelity.

Section 4

Jude 1:4.

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who mere before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

The apostle, in this text, speaks of some persons, perhaps the followers of Simon Magus, or other immoral heretics, who had privily crept into houses, and unawares into the churches, and, perhaps, into the ministry, and had insinuated themselves into the affections of the people; and yet were ungodly men, did not worship God sincerely, and according to his appointments, misinterpreted the gospel of the grace of God, translated it to a wrong use, and abused the design of it., yea, denied both the Father and the Son. Now these persons were of old, that is, from all eternity, as Dr. Manton on the text observes, before ordained to just condemnation for their wickedness. These words may be considered then as a proof of reprobation, or of God’s appointing some men to damnation before they had a being. In answer to this it is said,

1. “The verse in the Greek text runs thus: So the ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, have entered into (the church) of whom it was before written, that this should be their sentence or punishment.” But, to tilts version of the text may be objected, that besides the transposing of the words, and dropping part of the character of these men, the word *pa>lai*, of old, is entirely neglected. Nor does the verse in the Greek text run thus: *peri< o-in proge>grapti tou~to to< kri~~ma*, of whom this sentence or punishment was before written; but, *oij pa>gai progeprogramme>noi ejv tou~to to< kri~ma* who were of old before written to this condemnation.

2. “That this cannot be meant of any divine ordination or appointment of them to eternal damnation before they had a being, is evident; because it cannot be thought without horror, that he, who is the lover of souls, should appoint any, much less the greater part of them, to inevitable destruction before they had a being.” But, where does the horror of this doctrine lie? Does it lie in the appointment of men to damnation, before they had a being? If there is an divine ordination or appointment to it, it must be before men have a being, even from eternity, since

no new appointment decree, purpose, or ordination is made by God in time. It election is from eternity, reprobation must be so too, since there cannot be one without the other. If some were chosen before the foundation of the world, others must be left, or passed by as early. If some were appointed unto salvation from the beginning, others were appointed unto wrath or were of old, ayrwç zm, from the beginning, as the Syriac version renders the word (compare this with 2 Thess. 2:13; Prov. 8:22), fore-ordained to condemnation. Or, does the horror of it lie in this, that this appointment is ascribed to the lover of souls? Why may it not be thought without horror, that he, who is the lover of souls, should appoint some men to eternal damnation for sin before they had a being, as well as hate Esau before he had done any evil, and yet loved Jacob before he had done any good? Or does it lie here, that God should appoint the greater part of men to damnation? But the question before us is not, whether God has appointed the greater or lesser part of mankind to destruction for sin, but whether he has appointed any; and, if he could appoint any, he could appoint many, yea, all mankind; as he did the whole body of apostate angels, without any impeachment of his wisdom, justice, or goodness. But perhaps the horribleness of this doctrine is thought to lie here, that God has appointed men as creatures, without any consideration of sin, unto eternal damnation. If this was our doctrine, I should not wonder that it should be thought of with so much horror and detestation; but this is a most vile misrepresentation of it. For, though the Supralapsarians do not promise the consideration of sin to the act of preterition, or God's leaving and passing by some, when he chose others; yet both they, and the Sublapsarians premise the consideration of sin to predamnation, or God's appointing men to destruction. We say, God damns no man but for sin, and that he appointed to damn none but sinners. And cannot this be thought of without horror? Our author himself owns it, as will quickly appear.

3. It is said, that "the word kri~ma, relates not to sin, but punishment, the fruit of sin; so Mark 12:40, Romans 2:3. Now, God ordaineth none to punishment but sinners; and ungodly men; and such, by the text, these persons are here styled." To which may be replied, that, though the word kri~ma, in the passages referred to, and in many others, signifies damnation,

yet, elsewhere, it relates to things criminal; a sinful blindness and hardness of heart, which God sometimes leaves persons to: so when our Lord says, eijv kri~ma, for judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind (John 9:39), thus, these persons in the text, having gone great lengths in sin, were given up to a reprobate mind to do things not convenient; to neglect and despise the worship of God, abuse me gospel, and deny both the Father and the Son. Now, eijv tou~to to< kri~ma, to this judicial blindness and hardness, they were of old before ordained. This is a sense of the words which cannot easily be confuted, and is, indeed, acknowledged by the Remonstrants. But, however, we are willing to allow that kri~ma here relates to punishment, and not sin, as in the parallel place (2 Pet. 2:3). And we say with our author, that God ordains none to meat but sinners; only we say, that ordination was from eternity, and this is the doctrine of the text, and which we contend for.

4. It is observed, that "these were men of whom it was before written or prophesied, that they should be condemned for their ungodliness, as be Enoch, verse 14. And, that this also is the import of the word proegra>fe, (Rom. 15:4; Gal. 3:1). The writers and interpreters on the Arminian side are pretty generally agreed that these words refer to some prophecy concerning these men, somewhere or other in Scripture, but are not agreed about the particular passage. Some think the apostle has a regard to the parallel place in 2 Peter 2:1-3; but if he had this in his view, he would never have said that they were of old, a long while ago, before written or prophesied, of; since, according to the, common calculation, that epistle of Peter's was written in the very same year as this of Jude's. Besides, Peter says, at the time of his writing, that the judgment of these men was of a long one, that is, had been long ago pronounced and did not linger. Others think, that reference is had to the prediction of Christ, in Matthew 24. This is, indeed, carrying the prophecy further off. But then, as no such persons are described there as here, so neither there any mention of their punishment or condemnation. Others, as our author supposed, that the apostle respects the prophecy of Enoch; this, indeed, was of old. But, tough it is true that Enoch

prophesied of persons, yet, as his prophecy was never that we know of, and, therefore, these, men could not be said to be fore-written of in; so it is easy to observe, that the apostle peaks of this prophecy as something distinct from these persons being fore-written to condemnation, when he says (v. 14), and Enoch also prophesied of these. Besides, as Vorstius, a writer on the other side the question, observes, "It is all one whether we understand it, that these men were of old appointed and designed by God to this condemnation; or, whether this condemnation was of old written concerning them in the Old Testament." Since such a prophecy concerning them must be founded upon an antecedent, divine ordination and appointment. Nor is prophecy he import of the word proegra>fe, especially in Galatians 3:1, and only regards things, and not persons, in Romans 15:4. And here intends, not their being fore-written in any of the books of Scripture, but in the book of God's eternal purposes and decrees.

Section

Revelation 13:8.

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him; whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, stair, from the foundation of the world.

With 2 Corinthians 4:3, 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Romans 9:18. The learned writer attended to, observes, that Dr. Twiss confesseth that the Scriptures speak fully of election, sparingly of reprobation, in most places; yet, some passages we have, saith he, which give light and evidence to both alike. The passages referred to are, for the one, Acts 2:47; Matthew 24:24; Acts 13:48; Luke 10:20; Hebrews 12:23. For the other, 2 Corinthians 4:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Romans 9:18; Revelation 13:8, and Revelation 17:8. Now, to all these citations, most of which are said to be palpably impertinent, (though whether they are or no, will be seen hereafter) this is the general answer, "That they signify no more than those words of Christ (Mark 16:16; Luke 13:3-5); and of the Baptist (John 3:36). The stun of which is, that he that believes and repents, shall be saved; and he that does not believe and repent, shall be damned. Which is a considerable mistake; seeing the words of Christ and of the Baptist regard only the revealed will of God, in the external ministry of the word; and the passages cited, the secret will of

God, in giving grace to some, and denying it to others. The main thing to be attended to is, how it comes to pass, that some men have faith and repentance, and so are saved; whilst others have neither, and so are damned. Some men have faith and repentance: how come they by them? God freely gives these graces to them, and implants them in them; and why does he do so? Because of his sovereign good pleasure he has, from all eternity, willed and determined to do so; widen is a considerable branch of election. On the other band, some men have neither faith nor repentance; what is the reason of it? Because, being by nature in a state of infidelity and impenitence, God does not give them that grace which only can deliver them from it. And why does he not give them that grace? Because, of his sovereign will and pleasure, he has determined not to give it them; which is a considerable branch of reprobation. To some of these citations our author thinks fit to reply, by saying, that "those that are lost (2 Cor. 4:3), are those that believe not (v. 4). And those who perish (2 Thess. 2:10), are those who believe not the truth (v. 12). And they who perish (1 Cor. 1:18), are the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. And they who are hardened (Rom. 9:18), are the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, by their own wickedness, completed by their infidelity, or want of faith." But still the question returns. How come these persons to want faith, to be unbelievers, not to believe in Christ, or the truth, whilst others do? It is not because they are left to their natural infidelity, and given up to judicial blindness, and hardness of heart? And why are they thus left? Or, why does God deny them that grace which only can cure them of all this? but, because it is his will, and he has determined to deny them it? Now, this is one part of reprobation we contend for. From these this celebrated writer proceeds to those places, which may seem to require a more particular notice. And,

1st. Begins with the phrase of being written in the book of life, (Rev. 13:8; 17:8). Which,

1. He says, is Jewish, and doth not stratify the absolute election of any person to eternal life, but only the present right of the just person to life; and therefore it is called the book of life written for the just, Targum on Ezekiel 13:9. And, the book of the just, Targ. Jori on Exodus 32:8-2. To which I answer, that the book spoken of in the Scriptures under

consideration, is not called the book of the just, nor the book of life written for the just, but the book of life for the Lamb, a phrase never to be met with in Jewish writings. But, admitting an allusion to these phrases used by the Jews, let it be observed, that just or righteous persons are particular ones: all men are not righteous; only such from God from all eternity willed to be righteous through the righteousness of his Son. Now, as many as are written in the book of life God willed to be righteous, through the righteousness of his Son; and, as many as he willed to be righteous, through the righteousness of his Son, he wrote their names in the book of life. Hence the same individual particular persons, who are said to be written in heaven (Heb. 12:23), are called just men made perfect that is, through the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; which gives them not only a present, but a future continued right to eternal life, which can never be lost. For, whom God did predestinate, them he called; and whom he called, he justified, and whom he justified, them he glorified (Rom. 8:30).

2. It is observed, that, in this book, The apostolical institutions (constitutions, I suppose, it should be,) say, we come to be written th> hJmetera ejnoi>a kai< spoudh~ , by our good affection and industry.” What these constitutions say will not meet with much credit; since, not only they appear to be a spurious work, and not the genuine writings of the apostles, but also, we find nothing in the sacred writings to confirm such an assertion; and, indeed, how is it possible that any should come to be written in this book, through their good affection and industry, when the book was written, from the foundation of the world (Rev. 17:8), and so before men had done either good or evil?

3. It is said, that, “from this book, men, as they may be written in it, when they are converted from vice to virtue, so may they be blotted out, when they backslide from virtue to iniquity, according to Psalm 17:28, Revelation 22:19, and Exodus 32:33.” To which I reply, that, as men are not first written in this book when they are converted, since this book was written from the foundation of the world, before men had a being, and consequently before they were converted, so neither may they or can they be blotted out when they backslide; for God not only heals the backsliders of his people, and still loves them freely (Hosea 14:4; Rev. 3:5), but he has promised to him

that overcometh, as all his elect do and shall, that he will not blot out his name out of the book of life. Nor do the passages alleged prove that they may or shall be blotted out; not Psalm 69:28, which is a petition concerning wicked men, either that they may die, theft memory perish, never be mentioned with the righteous, nor appearing among them at the last day; or that they might be excluded from the visible church, the congregation of saints, and appear to be what they really were, none of God’s elect; and, supposing the book of the living intends the book of election, blotting out of it is no more, as is evident from the text itself, than not writing them in it; nor Revelation 22:19, for taking away the man’s part out of the book of life is only taking away that which he seemed to have and not what he really had, agreeable to Luke 8:18. And as for Exodus 32:33, it is not there said, Whoso yet hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of the book of life, as this writer inadvertently cites the words, but out of the book which I have written, that is, either out of the book of the law, according to R. Sol. Jarchi; his name shall not be mentioned there; or, of it this temporal life, he shall die and not live.

4. “This book is said to be written from the foundation of the world, God having Adam and others, who are styled the sons of

God; and not to have a name written in it, is not to be owned as God’s sons and faithful servants; when therefore St. John saith, that they whose names were not in this book of life writ from the foundation of the world, worshipped the beast; he means they, and they only did so, who never were by God esteemed, or registered in the number of good Christians. But if this book was written from the foundation of the world, it must be written before these sons of God had a being, and before they knew, or were known by others, that they were the sons of God. And if none but such whom God owns and esteems as his sons were written in it, then none but such who are really so, or such who were predestinated to the adoption of sons, are written in it. And if none but these: are written in it, then those whose names are not written in it are such who are passed by and rejected of God, which is what we contend for, and this passage of Scripture is brought to prove.

2ndly “The passage cited from the Thessalonians is said only to concern the Jews, who rejected the

gospel of our Lord and their Messiah, confirmed by the strongest evidence of innumerable miracles; and so believed not the truth at all, or else revolted from it after they had embraced it.” Though it rather seems to concern the followers of Antichrist, and the worshippers of the man of sin, when he should be revealed, to whom God would send strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, and be damned. But, let it concern who it will, it is certain it respects such persons who would be left of God to their infidelity, and given up to the power of Satan, and to judicial blindness of mind; and are distinguished from the elect of God that should be saved (vv. 13,14).

3rdly “The passages cited from Romans 9, it is said, can do nothing to the purpose; that chapter having no regard to God’s absolute decrees, concerning the final and external state of mankind in general, or of any particular persons, but his providential dealings in rejecting the Jews, and receiving the Gentiles.” But I hope to make it appear, in a subsequent section, that that chapter is designed to illustrate personal election and reprobation. Nor does the apostle’s recapitulation (v. 30), contradict this; since the Jews not attaining to the law of righteousness, was owing to their stumbling at that stumbling- stone to which they were appointed; and the Gentiles attaining to righteousness, was in consequence of their being vessels of mercy, afore prepared to glory; and both to be understood of particular per-reasons. Nor does the apostle’s prayer, chapter 1, contradict the decree of reprobation concerning the Jews, or his knowledge of; since this might be the effect of natural affection to them, as his countrymen, and not rise from the exercise of faith and spiritual knowledge.

CHAPTER II

OF ELECTION

The following sections contain a reply to Dr. Whitby’s exceptions in the third chapter of his Discourse, concerning absolute election, of our arguments for it, taken from some of the more principal passages of Scripture used by us in favor of it, with a particular consideration of Romans 5:19, and the doctrine of the imputation of Adam’s sin, which the doctor, in the fourth chapter of the said discourse, makes to be the foundation of the decree of election. As I have nothing to object to his stating our sense of predestination, or the absolute election of some particular persons to

eternal life, I shall immediately attend to what he has to object to the Scriptures, produced in proof of it.

Section

1 Peter 2:9.

[Together with—2 John 1:13; James 2:5; Matthew 20:16; 24:22, 25, 31; Luke 18:7; Romans 11:5].

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priest-hood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him, who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

It is said, “That the election, mentioned in the holy Scriptures, is not that of particular persons, but only of churches and nations; and imports rather their being chosen to the enjoyment of the means of grace, than to a certainty of being saved by those men. For the proof of this, several passages are cited out of the Old Testament, showing what will not be tried by any, and so might have been all spared, that the whole Jewish nation, good and bad, were styled the elect of God: but then, though that whole nation was chosen to external means and privileges, yet there were some particular persons among them who were also chosen to grace itself, and to certain salvation; and, accordingly, in the writings of the Old Testament, mention is made of the election of particular persons, as Moses, Aaron, David, and others (Ps.106:23; 105:26; 89:3,19; 4:3).

And, also, of some among the Gentiles, distinct from the Jews, (Isa. 43:20; 65:15,29). And, of the latter, even before they were called by grace. It is, moreover, observed, that when the word elect is, in the New Testament, applied to Christians, it plainly doth include as many as were converted to the Christian faith; for, when it is applied to the Jewish converts, it plainly signifies all n that had been converted to the Christian faith.” It is certain, that Christians are such as are converted to the Christian faith, and Jewish converts made be such, and those, who are really converted, are the elect of God; I but then, they are not elected because they are converted, but they are converted because they are elected; and conversion being a sure and certain fruit of election, becomes the evidence of it. Now, to prove this sense of the word, when applied to Jewish converts,

1st. This passage of the apostle Peter is produced,

though it rather seems to regard the Gentiles, as appears not only from the place in Isaiah (Isa. 43:20, 21), out of which it is taken, where this chosen people are distinguished from the Jews, the posterity of Jacob and Israel; but, also, from the words following the text, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not; obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy, being a citation from Hosea 1:23, and applied to the Gentiles by the apostle Paul, in Romans 9:25. However, their election was not of them as a nation, or a church, since they were neither, being strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Nor was it barely to means of grace and outward privileges, but both to grace and glory, seeing they are said to be elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, though sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:1-5). And in consequence of this, were regenerated by the grace of God, and were kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation, and so must be men absolutely designed for eternal happiness. But, to this are excepted,

1. That the apostle “exhorts these elect, in 1 Peter 1:14, 2:10,11, and 4:2,3,15, to avoid offenses which are not incident to men elected to salvation, whilst they continue so to be.” To which I reply, that such, who are elected to salvation, always continue to be so; nor are there any sins, excepting the sin against the Holy Ghost, which God’s elect, before or after conversion, may not be guilty of. And the offenses which the apostle here exhorts them to avoid, are such as are incident to men elected to salvation, as the cases of David, Peter, and others, do abundantly declare.

2. “That he affirms the same thing of the whole church of Babylon, chapter 5:13. Now, it was more than he could know, that all the members of that great church were absolutely elected to salvation.” What church is meant by the church of Babylon, and how great it was, is not easy to know; and it is equally as difficult to say what an inspired apostle could or could not know. However, without a revelation, though that is no absurdity to suppose, he might affirm of that church in general, that it was elected together with these, as he did affirm, in a judgment of charity, that the churches at Colosse and Thessalonica were the elect of God, though every member of it, in particular,

was not elected to salvation, without any prejudice to the doctrine of eternal absolute election, since all the members of this church were under a visible profession of religion, and, no doubt, the far greater part, at least, were true believers in Christ.

3. “That, whereas this epistle is inscribed to the elect, the second epistle, sent to the same persons, beginneth thus: To them who have obtained like precious faith with us; and speaks of some who had forsaken, the right way; and prophesies, that false teachers should make merchandise of some of them.” Be it so, that the elect, and who have obtained like precious faith with the apostles, are the same persons, which must be allowed; their having the same faith with them is a strong evidence of their being men absolutely designed for eternal happiness, and not barely chosen to the means of grace, or external privileges; yet, it is not true that the apostle speaks of any of the elect he writes to, that they had forsaken the rigid way, but of some other persons who are distinguished from them; and, though he prophesies that false teachers should make merchandise of some of them, his meaning is, that they should be able to draw their money out of their pockets, not that they should destroy the grace of God in their hearts.

4. That “these words are plainly taken from Isaiah 43:20,21. Now, though the whole Jewish nation are styled God’s chosen generation, and peculiar people, it is as sure, that they were not all elected to salvation; we then may reasonably conclude, that the same words applied by St. Peter to all these Christian churches, do not imply that all their particular members were elected to salvation, but only, that they were all members of the church of Christ.” I answer, that the apostle takes these words out of Isaiah 43:20,21, or at least, refers to that place, will be allowed; but then the words of that prophecy do not regard the whole Jewish nation, who though styled, yet not there, God’s chosen on and people, but a set of persons the Gentiles, whom God had chosen, for himself, to show forth his praise; who are distinguished from the Jews, the posterity of Jacob and Israel; opposed to them (v. 22), But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel. Besides, these words are not applied to several Christian churches; for the apostle did not write to churches, as such, but to strangers scattered about the world, whether Jews or Gentiles; though, upon

the consideration of their being church members, he night, in a judgment of charity, pronounce them elect. And whereas it is owned, that the words imply that they were members of the church of Christ; which, if understood of the general assembly, and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, is the same as to be elected to salvation. For, to be a member of this church, and to be an elect person, one absolutely designed for happiness, is the same thing and that these persons were such is evident, from their being called out of darkness into marvelous light.

2ndly Another instance of the word deer, when applied to Jewish converts, signifying such as are converted to the Christian faith, is in 2 John 1:13, where we read of the elect lady, and her elect sister, that is, says our author, the Christian lady and sister. That these were Christian ladies is certain, but that they were Jewish converts to the Christian faith is not so certain. However, it is most certain that these are no instances of the election of nations or churches, but of particular persons, whom the apostle, in a judgment of charity, and from a thorough persuasion of their having received the grace of God, might address under this title and character; though I rather think it is here used as a term of civil honor and respect, than in a religious sense, and so has no concern in this controversy.

3rdly When St. James says, God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, it: is said, His meaning is, that they were called out of the world to the profession of the faith, which, if they lived according to it, would make them heirs of his heavenly kingdom. Now, though the apostle James wrote to the twelve tribes, and so chiefly designs Jewish converts, yet he neither writes to them as a nation, or as a church, seeing they were scattered abroad. Nor can these words be applied to them, or any other, under either of these considerations; since all the individuals of a nation, and all the members of churches, are not the poor of this world, but are to be understood of some particular persons, in such circumstances, on whom God, in consequence of their eternal election, bestows the precious grace of faith, which receives the blessing of free justification, by the righteousness of Christ, when they openly become the heirs of glory; for, being justified by his grace, they are made heirs according to the hope of

eternal life (Titus 3:7). This, and this only, and not a profess on of the faith, no, nor a life according to it makes them heirs of the heavenly kingdom.

4thly. “When Christ saith (Matthew 20:16), many are called, but few chosen, it is said these parables plainly relate to the Jews; and the import of them is, that though many of them were called by Christ and his apostles to faith in him, yet few did or would accept of him as their Savior, or embrace the faith of Christ; so that here the elect and the believers of the Christian faith are the same persons;” But, though these words may primarily relate to the Jews, yet they are also of the Gentiles to this day, and the plain import of them is, that many of them are externally called, by the preaching of the Gospel, but few are, or appear to be, chosen unto eternal life. Were embracing the faith of Christ, and accepting of him as a Savior, intended by the words, it should rather have been said, many are called but few choose, that is, Christ and salvation by him, as Mary is said (Luke 10:42) to choose that good part which shall not be taken away; and not as it is, many are called, but few chosen; which does not express any act of man’s, such as accepting Christ, and embracing the faith of him, but God’s act, to whom alone, and not man, election is always ascribed in scripture; and, therefore, the elect are called God’s elect, and his own elect. Besides, though election sometimes intends effectual vocation, yet never when calling and election are mentioned together in the same verse, for then they are to be distinguished one from another. Moreover, were true believers here meant, this would not militate against eternal election, since, their, being believers is an evidence of it; and, after all, the few chosen must design particular persons, and not either nations or churches, no, nor mere nominal believers of the Christian faith.

5thly. “When he (Christ) says, (Matthew 24:22) that for the elects sake those days shall be shortened, it is said, he styles the faithful, left in the midst of the unbelieving Jews, the elect. So that believers are intended: be it so; then not whole nations, or churches, or communities, are designed, but particular persons; though they seem rather to be such who were unconverted, to be the people among the Jews whom God had foreknown, who were a remnant according to the election of grace, and therefore should obtain, whilst the rest were blinded; for whose sake, the days

of affliction and trouble in the Jewish nation should be shortened, or there should be some respite given, that so there might be art opportunity of preaching the Gospel, which should become the power of God unto salvation to his chosen people; just as, on the other hand, the day of Christ's second coming is deferred until all the elect are gathered in, God being unwilling that any one of them should perish, but that they should all come to repentance.

6thly. "When he (Christ) adds, verse 24, that the false christs and false prophets should do as much as in them lay, by signs, and wonders, to deceive the elect; it is said, There also are we to understand the persevering Christians." I reply, that such who are converted or are true believers are, and will be persevering Christians, and such are certainly the elect of God; but then the reason why they are elected is not because they are converted, or are true believers, or are persevering Christians; but, on the contrary, the reason why they are converted, become true

believers, and so persevering Christians, is, be. cause they are elected; conversion, faith, and perseverance, being not causes and conditions, but fruits and effects of election.

7thly. "When he saith, verse 31, that God (it should be the Son of Man) shall send his angels to gather his elect front the four winds, it is said, the meaning may be, either that he would send his angels to warn the Christians in all the quarters of Judea, to gather together from the unbelieving Jews, that they might be preserved from ruin; or, that he would send his messengers with the Gospel, to gather together as many as did, or would believe, from among the nations of the earth." But the first of these cannot be the meaning of the words; these elect cannot be the Christians in Judea; since they were to be gathered, not from all the quarters of Judea, but from the four winds, from one end of the heaven to the other; and if any from among the nations of the earth, or Gentiles, are in tended by the elect, who, after the destruction of Jerusalem, were to be gathered by Christ's ministers, his angels to himself, with the sound of the Gospel trumpet, God having resolved to take out of them a people of his name (Acts 15:14), when the Jews were rejected and cut off; yet these are not such as did believe the Gospel, or would of themselves believe it, but unconverted persons who were destitute of

faith, on whom God, of his free grace, would bestow it ,as a fruit of his electing love: or else, all the chosen vessels of mercy are meant by the elect, even the dead in Christ, who shall rise first, when the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God (1 Thess. 4:16), even all those who will be gathered together, and placed at his right hand; to whom he will say, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34); a character aptly descriptive of persons absolutely chosen to eternal salvation.

8thly. "The elect, in Luke 18:7, are said, to be the whole body of true believers; and it is suggested, that die faith of many of these should fail." Be it so, that the whole body of true believers are intended, this no ways prejudices the doctrine of eternal election; since they are styled elect, not from their faith, but from God's choice of them to everlasting life; whence they are called his own elect. Nor does the inquiry in verse 8, show that the faith of many, or any of these elect, should fail at the coming of the Son of Man; for though, when he comes, the doctrine of faith will be greatly departed from, ,and the grace of faith Will be very rare, and at a low ebb, yet Christ prays for the faith of all his elect, as he did for Peter's, that it fail not.

9thly. It is observed, that "the election according to grace, mentioned Romans 11:5, doth, in like manner, signify the whole, body of the Jewish converts, even all that did embrace the Christian faith. A great number of these turned afterwards apostates, and renounced the Christian faith; and St. Paul was afraid that some of these elect would afterwards draw back unto perdition. From all which, it is extremely evident, that the apostle neither did, nor could speak of this remnant according to the election of grace, as persons absolutely elected to salvation." I answer, that though the Jewish converts, such as were true believers, were the remnant in being at that time, according to the election of grace, before the world began; yet all that bore the name of converts, or externally embraced the Christian faith, were not of that number: nor did any of the remnant turn apostates, renounce the Christian faith, and so come short of heaven; otherwise, how could it be said, the election hath obtained it? nor was the apostle Paul afraid that any of these elect: should

draw back to perdition; but affirms the reverse, we are not of them that draw back to perdition (Heb. 10:39) nor do any of the passages, cited from the epistle to the Hebrews, suppose that any of these elect might, or did apostatize, or draw back unto perdition; as has been made to appear in the former part of this work.

Section 2

Romans 9:10-13.

[With Romans 8:33].

And not only this, but where Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth) it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

The design of the apostle, in this chapter, is to show, that though the Israelites in general were a chosen people, had peculiar 200 privileges, to whom the promises were made; yet, the word of God was not made void, or took no effect; notwithstanding few of them believed in Christ, the greater part were rejected of God, and the Gentiles shared the blessings of the new covenant; seeing there were then, as there always had been, two sorts among them; the one were children of the flesh, the natural descendants of Abraham only; the other also children of the promise, who were counted for the spiritual seed. To the latter of which the promises were always made good; and these always shared, as they then did, the spiritual blessings of grace; wherefore, the word of God had its designed accomplishment. And, lest this should seem any new, or strange thing, the apostle instances in the immediate offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Ishmael; the one was born after the Spirit, the other after the flesh; the one was the son of the free, the other of the bond- woman; the one continued in the house, the other was cast out. And to prevent any objection that might be taken from Ishmael's being born, not of the lawful wife, but of the bond-woman, as being the reason of his rejection, the apostle proceeds, to mention the case of Jacob and Esau, who not only had the same father, but the same mother, Isaac's lawful wife; these were conceived at once, were in the womb together, were twins; and if any had the preference, Esau by

birth had it, being born first; and a yet a difference was made between these two by God himself; who said to the mother of them, The elder shall serve the younger; which is interpreted of God's loving the one, and hating the other; and this was notified to her, in consequence of an eternal purpose, before the children were born, and when they had done neither good nor evil; so that it could not be said, that Jacob was loved for his good works, nor Esau hated for his evil ones; wherefore the purpose of God, respecting the election of Jacob, fully appears to depend not of works, but of the grace of him that calleth. From all this we conclude, that the predestination of men, either to life or death, is personal: that the objects of either branch of predestination are alike, or are considered in the same situation or condition, whether, in the pure, or corrupt mass, or in both; that God was not influenced or moved, in the election of the one, by their good works, or in the rejection of the other, by their bad ones; that God's decree of election stands firm and immoveable, not upon the feet of works, but of the grace of God; and, that love and hatred are the real springs and source of predestination in its respective branches. But the grand exception to this instance and example of personal election and rejection, is, that these words do not "respect the persons of Jacob and Esau, but their whole nation and posterity; and this is said to be plain,"

1. From the words of God to Rebecca, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger. To which I reply, that this oracle primarily respects the persons of Jacob and Esau as the roots of their respective offspring; and only, secondarily, their posterity, as branches that should sprout from them; it properly regards their persons, and only in an improper, figurative, and metonymical sense, their seed; for, in no other sense could two nations, or two manner of people, be in Rebecca's womb, than as there were two persons there, who would be the authors of two nations and people; and, admitting that their respective posterities are in ever so strict and close a sense intended, this can never be understood to the exclusion of their persons; any more than they can be thought to be personally excluded from any concern in the loss or enjoyment

of the birthright and blessing; for, were the posterity of Esau only deprived of the birthright and blessing? Was not he himself personally supplanted with respect to both? Did the posterity of Jacob only enjoy the birthright and the blessing? Did not Jacob himself, in his own person, purchase the birthright, and receive the blessing?

2. This is said to be plain, “from this observation, that, as to the persons of Jacob and Esau, this was never true, that the elder did serve the younger; but only, as to their posterity, when the Edomites became tributaries to David, (2 Sam. 8:14).” But this observation supposes that this is to be understood of outward temporal servitude; and, indeed, in this sense, it was never true of their persons; so far from being so, that Jacob, as soon as he had got the birthright and the blessing, was obliged to flee from Esau; and when, after many years, he returned, he sends messengers to his brother, in a very submissive manner, charging them, saying, Thus shall ye say to my lord Esau, thus etc. And, when he found that his brother was coming to meet him, it threw him into a panic fear, lest he should smite him, and the mother with the children; he prepares presents for him; and when he came to him, bowed himself to the ground seven times, and so his wives and children all bowed to him; and the language in which he addressed him, while they conversed together, was that of my lord (Gen. 27:43; 32:3, 4, 11, 13; 33:5-8, 13-15.) Now it is not credible, that if this oracle is to be understood of temporal servitude, that it should have no appearance, nor the least shadow of an accomplishment, in their persons, supposing it was to have a greater in their posterity; and, indeed, the completion of it in this sense, in their posterity, is not so exceeding evident. It is certain, that there was a long train of dukes and kings in Esau’s posterity before there was any king in Israel (Gen. 36:31). They were in lordly grandeur and splendor, when the children of Israel were oppressed with hard bondage in Egypt. The single instance referred to, when the Edomites became tributaries to David, was near a thousand years after the giving out of this oracle: and this servitude did not continue long; for, in Joram’s time, they revolted (2 Kings 8:22), and so continued; and it is plain, that, at the time of the Babylonish captivity, the children of Edom were prosperous and triumphant; who said (Ps.

137:7), concerning Jerusalem, Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof. This servitude, therefore is to be understood in a spiritual sense of Esau’s exclusion from the favor of God, and the blessings of grace: for these two phrases, The elder shall serve the younger, and Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, are of the same signification: the one is explanative of the other. When Jacob got the birth-right, and received the blessing, this oracle began to have a visible accomplishment, Esau then appeared not to be the son and heir of promise, who was to abide in the house; and therefore departs, and pitches his dwelling elsewhere; all which showed he had no interest in spiritual adoption—no right to the blessings of the covenant of grace—nor was he an heir of heaven; these belonged to Jacob. Esau was a servant of sin, under the dominion of it, and in bondage to it; whilst Jacob was the Lord’s freeman, and, as a prince, had power with God, and with men, and prevailed. Esau was serviceable to Jacob, even in spiritual things, as reprobates are to the elect; for all things are for their sake, and all things work together for their good. Jacob’s being obliged to flee from his brother, was for his good; by this providence, he got him a suitable wife, and large substance. His brother’s meeting him on his return, which gave him so much pain and uneasiness, issued in his spiritual good; this sent him to the throne of grace, to humble himself before God, acknowledge his mercies and dependence on him, to implore his help, and plead his promises. And thus the oracle was verified in the persons of Jacob and Esau.

3. It is urged, that “what is here offered, as a proof or confirmation of this, is cited from the prophet Malachi, who prophesied long after Jacob and Esau were personally dead, and speaks expressly of the nation of the Edomites.” It is very true, that Malachi prophesied long after Jacob and Esau were dead personally; and it is as true, that what God there says by Malachi so long after they were dead, is only an explanation of what he had said to Rebecca before they were born; as appears from the apostle’s citing both passages as of like import, and the one as interpreting the other. It is plain that the Lord, in the prophecy of Malachi directs the murmuring Jews to the personal regard he had to Jacob and Esau; and which had continued in numberless instances to their respective posterities, in order to stop their mouths, and reprove

their ingratitude: and though he speaks of the nation of the Edomites, and also to the posterity of Israel, yet it is evident that he has a respect to the persons of Jacob and Esau, from whence they sprung, when he says, was not Esau Jacob’s brother? Now, though an Edomite may be said to be brother to an Israelite, yet Esau is never said, nor can he, with any propriety, be said to be the brother of Jacob’s posterity.

4. That the persons, and not the posterity of Jacob and Esau, are here designed, is evident from the personal account that is given of them; for whatever may be said for their taking their rise from one common father, Isaac, or for their being chosen or rejected as nations before they were born, or had done good or evil; yet it cannot be said with any propriety at all, that Rebecca conceived their respective posterities by one, even by our father Isaac. Moreover, the Scriptural account of these two accords with a personal rejection of the one, and an election of the other. Esau is represented as a profane person; yea, is expressly (Heb. 12:17) said to be apedokimasqh, rejected, that is, from inheriting the blessing. Jacob, on the other hand, is spoken of as a plain and upright man; one interested in the covenant of grace, and a chosen vessel of salvation. Besides, this sense of the words only agrees with the scope and design of the apostle, which is to prove, that all were not Israel which were of Israel, and that all the natural seed of Abraham were not the children of God: this he could not better exemplify, than in the persons of Jacob and Esau; for to have instanced in the posterity of Esau, would have been foreign to his purpose. Add to all this, that the apostle continues his discourse, in the following verses, upon the subject of personal election and rejection; he observes (vv. 15, 18), that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth; which respects persons, and not nations; and instances in Pharaoh, which surely cannot be understood of the posterity, but of the person of Pharaoh; and in verses 22, 23, speaks of vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and of vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory; which design, neither nations, nor churches, nor Jewish converts only, but particular persons among Jews and Gentiles; which latter appear to be the people and beloved of God, and vessels of mercy, by their being called by grace. Hence,

5. It does not clearly follow, as is said, that the

apostle cannot here discourse of any personal election to eternal life, or of any personal love or hatred with respect to eternal interests; since he manifestly speaks of the persons, and not the posterity of Jacob and Esau: and did he, it would not follow, as is suggested, that according to this opinion, the whole nation of Israel must be elected to eternal lifts, and the whole posterity of Esau he the objects of God’s hatred and reprobation; since the people of Israel in general might be said to be loved and chosen of God, the far greater part of them being so, the line of election running among them as it did for many hundreds of years; and yet some of them be instances of God’s displeasure and hatred: and on the other hand, the posterity of Esau in general might be said to be rejected, the far greater part being so, the line of rejection running among them as it did for many hundreds of years; and yet some of them, as Job and his friends, be chosen vessels of mercy. Nor,

6. “Is it certain, That the apostle here only speaks of the election of one seed and nation before another, to be accounted and treated by him as the seed of Abraham, or owned for his peculiar people. For nothing is more certain than that the apostle here speaks of the election of some of the same seed, and of the same nation, before others, who were to be accounted and treated as the spiritual seed of Abraham; and owned for God’s peculiar, special people, before others who were, equally with them, the natural seed of Abraham.

7. The last instance of the sense of the word elect, when applied to Jewish converts, is in Romans 8:33, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? And, “here again it is said, that the elect and true believers are the same.” I see no reason why the elect here should be confined to Jewish converts; for though the apostle speaks of himself and others, he is writing to the Romans. And be it so, that the elect design true believers, it is plain they were such who were predestinated before they were called; and so were the elect of God antecedent to their being true believers, and therefore are not denominated God’s elect from their being so; and besides, they were such as were chosen not barely to external means of grace, and outward privileges, but to grace here and glory hereafter, verse 30, and so were not whole nations, or churches, or communities, but particular persons.

Section 3

Colossians 3:12.

Put on therefore (as the elect of God, holy am beloved) bowels of mercies, etc.

Our author goes on to observe, “that suitable to this notion of the word election, where it respects the Jewish nation, or the Jewish converts, is the import of it in these epistles, where whole nations, communities, or churches, are styled the elect;” that is, that it means converts to the Christian faith, or true believers. But surely, whole nations are never styled the elect in such a sense; and, indeed, this author does not attempt to propose one instance of it, and only takes notice of churches or communities. And,

1. Observes, that “all the faithful brethren in Colosse, are styled (Col. 3:12) the elect of God;” and the same apostle saith to the whole church of Thessalonica, Knowing your election of God (1 Thess. 1:4); and in his second epistle, he saith, We ought to give thanks for you, that God hath elected you from the beginning to salvation” (2 Thess. 2:18). All which he might say without a special revelation, in a judgment of charity; for, though every individual member of these churches were not chosen to salvation, yet, inasmuch as they were all under a visible profession of religion, and the major part of them were truly believers, he might write to them as such: nor do the cautions, exhortation, care and fear, expressed by him, militate against this their character; since these might be all designed, and be made use of for their perseverance as such in grace unto glory.

2. Another instance is in 2 Timothy 2:10, where the apostle says, I endure all things for the elect’s sake; And we are told that “if we compare this with a parallel place in Colossians 1:24, 25, we shall find the elect to be no other than the whole church of Christ, of which he was a minister.” But by comparing this text with that in Colossians, it appears that the church of which the apostle was a minister, is no other than the body of Christ; and intends the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven (Heb. 12:28), and not any particular society, or community of men, under a profession of Christianity; for of such a particular church the apostle was no minister. Nor would this have been agreeable to his character as an apostle, who was not fixed with any particular

church, but had the care of all the churches upon him. Besides, the elect here were such who were not yet called by grace, for whose sake the apostle endured, and was willing to endure, reproach and persecution, in preaching the Gospel; that they also, as well as such as were already converted, might obtain that salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

3. The apostle in Titus 1:1, styles himself an apostle according to the faith of God’s elect; which is interpreted of the faith of Christians in general. But this interpretation will not hold good of nominal, only of real Christians, who become so because they are God’s elect, to whom true saving faith in Christ is peculiar; for all men have not faith; to the elect only is it given, whilst others believe not in him, because they are not of his sheep.

Section

Ephesians 1:4.

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.

These words are, indeed, a strong proof of the doctrine of an eternal, personal, and unconditional election of men to grace and glory; yet the whole strength of the doctrine is not placed in them, as is suggested: we have other strengthening proofs of the proof of it; though we readily own this to be a very considerable one. This passage of Scripture proves, that the choice of men to holiness and happiness, is an eternal act of God the Father, or what passed before the world began; since it is expressly said, that he hath chosen us in him, that is, in Christ, as the head of the elect, before the foundation of the world; and not as the author attended to, either through inadvertency, or with design, cites the words, from the foundation of the world. For the phrase is not apo katabolhv kosmou, as in Revelation 8:8, but pro katabolhv kosmou, and is expressive of the eternity of it, agreeable to other scriptures; as 2 Timothy 1:9, and 2 Thessalonians 2:13, compared with Proverbs 8:22, 23. It also proves, that this choice is of particular persons, he hath chosen us, and not of nations, or churches; seeing the apostle is not writing to, nor speaking of a nation: nor is it very evident that he is writing to a church; for he expresses himself with much caution and distinction, when he inscribes his epistle to the saints which are at Ephesus,

and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. And it is still less evident, that he is speaking of these same persons, or of them as a church; yea, it is manifest, that he is speaking of himself and others, as partakers of the several blessings of grace mentioned in the context; who first trusted in Christ, and were not members of this particular church. These are distinctly spoken of from verse 3, to verse 12 inclusive; and then the apostle addresses himself to the Ephesians in verse 13, and says in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Besides, admitting that these words are spoken of the saints and faithful at Ephesus and of them as a church; they are not said to be chosen as a church, or chosen to be one, but that they should be holy, and without blame; who might be called by the apostle chosen in Christ, or the elect of God, as the churches of Colosse and Thessalonica are from their visible profession of religion, and from the majority among them of such as were truly so. Wherefore these words still continue a proof of personal election. Add to this, the phrase of being chosen in Christ, is sometimes used of a single person, as in (Rom. 16:13). Once more, this text proves that this eternal election of particular persons to salvation is absolute unconditional, and irrespective of faith, holiness, good works, and perseverance, as the moving causes or conditions of it; all which are the fruits and effects of electing grace, but not causes and. conditions of it; since these are said to be chosen, not because they were holy, but that they should be so. And supposing that the apostle, is here speaking of the saints and faithful in Christ, they are not said to be chosen, as such, or because they were such: nor does it follow that they were so antecedent to their election, because they were so when the apostle wrote this epistle, any more than they were so antecedent to their redemption and effectual vocation; since these same persons are said to have redemption in Christ, and the mystery of God’s will made known unto them; which would imply this contradiction, that they were saints before they were called with an holy calling, and faithful before they were believers. And whereas it is said, that these persons “were not all infallibly predestinated to salvation, but only to the adoption of children” (v. 5). It may be replied that if they were infallibly predestinated to the adoption of children, which adoption does not so much design

the blessing itself prepared in divine predestination, or the grace received in effectual vocation, as he inheritance to which the saints are adopted, even the heavenly glory (see Rom. 8:23), then they were infallibly predestinated to salvation; and what short of salvation can be meant by being holy, and without blame before him in love? But that these words are spoken of such as were chosen out of the world to be God’s church and people, and not of persons, infallibly predestinated to salvation, is thought to be exceeding evident.

1. “From the exhortations and cautions given to these persons in this very epistle; such as in Ephesians 4:17; 5:6; and 6:13. All which are inconsistent with the character of the elect, that is, of persons infallibly predestinated to salvation.” I reply, That the exhortations not to walk as other Gentiles, and to take to themselves the whole armour of God, though the former seems rather a testimonial of their pious walk than an exhortation to it; these, I say, are so far from being inconsistent with their character as elect, that nothing could be more pertinent to them who were chosen to be holy, and which were designed, and doubtless were blessed, as means of their perseverance in grace and holiness. And as for the caution given them, that no man deceive them into the commission of sins there mentioned, with this very good reason, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience; nothing could be more proper to give them a just idea of the evil nature of sin, and the resentment of it by God, in order to their avoiding it; and yet no ways prejudice their absolute and infallible election to salvation, nor their faith and hope in it; seeing the wrath of God cometh not upon them, but upon the children of disobedience.

2. “From the apostle’s prediction” (Acts 20:29,39). But though the apostle prophesies, that after his departure either from them, or out of the world, grievous wolves should enter among them, and of themselves men should arise speaking perverse things; yet not that any of them who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, be such or act in this manner. For these words, as has been already shown, are not spoken of the members of the church at Ephesus; and were they spoken of them, the apostle in his prediction could never design any of the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, who then constituted the

church at Ephesus, but others that should creep in, and rise up among them in some time to come.

3. “From his advertisement to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 1:15; 2:18; 4:3, 4; 1 Timothy 1:19; 5:15; and 6:21, that some had or should turn away; all which is inconsistent with the character of the elect.” I reply that some of these passages do not seem to have any immediate relation to the members of the church at Ephesus, nor any of them to them who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; some of them speak not of men’s turning from the faith, but from the apostle slighting and neglecting him when he was in necessity; and others not of what was then done, but what should be hereafter; and though some then present instances of apostasy are mentioned, yet it is also affirmed, that nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. So that these instances carry in them nothing inconsistent with the character of the elect, that is, of persons infallibly predestinated to salvation, nor prove what they are produced for.

Section 5

Romans 8:28, 29.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called, kata proquesin, according to his purpose; for whom proegnw, he did foreknow, he also prowise, did predestinate.

These three words prognosiv, the foreknowledge, proquesiv, the purpose, and prowristmov, the fore-appointment God, are used in the New Testament to express the doctrine of election; which show that the predestination of men to eternal life, according to the foreknowledge and purpose of God, is a special, unchangeable, and eternal act of his grace. Though,

1. It is affirmed, “that none of them relate to particular or individual persons (save only when they are used of our blessed Lord and his sufferings for us), but only to churches and nations in the general.” But surely they do not relate to churches and nations in the general, in the text before us; for then it would unavoidably follow, that whole churches and nations in general are conformed to the image of Christ, justified and glorified, seeing these things are said of those whom God foreknows and predestinates; nor do the instances alleged prove the assertion; not Ephesians 1:5, 11, where the apostle speaks of

some whom God had proorisav, predestinated to the adoption of sons, and who were proorisqentev kata proquesin, predestinated according to the purpose of God, which passages regard not nations or churches, but particular persons, as has been shown under the foregoing section; nor 1 Peter 1:2, where some are said to be elect, not kata proquesin, according to the purpose, as Dr. Whitby very wrongly cites the words, kata prognwsin, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, which intend particular persons, and not nations or churches; for not to such does the apostle write, but to strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; nor Romans 9:11, where the h kat ekloghn tou qeou proquesiv, purpose of God according to election, concerns not the posterity of Jacob and Esau, but the single person of Jacob only, as has been made to appear in a preceding section.

2. It is said, “that this foreknowledge, purpose, or appointment, is only that of calling men to the knowledge of salvation by Christ Jesus.” But, if by calling men to the knowledge of salvation by Christ Jesus is only meant, as it seems to be by what follows, a bare external call by the ministry of the gospel; it must be denied that foreknowledge, purpose, and appointment, only regard this; seeing many are called according to the purpose of God, with an holy calling, such an one as is powerful, and effectual to their real sanctification, and which is secured to them by God’s foreknowledge, purpose, and appointment, though it is something distinct from them, being an act of God’s grace in time, whereas the other respects his knowledge and will from all eternity.

3. It is farther said, that “this calling is by God designed *epi touto*, that they who are thus called might obtain salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; all Christians being chosen to this end, that they might be holy, and unblameable before God in love. But hence it cannot reasonably be argued, that this election is no larger than the holiness designed to be produced by it.” I reply, that effectual calling by the grace of God, which is the calling according to purpose the Scriptures speak of, is not only designed by God, that such who are thus called might obtain salvation, but is really and infallibly succeeded to such an end; though it would be more proper, and more agreeable to the Scriptures to say,

that such obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, being chosen to it through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; which holiness is not only designed to be produced in consequence of electing grace, but is really produced. Nor is this election larger, nor it does not extend to more persons than holiness; just as many persons are made holy in time as were chosen to be so from eternity: holiness is a certain fruit and effect of election. The instances of God’s general goodness, the mission of the Baptist, and the outward ministry of the gospel of grace, not always having a good effect, upon men, are not to be put upon a level with the purposes and counsel of God, which shall certainly stand; for he will always do his pleasure. As to the end of the Messiah’s coming, to save his people from their sins, that ought not. to have been mentioned with the former instances; since that is fully answered, and has had its sure effect and accomplishment.

4. It is observed, that “as men were appointed to be called from the beginning, and the gospel is that hn prowrisen, which God had fore- appointed to be preached to them for that end (1 Cor. 2:7); so by virtue of this purpose and fore-appointment men were in time called by the gospel to faith in Christ, where they are said to be called according to purpose (Rom. 8:28; 2 Tim. 1:9). And the purpose of sending Christ to die for the remission of sins, being the ground of this calling, he is said to be given up to death, according to the foreknowledge of God and his fore-appointed course, (Acts 2:23). And they who slew him are said to have done only what his counsel had fore-appointed to be done” (Acts 4:28). Which observations are very just; but are so far from militating against the doctrine of absolute election, that they establish it; since, according to them, not only the end but the means, the death of Christ, the preaching of the gospel, and calling men by it, are appointed and fixed, which infallibly succeed to bring about the end, eternal salvation.

Section 6

John 6:37.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

These words contain three of the most glorious truths of the Gospel, namely, the doctrines of particular election, efficacious grace in conversion, and the final perseverance of the saints.

1st. The doctrine of particular election. The all, pan, design not the apostles only, who were given to Christ as such; for these did not all, in a spiritual manner, come to him, and believe in him, one of them was a devil; much less every individual of mankind. These are in some sense given to Christ, to subserve some ends of his mediatorial kingdom, and are subject to his power and control; yet do not come to him, believe in him (2 Thess. 3:8), all men have not faith; but the whole body of the elect, who, when they were chosen by God the Father, were given, and put into the hands of Christ, and therefore are said to be chosen in him (Eph. 1:4): he was chosen as head, and they as members of him. God made a covenant with him, as the head of the election of grace; in which he gave his chosen people to him as his seed, his spouse, his sheep, his portion and inheritance, and to be saved by him with an everlasting salvation. This was done before time; otherwise how could these persons be blessed with all spiritual blessings, and have grace given to them in Christ, before the world began; if their persons had not also been given to Christ, and secured in him? And though Christ here expresses this act of his Father’s in the present tense, all that the Father didwsi, giveth me, perhaps to express the continuance and unchangeableness of it; yet he expresses it in verse 39, in the past tense, all that dedwle, he hath given me, and respects an act of God, antecedent to coming to Christ, and believing in him; which is the faith of God’s elect, the fruit and effect of electing love; for as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed (Acts 13:48). Now to this sense of the words the following things are objected.

1. “That to be given of the Father, cannot signify to be absolutely chosen by God to eternal life; for then the Jews could not be reasonably accused for not coming to Christ, or not believing on him; much less could it be imputed to them as their great crime, that they would not come to him, or believe in him; since upon this supposition none could come but whom God had chosen.” I answer, There is a difference between coming to Christ, and believing on him as the Messiah, or giving a bare assent to him as such, and coming to him as a Saviour, or believing in him for life and salvation. The Jews might be reasonably accused for not believing on him as the Messiah, whom the Father had sent; since they had such a demonstration of his

being so from his character, miracles, and doctrines; though none but those among them, whom the Father had given to Christ, could believe in him to the saving of their souls.

And even not coming to Christ, and believing in him, in this spiritual manner, when he is revealed in the external ministry of the word, as God's way of salvation, is criminal and blameworthy, notwithstanding men's want of both will and power; since this does not arise from any decree of God, but from the corruption of nature through sin: and this being blameworthy, what follows upon it, or is the effect of it, must be so too.

2. "Hence it must follow (it is said) that Christ could not reasonably have invited them to come to him, or called them to believe in him, who were not given him of the Father; since he well knew they could never come." I reply, that Christ, as a preacher of the Gospel, and a minister of the circumcision, might exhort the Jews in general to labour for, that is use the means of obtaining the meat which endures unto eternal life; he might inform them, that this is the work of God, which he himself works, as well as commands, that they believe in him whom he hath sent; he might say to them, My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven, since he, who is the Bread of life, was come down from heaven, and was among them; and these things he might say unto them, that they might be saved, without any prejudice to the doctrine of particular election, and with a special view to the good of those among them his Father had given to him. And after all, it will not be easily proved, that Christ ever invited any to come in a spiritual way to him, and believe in him savingly, but such as the Father had given him. The words in Matthew 9:28, are directed, not to unconverted sinners, much less reprobates, but to such who were under a work of the Spirit of God, laboring, and being heavy laden, with a sense of sin, and breathing and seeking after spiritual rest.

3. It is further objected, that "were this so, the Jews must have just occasion to complain of Christ and of his doctrine, as being that which revealed to them their eternal and inevitable reprobation, and made it; not only necessary, but even equitable to reject him; because the blessings which he tendered belonged not to them in general, but only to some few, who by the

Father should be given to him." It is true, indeed, that the doctrine of Christ was oftentimes very expressive of God's special and distinguishing grace, which raised loud complaints, and even indignation (See Luke 4:25-28), in the Jews against him, but without any just occasion or reason; since the grace of God is his own, and he may do with it as he pleases, and give it to whom he will. And as for their destruction, it was wholly owing to themselves; nor had they any just occasion, by Christ's doctrine, to complain of any but themselves, who ought to have been received by them as the Messiah; by whom it was necessary and equitable he should be received, and not rejected, even by those who were not given of the Father to him. Though Christ did not offer or tender the blessings of grace to any, much less to them in general; but as a preacher of the Gospel, published the truths of it to all; and as the Mediator of the new covenant, dispensed the blessings of it to those who were (not should be) given him by the Father.

4. It is observed, that "Christ here gives a reason why they believed not, namely, Ye have seen, and believed not; because ye are not given to me of my Father. Now it is reasonable to conceive this reason should agree with all the other reasons assigned of their infidelity; which yet are manifestly founded, not on anything wanting on the part of God, but in themselves." But it should be observed, that Christ is not here giving a reason why some believed not, but rather why others did, and would believe, while some remained unbelievers in him, who saw his miracles; when others, even all those the Father had given to him, should come to him, and believe in him, and so never perish. But admitting that Christ here gives a reason of the infidelity of some; it is such an one in the sense of it contended for, that is agreeable to other reasons of infidelity elsewhere assigned; such as, Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God (John 8:47), do not belong to him, are none of his, neither chosen of him, nor born of him: and in another place, Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep (John 10:26), whom the Father has given me, and made my care and charge.

5. It is said, that "the true import of this phrase, To be given of the Father," is,

(1.) To be convinced by the miracles which God wrought by Christ, that he was the Messiah; which

appears from the description Christ gives of the persons the Father had given him (John 17:8), and from a like expression in the book of Deuteronomy. On which I observe, that as the miracles Christ wrought were by the Spirit of God, so the conviction which came by them, was by the same hand. Hence such who denied Jesus to be the Messiah, against such conviction, sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is unpardonable; whence it follows, that since conviction by miracles that Jesus was the Messiah, is not the act of the Father, but the work of the Spirit; therefore to be so convinced, is not the true import of this phrase. And admitting such conviction to be the act of God the Father; yet this is what is wrought internally in the consciences of men, and not an act towards them, or concerning them, as this of giving them to Christ is. Add to this, that some persons were convinced by miracles, that Jesus was the Messiah, who never came to him in a spiritual saving way, or believed in him to the saving of their souls, though they might give their assent to his being the Messiah; whereas these words declare, that all that the Father giveth to Christ shall come to him, and never be cast out, or perish. Nor does this sense of the phrase appear from the description of those who were given to Christ in John 17:8, which is spoken of Christ's disciples; for though these saw his miracles, and believed on him, and knew that he came from God, and was sent by him, yet this was not all: Christ manifested his Father's name, person and glory, mind and will, his love and grace, to these men which he gave him out of the world; which donation of them to him was made antecedent to their seeing of his miracles, and believing in him, to the manifestation of his Father's name unto them. The passage referred to in Deuteronomy (Deut. 29:3, 4.) is not all to the purpose; since it appears from thence that miracles may be wrought, and yet not be taken notice of, or men may not be convinced by them: which was the case of the Israelites, to whom. the Lord did not give an heart to perceive, and eyes to see. For to read the words with an interrogation, is contrary to the ancient and modern versions; and still more impertinent is this passage alleged to prove this to be the import of the phrase under consideration.

(2.) It is also urged, that such "are said to be given of the Father to Christ, who are so convinced by his

miracles of the truth of the promise or eternal life, as to expect to receive it by faith in him, and obedience to his doctrine; and were so affected with it, as to esteem it above all other things; and so were willing to apply themselves to those duties by which this life might be acquired, and to reject and quit those things which might obstruct them in the prosecution of it." This sense of the phrase not only makes eternal life to be acquired by men's duties, contrary to its being both a promise of grace, and a gift by it, but also makes this act of the Father's to consist in a revelation of the promise of eternal life, and in a conviction of the truth of it by the miracles of Christ; when such a revelation and conviction of the truth of it by the miracles of Christ; when such a revelation and conviction are to be ascribed not to the Father of Christ, but to the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, whose proper business it is to convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (Eph. 1:17; John 16:8); and so of the truth of the promise, and of their need of enjoyment of eternal life by Christ. And, supposing all this to be done by the Father, yet this regards something internal in the minds and consciences of men; and not an act concerning

them, as is the giving of them to Christ; which is no other than interesting him in them, putting them into his hands, and him into the possession of them, making them his care and charge; which was done when they were chosen in him unto eternal life before the foundation of the world. To this I take leave to add the two following observations; though they do not properly fall under this head of discourse. That,

2ndly The doctrine of efficacious grace in conversion is strongly asserted in these words; for such who are given in eternal election, and in the everlasting covenant of grace to Christ, shall in time come unto him, that is, believe in him. Which is not to be ascribed to any power and will in them, but to the power and grace of God; for there is not in them naturally, any will, desire, or inclination, to come to Christ for life; they had rather go any where else, than to him for it; for no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him (John 6:44). It is not here said, that such who are given to Christ have a power to come to him, or may come if they will; but they shall come, efficacious grace will bring them to Christ as poor perishing sinners, to venture on him for life and

salvation.

3rdly The doctrine of the saints' final perseverance may be established on this text; for such who come to Christ in a spiritual manner, and are brought to believe in him truly and really, he not only receives them kindly, but keeps and preserves them, and will not east them out. The words are very strongly and emphatically expressed in the original, ou mh ekbalw exw, I will not, not, or never, never, we render it in nowise cast out without, or cast out of doors. Christ will never cast them out of his affections, nor out of his arms, nor out of that family that is named of him, nor out of or from his church, which is his body, and of which they are

members, nor out of a state of justification and salvation; and therefore they shall never perish, but have everlasting life.

Section 7

Acts 8:48.

And as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed.

This act of ordination to eternal life, is no other than God's act of predestination of some persons to glory, or his eternal choice and appointment of them to life and salvation by Jesus Christ, which the scriptures frequently speak of. Now, seeing that as many as were ordained to eternal life, did in the times of the apostles, and do in all ages, believe in consequence thereof, election must be an act of God's grace, irrespective of faith, is not on account of the foresight of it; faith being not the cause, but a fruit and effect of it; and it must also relate to particular persons only; since all men have not faith, nor will enjoy eternal life; both which are firmly and infallibly secured by this act of grace to all those who are interested in it. To which is objected,

1. That these words speak not of preordination, much less of divine preordination. The persons spoken of are not said to be protetagmenoi foreordained, but tetagmenoi, ordained; and not said to be ordained by God, but were such who disposed themselves unto eternal life. To which I reply, that the words are rendered both by the Vulgate Latin, and by Arias Montanus, quotquot erant praeordinati, as many as were preordained. And it is certain, that they speak of an ordination to what is future, eternal life, and to that antecedent to believing, and why not then

before the foundation of the world, agreeable to other scriptures? especially since there was a promise (and therefore why not a purpose?) of eternal life made by God before the world began (Titus 1:2). And though here is no mention made of God, yet who can ordain to eternal life, or dispose of it but God? Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:23). And could these words be understood, even of an internal disposition in man unto eternal life; who can dispose unto it, any more than of it, but God? For we are not sufficient of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God (2 Cor. 3:5).

2. It is said, "That these words cannot signify that there is a fixed number of persons absolutely by God ordained to eternal life, is evident from this consideration, that if the reason why these men believed were only this, that they were men ordained to eternal life, the reason why the rest believed not can be this only, that they were not by God ordained to eternal life. And if so, what necessity could there be, that the word of God should be first preached to them? as we read verse 46. Was it only that their damnation might be the greater? This seems to charge the Lover of souls with the greatest cruelty; what could even their most malicious and enraged enemy do more? This is to make God as instrumental to their ruin as he very devil." To which may be replied, that though faith is a fruit of, and what follows upon, electing grace, and therefore is called the faith of God's elect, yet election is not the immediate cause of it, but the grace and power of God: hence it is said to be the gift, and of the operation of God (Eph. 2:8; Col. 2:12; Rom. 10:17), and comes by hearing the word, as an instrumental means. So, likewise, though unbelief follows upon God's denying his grace, which is agreeable to a previous determination, yet neither the denial of his grace, nor his determination to deny it, is the cause of unbelief, but the vitiosity and corruption of nature, and, therefore not to be charged on God's not ordaining them to eternal life, which is no instance either of cruelty or injustice, for then it would have been both cruel and unjust with God to deny and determine to deny his grace to fallen angels. And whereas it is asked, to what purpose was the word of God preached to them; was it for their greater damnation? I answer, that the preaching of the

Gospel to men is not to aggravate the damnation of any; for, though the condemnation of men becomes the greater by it, yet this is only accidental to it or owing to the wickedness of men, but is not the end and design of God in it, which is partly to gather out his elect from among them, and partly to leave the rest inexcusable, who would be apt to say, Had we heard of Christ, we should have embraced him; had the Gospel been preached to us, as unto others, we had believed, even as they.

3. It is observed, that "the apostle gives this reason why he turned from the Jews to the Gentiles, because the Jews thrust away, the word of God from them, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life (v. 46). Whereas, according to this supposition, that could be no sufficient reason; for it was only they among the Jews, who were not ordained to eternal life, that refused to believe and obey the word of God; and as many among the Gentiles, who were not thus ordained, must necessarily do the same." I reply, that the reason was a sufficient one; for these Jews, as a body of men, rejected the Gospel; not one gave heed unto it; wherefore the apostles rightly concluded, that God had no more work for them to do among them; that there were no more of his elect to be gathered out from them, and therefore, they turned to the Gentiles, as the Lord had commanded them; expecting and believing that God would take out of them, through their ministry, a people for his name and glory. And it is easy to observe, that this was the rule of their conduct among the Gentiles; for, according as they were directed by the Spirit of God, or were able to make a judgment, whether God had a people to be called by grace or not, they continued, or departed, or turned aside. Thus they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost, at a certain time, to preach the word of God in Asia; and when they assayed to go into Bithynia, the Spirit suffered them not; and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas (Acts 16:6-10), where by a vision, they were directed to Macedonia; from whence they assuredly gathered, that the Lord had called them to preach the Gospel to them, and that some persons were to be converted there, and not in the other places at that time where they were not permitted to go. The apostle Paul, when he went to Corinth, first preached among the Jews; but they opposing, themselves, and blaspheming, he turned to the Gentiles, and had

this encouragement from the Lord to continue in his ministrations to them, from this consideration (Acts 18:10), that he had much people in that city.

4. Whereas the apostle preached the doctrines of remission of sins, and justification to the Jews, and exhorted them to beware, lest what was spoken of in the prophets should come upon them. It is asked, "Could God have determined that these very persons should not believe to life eternal, and yet commission his apostles to tell them these things? Could it be revealed to St. Paul that they could not believe to life eternal, as being not by God ordained to it; and yet would he so passionately exhort them to that faith in Jesus which he well knew, by virtue of this revelation, belonged not to them, nor could they possibly exert?" But who says that God had determined they should not believe, or that it was revealed to St. Paul that they could not believe to life eternal, as being not by God ordained to it? The apostle Paul, with the rest of the apostles, had a commission to preach the gospel to all nations, beginning with the Jews, which, as it was designed to gather in the elect of God among them, so it was faithfully executed by them. They preached these doctrines of grace promiscuously to all, not knowing who were ordained to eternal life and who were not, or who would believe and who would not; the judgment they were able to form in anywise of these things, did not arise from any special or extraordinary revelation, but from the success of their ministry. Thus, from the Jews rejecting the gospel, and thereby judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life, they might justly fear they were left of God, and did not belong to him, and might rightly conclude that many among the Gentiles were ordained to eternal life, from their believing in Christ; and, therefore, in perfect consistence both with the design of God and the nature of their commission, could, and did preach and propose these things to them.

5. It is urged, that "the words will very well admit of this sense, as many as were disposed for eternal life believed." Which sense is pleaded for from the use of the word tetagmenov, in this very book of the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Son of Sirach, from some passages in Philo the Jew, from Simplicius on Epictetus, and from the opposition in the context between the indisposed Jews and the disposed Gentiles. To which I reply, that the place referred to

in this book is no proof of such a sense of the word; for it is not the same word in the same simple form with this here that is there used, but as in composition with the preposition dia; it is not tetagmenov, but diatetagmenov; nor does that signify disposition of mind, but determination and fore-appointment. The words are these (Acts 20:13). We went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul, outw gar hn diatetagmenov , for so had he appointed, not as Dr. Whitby renders it, for so was he disposed: the disposition of his mind is expressed by the following phrase, minding himself to go afoot. It is plain that it was a determined case, which had been concerted and agreed upon between Paul and his associates, that they should go with the ship to Assos, and he would go afoot thither, where they should take him in; so that this place, instead of making for, makes against the sense of the word contended for. The Son of Sirach says, (Eccl. 10:1) that the government, or principality of a wise man, is tetagmenh, which the Vulgate Latin renders stabilis erit, shall be stable or firm. The reason is, because it is ordained by God; for, as the apostle Paul says (Rom. 13:1), the powers that be are tetagmenai, ordained by God, which is an instance of the use of the word in favor of our sense of it. The passages out of Philo are no proof of the word signifying an internal disposition of mind, being allusions to the marshalling and ordering of persons in a military form, which is the frequent use of tattw, in Xenophon and other writers. Though Simplicius interprets tetagmenov upo qeou, in Epictetus, by protrepomenov upo qeou, yet both the one and the other phrase signify the force and power of the fatal decree, ordaining things; which is made use of as an argument with the philosopher, why he should choose and retain them. For in another place, says Epictetus, Lead me, O Jupiter, and thou fate, opoi poq umin eimi diatetagmenov whither I am by you appointed, and I will cheerfully follow. So wra tetagmenh, is used by him for a stated hour, just as hmera tetagmenh is by Porphyry, for a fixed day, or appointed time. But, after all, to settle the true sense of the word in the text, it will be proper to inquire in what sense it is used by the historian Luke, in this book of the Acts of the Apostles, where we shall always find it signifies determination and appointment, and not disposition of mind. So in Acts 15:9, When therefore Paul and

Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, etaxan, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem. Again, in Acts 22:10, The Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus, and there it shall be told thee of all things which, tetatkai, are appointed for thee to do. Once more, in Acts 28:23, And when taxamenoi autw hmeran, they had appointed him a day, there came many to him. By these instances we may judge of the sense and translation of our text. Besides, both the ancient and modern versions agree in favoring the translation and sense we contend for; nor does the opposition in the context favor the other; for the comparison is not between the blaspheming Jews and the believing Gentiles, but between one part of the Gentiles and the other; the one believing, and the other not; the one being ordained unto eternal life, and the other not ordained to it. Add to this, that the phrase of being disposed to, or for eternal life, is a very unusual, if not a very improper, and an inaccurate one. Men are said to be disposed to a habit or an action, as to vice or virtue; but not to reward or punishment, as to heaven or hell. Nor does it appear that these Gentiles had any good dispositions to eternal life, antecedent to their believing; for, though they are said, in verse 49, to beseech the apostles to preach the same things to them the next sabbath, yet the words may be rendered more agreeable to the order in which they lie in the original text thus: They, that is, the apostles, parekaloun ta eqnh, besought the Gentiles, that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath; that is, they entreated them that they would come and hear them again at such a time. And as for their being glad, and glorifying the word of the Lord, it is not evident that it was before their believing; and suppose it was, this has been found in persons who have had no true, real, inward dispositions to spiritual things, as in many of our Lord's hearers; and, indeed, there are no such dispositions in men previous to faith in Christ, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Before believing, men are dead in trespasses and sins, given up unto them, live in them, and fulfill the lusts of the flesh, and are insufficient either to think well or do well. Besides, admitting that there are in some persons good dispositions to eternal life, previous to faith in Christ; and that desiring eternal life, and seeking after it, be accounted such; yet these may be, where faith

does not follow. The young man in the Gospel had as many dispositions of this sort, perhaps, as ever any had, who were destitute of faith; and yet was so far from believing in Christ, that he went away from him sorrowful. As many, therefore, as are so disposed unto eternal life do not always believe, faith does not always follow such dispositions. And, after all, one would have thought that the Jews themselves, who were externally religious, and were looking for the Messiah, though they did not believe that Jesus was the Christ; and especially the devout and honorable women, were more disposed unto eternal life than the ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles; and yet the latter believed, and the former did not. It follows, then, that their faith did not arise from previous dispositions to eternal life, but was the fruit and effect of divine ordination.

6. Another sense which these words are said to be capable of, is, that as many as were well disposed, believed unto eternal life. But it has been already proved, that tetagmenoi, does not signify well disposed; and as for joining the phrase eternal life, to the word episteusan, believed; that stands at too great a distance to admit of such a construction: and should it be allowed, it would make no considerable alteration in the sense of the text; which would be read thus, as many as were ordained, believed unto eternal life; that is, as many as were chosen of God, and appointed by him to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ, believed in him to the saving of their souls. Let the words be placed in construction either way, the sense is the same.

Section 8

Romans 8:29, 30.

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

The meaning of these words is, that those whom God foreknew, or loved with an everlasting love, he predestinated to conformity to his Son; which conformity begins in grace, and will be finished in glory; and whom he has thus predestinated to grace and glory, he in time calls unto both; and whom he calls by his powerful and efficacious grace, he

justifies by the righteousness of his Son, revealed to them by his Spirit, and received by faith; and whom he justifies, he will glorify, with the enjoyment of himself to all eternity. Whence it follows, that those, and none but those who are called, justified, and are loved by God with an everlasting love, and appointed unto salvation by Christ: and that all those, and none but those who are foreknown, or loved by God with a special love, and are predetermined to grace and glory, shall certainly be called with a holy calling, be completely justified by Christ's righteousness, and at last be eternally glorified. So that these words confirm the doctrine of the eternal predestination, or election of particular persons to salvation. Now to set aside this sense of the words, and the argument upon it in favor of this doctrine, the Arminians have given us another sense of them, which is this: that those whom God foresaw would be true lovers of him, and devoted to his service, and whom he approved of as persons fit to be received into his favor, he fore-appointed to be like to his Son in sufferings; and whom he thus predestinated, he in due time called to suffer; and whom he thus called to suffer, upon their faith and patience under their sufferings, he approved of as sincere and faithful servants; and whom he justified or approved of, he gave them a glorious reward of all their sufferings; or he made them glorious under sufferings by the Spirit of glory and of God resting on them; or by giving them his Holy Spirit, to enable them to work the greatest miracles. But,

1. The foreknowledge here spoken of, is not of men's works or graces, as the cause and reason of their predestination; since these are fruits and effects of it, and what follow from it; and therefore can never be the causes of it. It is true that God foreknew who would believe and love him, and be devoted to him; he having determined to bestow these graces on them, and ordained or prepared good works for them, that they should walk in them. The text does not say, that those whom God foreknew would be lovers of him, or fit for his kingdom, or devoted for his service, he predestinated; these are additions to it, and neither expressed nor implied in it; it only says, whom he foreknew; and which is owned to relate to God's affectionate knowledge of these persons, as his chosen generation, his peculiar people:" words of knowledge being often expressive of affection (Ps. 1:6; Jer. 1:5; 2

Tim. 2:7; Matthew 7:23). And it may be justly added, that it relates to God's affectionate knowledge of them from all eternity: since they were so early his chosen generation, and peculiar people, and as early loved by him with an everlasting love; to which, and to which alone, their predestination, or election to eternal life, is owing, and is the true meaning of the phrase here; whom God thus foreknow, or affectionately loved before the world began, them he predetermined, or fore-appointed, to everlasting happiness. Hence,

2. The predestination of these persons to be conformed to the image of Christ, is not a fore-appointment of them to be like him in sufferings: for though the saints are appointed unto sufferings, and sufferings or afflictions are appointed them; and though there is some likeness between Christ the head and the members of his body in suffering; yet this cannot be intended here: since the image of Christ, to which they are predestinated to be conformed, always designs something great and glorious, and not mean and abject; it is the image of the heavenly, in opposition to the image of the earthly; and is no other than the glory of the Lord, into which the saints are changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (1 Cor. 15:47; 2 Cor. 3:18). Besides, Christ is never said to be the first-born with respect to afflictions, but with respect to preeminence, honor, and glory (see Ps. 89:28; Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). This conformity to the image of Christ, to which they are predestinated who are loved by God, seems rather to be a spiritual likeness to Christ, which is begun in this world upon believers, and will be finished in the other; when they shall be like him both in soul and body, as perfectly as they will be capable of; when the great ends of predestinating grace will be fully answered upon them; or rather, particularly, this conformity is to be understood of a likeness to the filiation of Christ, or a likeness to the image of Christ as the Son of God; for though the saints are not in the same class of sonship with Christ, yet their, sonship bears some resemblance to his; as he is the Son of God by nature, they are the sons of God by grace; as he is the dear Son of God, they are the dear children of God; as where he is the first-born among many brethren, they are the first-born with respect to the angels; and as he has an inheritance, being heir of all things, so have they, being heirs of God,. And joint-

heirs with Christ;. which likeness of sonship will more fully appear hereafter; for though now are we the sons of God, it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2). This sense of the words is strengthened by a parallel place (Eph. 1:5), Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Besides, it is owned, that "according to the received interpretation of the ancient Fathers, the import of these words is this; that whom God foreknew, he predetermined to render conformable to the image of his Son, that is, to be like him in glory;" or as in another place "he predestinated, or fore-appointed them to be conformed to the image of his Son, their elder brother; that is, to be sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ; and the author I am concerned with, after he had considered the text in every light: "conceives the sense of it to be this; those whom he hath so foreknown as to make them his elect, and peculiar people; for them he hath designed the choicest blessings, even the adoption of sons, and their being co-heirs with Christ." Wherefore,

3. The calling here intended, is not of persons to suffering in this life: for though such who are called by grace, are generally an afflicted people, they meet with many afflictions between their call to glory, and the enjoyment of it; yet they are not properly called to them, but to faith and patience under them: which is the meaning of the words of the apostle; If when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called (1 Pet. 2:20, 21), that, is, not so much to sufferings, as to patience under them. And when in other places the saints are said to be called, it is either to grace or glory; thus they are called unto marvelous light, unto liberty, to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ, to peace and holiness, to a kingdom and glory, even to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:9; Gal. 5:13; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 1:7; Col. 3:15; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 2:14); and here, in the context, they are said to be (Rom. 8:28) called according to his purpose; which is the same with being called with an holy calling, according to the grace which was given us in Christ before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). Besides, all that are called to afflictions, or sufferings, are not justified and glorified; as for instance, the young man

in the Gospel, to whom Christ said, Take up the cross and follow me, who was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: and all such professors, who, when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by are offended (Mark 10:21, 22; Matthew 13:21). Add to this, that according to the received interpretation of the ancient fathers, the sense of the phrase is, that "whom God fore-appointed to be the sons of God, the method he used to bring them to this adoption was this; to call them to the faith of Christ; or as elsewhere expressed, "them also, in due time, he called to the salvation promised and offered in the gospel." And our author himself, at last conceives this to be the sense of it: "that in order to this adoption designed for them, it is that he hath chosen them out of the world to be his church, an holy nation, and peculiar people to himself." And therefore,

4. When God is said to have justified the persons whom he foreknew, predestinated, and called; the meaning is not, that he approved of them as sincere and faithful, on the account of their faith and patience in suffering: for though God does approve of, and is well pleased with the faith and patience of his people under afflictions, yet no instance can be produced of the use of the word in this sense: not James 2:21, 25, where Abraham and Rahab are said to be justified by works; the meaning of which is, not that they were approved of by Christ, or accepted by him on account of their works, but that their faith, was evidenced to the world, their cause vindicated, and they cleared by them from all false charges and imputations: nor Matthew 11:19, where wisdom is said to be justified of her children; that is, not barely approved of by them, but vindicated, and acquitted from the charge of libertinism: nor Matthew 12:37, where it is said, by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou I shalt be condemned; since justification stands directly opposite to condemnation, and is used in a forensic sense, as it is throughout this epistle to the Romans, and in this very chapter and context. Besides, according to the above- mentioned received interpretation of the ancient fathers, the sense of the expression is, that "whom God in due time called, and they believing in Christ upon this call, he justified them from, and remitted all their past sins. And according to our author's last conception of it, the meaning is, "he hath justified them, or given them a full remission

of their sins." Hence,

5. The glorification of them is not a making them glorious under sufferings; much less by them the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit to enable them to work miracles. The word is never used in this sense: not in 2 Corinthians 3:8-11, where the Gospel ministration is said to be en doxh in glory; but not on the account of the extraordinary gifts and miracles of the Holy Ghost, but because it is the ministration of the spirit of righteousness, and of life, in opposition to the law, the ministration of condemnation and death; and because it remains when the law is done away; and is attended with evidence, clearness, and perspicuity, when the legal dispensation had a great deal of darkness and obscurity in it: nor John 17:29, where our Lord says, The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; which is not to be understood of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit; since the words are spoken not of the apostles only, but of all them that should believe in Christ through their word, (v. 20), but rather of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and the excellent truths and doctrines of it; (see v. 8): nor Acts 3:13, where it is said, that God hath glorified his Son Jesus Christ; which was done, not by bestowing the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit on him, nor merely the miracle then wrought, by the raising him from the dead (v. 15); the thing he prayed for under this expression (John 17:1), and firmly believed (John 13:31, 32). Moreover, God is never said to glorify his people in this way. It is true, indeed, miracles were wrought, that the Son of God might be glorified (John 11:5). And in this way the Father did honor the Son (John 8:54). And Christ was glorified of all on this account (Luke 4:15). And the Spirit of God now glorifies Christ by receiving of his, and showing them to his people (John 16:15). But God is never said to glorify them by these gifts. Indeed some of the members of Christ's body are honored with gifts and graces more than others (1 Cor. 12:26). And should it be allowed, that extraordinary gifts are intended in this last-cited passage; yet this cannot be the meaning of the word here: since the apostle is speaking not of particular persons, but of all the saints in general, who were the sons and heirs of God, verse 17; had received the first-fruits of the Spirit, and were waiting for the adoption (v. 23); all who loved God, and were his called according to his purpose (v. 28); even all God's elect

(v. 33). Now all these are not glorified in this sense; besides, were this the meaning of the phrase, then none would be predestinated, called, and justified, but such as have the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit: and on the other hand, none would have the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit but such as are predestinated, called, and justified: whereas, it is certain, that many might have, and had in the apostles' days, such gifts, and yet were destitute of the grace of God. It is much more agreeable to the context, and to the analogy of faith, to understand this phrase of eternal glory; since it is what the apostle speaks of in verse 17, 18, 21, 23, and is what God's elect are predestinated and called unto; and what the righteousness of Christ, by which they are justified, gives them a right and title to; and which they shall certainly enjoy. The main objection to this sense of the phrase is, "That when the apostle speaks of our final justification (glorification it should be) in this chapter, he still speaks of it as a thing future; saying, We shall be glorified with him, (vv. 17, 18, 21). Whereas here he speaks of it as a thing past; saying, Whom he hath justified, them he hath also glorified." To which may be replied, Not to insist upon the change of tense, the past for the future, which is no unusual thing in scripture; this is strictly true of that part of the body of God's elect, who are already in heaven, called the family in heaven, and the things in heaven; who through faith and patience have inherited the promises (Eph. 3:15; Col. 1:20; Heb. 6:12), and is in some sense true also of the other part on earth, who are called and justified; since they are made glorious both by the robe of Christ's righteousness put upon them, and by the grace of Christ wrought in them; which makes them all glorious within, and is the beginning of eternal glory; for a saving knowledge of God in Christ is life eternal. Nor ought this sense of the phrase to be objected to by our opponents; seeing if such may be said to be glorified, who had the gifts of working miracles, much more may they be said to be so, who have the true grace of the Spirit, which is superior to all other gifts. Besides, God's elect may be said to be glorified, because of the certainty of their glorification. It is a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; which Christ has gone afresh to prepare by his presence and mediation in our nature; which he is in the possession of on the behalf of his people, and which is ascertained to their faith

and hope: hence they are said to be saved by hope, and by grace through faith (Rom. 8:24; Eph. 2:8.) Add to this, that they are in the same sense glorified in Christ, their representative head; in which they are said to be raised together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in him (Eph. 2:6).

Section 9

2 Timothy 2:19.

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

If the Lord knows them that are his, in distinction from others who are not his, and loves them with a special, peculiar, and everlasting love; then there is a select number, whom God has chosen to be his by a firm, immutable, and unalterable act of his grace, which stands sure and inviolable. But, the Lord knows them that are his: therefore, in answer to this argument,

1. It is observed, "That by the foundation of God, we are to understand the doctrine of the resurrection; which is the foundation of the church (Matthew 16:18); of our faith and hope (1 Cor. 15:19; 1 Thess. 4:13, 14), styled to qemelon, the foundation of the doctrine of the resurrection (Heb. 6:1, 2); the faithful saying, verse 11, by denying of which the Christian faith is overturned (v. 18), to which fundamental doctrine God hath set this seal, for confirmation of it, The Lord knoweth them that are his; that is, loveth and approveth of them, so as to reward them at the resurrection." To which may be replied, that it will easily be granted that the doctrine of the future resurrection of the dead is spoken of in the context: nor will it be denied, that it was a fundamental article a the Jewish creed (Heb. 6:1, 2); or of the Christian faith (1 Cor. 15:13, 14, 19). though it does not seem to be the foundation of the church (Matthew 16:18), but the doctrine of Christ's deity and sonship, owned by Peter, or rather the person of Christ himself, whom he confessed: nor does it seem to be intended here; seeing the seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his, which regards particular, persons, cannot well agree with it; since the resurrection will be both of the just and unjust. And if only the doctrine of the resurrection to eternal life is intended; and the meaning is, that God stands so kindly affected to his people, his sheep, whom he has given to Christ, that though they die, he will raise them up to eternal life; this is so far

from militating against, that it rather establishes the doctrine of absolute election. Besides, the foundation of God standing sure, here spoken of, is opposed not to the error and heresy of Hymeneus and Philetus; but to the persons of them, and others, who through them apostatized from the faith: so that by the foundation of God, is to be understood the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. 3:15.) which holds it forth, supports, and maintains it; even the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven (Heb. 12:23); the whole body of the elect; that church which is built upon a rock, the immoveable foundation, Jesus Christ, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail (Matthew 16:18); who every one of them are brought in time to possess, and exercise the faith which is (Heb. 11:1), the substance of things hoped for, and will never fail: to these persons this seal is annexed, the Lord knoweth them that are his, he knows whom he has chosen, he loves them with a peculiar affection, takes care of them, provides for them, protects them, so as that they shall never perish.

2. It is also observed, "That these words are taken from Numbers 16:5, where, as it is declared, that God knoweth them that are his, that are separated to his service, and will maintain their cause and calling, against all opposers; so here, that God will own his apostles and ministers, against all those that set up against them." Be it so, that the apostle refers to the place cited; yet as there Moses speaks of persons, whom God had chosen to be priests, whom he would stand by and preserve, whilst the earth swallowed up their opposers, from whose tents the Israelites were bid to depart; so here the apostle speaks of a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, who were made kings and priests: titles under the gospel-dispensation, not peculiar to ministers, but common to them, with all the saints; who are opposed not only to Hymeneus and Philetus, but to those whose faith was subverted by them; and who should stand, though they fell, being under the special notice and care of God; and are therefore bid to depart from apostates, their doctrines, and practices; let every one, not only ministers, but all that name the name of Christ, depart from iniquity, as an evidence of their election, and the means of their final perseverance. The simile the apostle uses in verses 20, 21, of vessels of gold and silver, and

also of wood and of earth, some being to honour, and some to dishonor, is much the same with that he uses in Romans 9:22, 23, and manifestly shows that he is speaking of elect persons, in opposition to others. Nor does Theodoret's descant upon these words, mentioned by our author, contradict the doctrine of absolute election, when he says, God foreknoweth both them that believe, and those who openly fight against the truth.

Section 10

Romans 5:19.

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.

The reason why this text comes to be considered in this discourse of election is, because it is said, that the "foundation of this decree is laid in the sin of Adam, imputed by God's arbitrary will to his posterity." Though this author must needs have known, that the Supralapsarians especially consider the decree of election as antecedent to and irrespective of the fall of Adam; and therefore the sin of Adam, and the imputation of it to his posterity could not be the foundation of such a decree which has no other foundation than the sovereign will and pleasure of God. However, I shall consider the objections made to this doctrine.

1st. As to the objections made against "Adam's sin being every man's personal sin and consented to by every man's personal will; because it is said, in Adam there was not only the will of one singular man but the universal will of all mankind, and of every, singular person," I have no concern with; let such who fall in with these assertions defend them: for I must own, that if Adam's sin is every man's personal sin, then every man must have personally existed in Adam, and personally sinned in him; and then this sin being personal with respect to them, must also be actual; and so the distinction between original and actual sin must drop. Moreover, if this is every man's personal sin, it must be their own; and then they are not made sinners by another, but by their own disobedience; and not by the sin of one, but by the sin of many. Besides, this seems repugnant to the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity: since, if it is their personal sin, then not theirs by imputation, in the sense we use the word, and which is the doctrine we undertake to defend. But,

2ndly It is said, that it “cannot truly be affirmed that we all sinned in Adam, and by his disobedience were made sinners; because his sin and disobedience was, by God’s arbitrary will, imputed to us. For,

1. “The Scripture nowhere maketh mention of anything of another’s imputed to any man for reward or guilt, but only of some personal thing or action of his own.” To which I reply, that the imputation of Adam’s sin is not to be placed to the mere arbitrary will of God; but the ground and foundation of it is the law, or covenant of works, made with Adam, and broken by him, as the federal head of his posterity: the constitution and tenor of which was, that what, he did as such, either in a way of sin, or righteousness, should be imputed to his posterity. And when we use the word imputation, we use it not in a moral sense, as when a man’s own personal action, good or bad, is accounted to him: but in a forensic sense, as when the debts of one man are in a legal way transferred, and placed to the account of another. And in this sense, the Scripture makes mention of the things of one imputed to another for guilt, or for obligation to payment in punishment; as when Paul said (Philemon 1:18) to Philemon, concerning Onesimus, if he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee anything, put that on my account, touto emoi ellogoi, let that be imputed to me; in this sense God laid on Christ, made to meet upon him, and imputed to him, the iniquity of us all; and he, by imputation was made sin for us: and on the other hand God imputeth to us his righteousness, without any consideration of our works (Isa. 53:6; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 4:6).

2. It, is argued, “either this imputation makes the sin of Adam truly ours, or it does not; if it does not, how can we be made sinners by it? if it does, then death came upon us for our sin; and so not for the sin of one, but for the sin of all.” I answer, the imputation of Adam’s sin makes it truly ours in the same sense as the imputation of Christ’s righteousness makes that truly ours. Now the imputation of Christ’s obedience and righteousness, though it makes it truly ours, gives us an interest in it, so as that we have the benefit of it, and it is styled the righteousness of the saints; yet it does not make Christ’s obedience our act, nor so ours, but, that it is still another’s, and distinct from our righteousness, and is in Christ as its proper subject and author, though put upon us, and imputed to us.

So the imputation of Adam’s sin, though it makes it truly ours, so that we are involved in the guilt; and punishment of it through the federal relation he stood in to us; yet it does not make it our act, or so ours, but, that it is his act, and is distinct from our actual transgressions, and is only ours by imputation; and so we are mane sinners by, and death comes upon us for, not our sin, nor the sin of all, but of one.

3. It is asked, “Whether this imputation made the posterity of Adam sinners, or whether it found them so before? If the latter, it was plainly needless, for they might have been condemned to death without it; if the former, then, since this imputation is the act of God, and not of man, it, plainly follows that God must be the author of this sin.” I reply, that though this act makes them sinners, yet not inherently, only imputatively; it puts sin upon them, and reckons it to them, but does not put any sin in them. And though this imputation is God’s act, it does not follow that therefore he is the author of this sin: the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is God’s act, yet not he but Christ is the author of that righteousness; so, though the imputation of Adam’s sin to his posterity is God’s act, yet not God but Adam is the author of the sin. And whereas it is insinuated, that this “imputation must be false, as charging them with sin whom he did not find sinners;” it should be observed, what has been already said, that; imputation is to be taken not in a moral but forensic sense; and does not imply any false measure taken, or wrong judgment passed, any more than when the debts of one man are by agreement reckoned to another, who previous to that imputation owed the creditor nothing And whereas it is further urged, that “if Adam’s sin becomes ours only by imputation it deserves condemnation only by the same to which action of God it is to be ascribed whence, according to this opinion, man’s destruction must be of God.” It may be replied, that as the placing of one man’s debt to another’s account by agreement which is no criminal action, is not that for which the other man is cast into prison and suffers, but the debt itself; so it is not the imputation of Adam’s sin, but the sin imputed, for which condemnation and death passed upon men.

4. It is observed, that “we are not guilt of any other sin of Adam; therefore we are not guilty of the first sin of Adam.” But this does not follow, the reason

for the one and the other not being the same: when Adam committed his first sin, he stood as a federal head to his posterity, which is the true reason of their being involved in it; but upon his commission of this sin, he ceased to stand in this relation, the covenant was broken, and it was hereafter impossible for him to perform sinless obedience, and in that way convey life to his offspring. He ceasing to be their covenant-head, they have no farther concern with him, or what he did afterwards; hence neither his after sins, nor his repentance, nor good works, are imputed to them; and this may be an answer to such queries, why “should they be charged only with his first, and not with his following transgressions? or, why should his guilt rather be imputed to them than his repentance?” But,

3rdly The covenant, or “compact made with Adam, is represented as forged, exceeding cruel, and plainly inconsistent with the justice, wisdom, and goodness of our gracious God; and invented to excuse him from cruelty, in subjecting myriads of men and infants to the most direful lasting torments, which without this imaginary pact he could not with the least pretense of justice do.” That Adam was a covenant-head to his posterity may be proved, which he could not be if there was no covenant subsisting; besides, those words of God to Adam (Gen. 2:15, 17). Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, are expressive of a covenant. The threatening of death in a case of disobedience implied and included a promise of life in case of obedience. This being proposed to Adam, and he consenting to it, formally constituted a covenant; in which he was considered not as a private but public person, having all his posterity in his loins. This compact therefore is no forgery; and where is the cruelty of it? since had Adam stood, his posterity had been partakers of his righteousness, and of all the benefits and advantages arising from it. Yes, but then it is said, his righteousness was a defective one, liable to be lost, either afterwards by himself, or some one of his posterity, which would have put them in the same sad case they are now. But why should it be thought that Adam’s righteousness would have been any more defective than that of the angels? Why may it not as well be concluded, that has Adam stood upon the trial of his obedience, that

he and his posterity would have been secured from after-falling, or been made impeccable as the angels are? And where is the inconsistency of this compact with the justice, wisdom, and goodness of God. Did not God make a covenant with Abraham, and by it obliged his posterity in future ages to the observance of circumcision? Is it any unusual thing, or an unjust, or an unwise action, for men to make covenants, and bind their children unborn to the performance of them. Has it not been reckoned just both with God and men, that in some cases children should be punished for their parents’ sins? Does not God say, that he will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him? (Ex. 20:5). Does not the treason of a nobleman taint his blood, and involve his posterity, until restored? Is not such a procedure according to the law of nature and nations, and justified by the sense and practice of mankind?

4thly. It is said, that the words of the apostle, by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, must have a metonymical sense; and the meaning is, that they were obnoxious to death for his sin, or that they become sinners by a metonymy of the effect, by suffering the punishment God had threatened to Adam for it. But this is to depart from the proper signification of the phrase; no instance can be produced of the apostle’s using it in this sense, either in the context or elsewhere: the word amartwloi always signifies persons guilty of a fault, and only obnoxious to death for that fault. This sense of the words is contrary to the apostle’s scope and design, which is, to give an account of the original of sin, and how condemnation and death came upon men through Adam’s sin, and their being made sinners by it, is contrary to the distinction he all along makes between sin and death, the one being the cause, the other the effect, and is to be disproved by the sense of the opposite part of the text, by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. The active obedience of Christ is opposed to Adam’s act of disobedience; the righteous are opposed to sinners; and a being made righteous by the one, is opposed to a being made sinners by the other. Now, by the rule of opposition, as to be made righteous by Christ’s obedience, is to be formally constituted and accounted so for the sake of his obedience and righteousness; and, in consequence of it, such become

partakers of freedom from condemnation and death. So to be made sinners by Adam's disobedience, is to be formally constituted and esteemed sinners on the account of it; and, in consequence thereof, become obnoxious to condemnation and death. Nor will the parallel of Christ bearing our sins, and being made sin for us, at all help this sense of the words; since Christ bore our sins, and was made sin for us, not barely by bearing and suffering the punishment of sins, but by the imputation of them to him; in consequence of which imputation he was made a curse, and bore and suffered the punishment due to sin. And, after all, it will not be easy to reconcile this with the justice of God, that men should be obnoxious to death for Adam's sin, and suffer the punishment threatened him, when they are no ways chargeable with the guilt of it; what reason can be given, why they should suffer death for that sin of which they are in no sense guilty?

CHAPTER III

OF REDEMPTION

The following sections contain a vindication of some arguments taken from passages of Scripture in favour of particular redemption, which Dr. Whitby calls objections to the universal scheme, and which he attempts to answer in the first, second, and fifth chapters of his discourse, concerning the extent of Christ's redemption; to which he premises the state of the question, by showing what limitations and restrictions of our Lord's general redemption he cannot admit of, and in what sense they who maintain that doctrine assert it. The distinctions of Christ's dying sufficiently for all, but intentionally only for the elect, and for all if they will believe and repent, but moreover for the elect, to procure faith and repentance for them, he rejects; and which, for my own part, I can no more admit of than himself. He adds positively, that Christ died equally for all, for Judas as for Peter, though not absolutely, but conditionally, or so as that they should be made partakers of the blessings of his salutary passion, upon condition of their faith, repentance, and sincere obedience to the laws of the new covenant; but did not purchase actual pardon or reconciliation for all men, only put all men, by his death, in a capacity of being justified and pardoned upon their conversion and faith. On the other hand, I firmly believe that Christ died for all the elect of God,

and them only; that, by his death, he has cured for them actual pardon, reconciliation and salvation; and, that in consequence of the absolute and unconditional covenant of grace being ratified and confirmed by his blood, faith and repentance are bestowed upon and wrought in these persons, not as conditions but blessings of that covenant; in which way they are brought to the full enjoyment of that salvation Christ has obtained for them. Which is what I undertake to vindicate.

Section 1

Matthew 20:28.

Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

These words not only express the great blessing of redemption, and the Author of it, the Son of man, a character of the Messiah, and the manner of his obtaining it, by giving his life, his own life, a ransom, a redemption price for, in the room and stead of the persons redeemed by him, but also point out the persons ransomed, who are said to be many, not all, and so may be considered as a proof of particular redemption; since, as our opponents themselves allow, that though "all men certainly are many, yet many are not necessarily all." To which the following things are objected.

1st. That "since what is, in some few places, said of many, is not only in more, but in the same places said of all, it is certain that Christ cannot be said to die for many exclusively of all." To which I reply: that we do not say Christ died for many exclusive of all, for then he must die for none; but that he died for many exclusive of some; nor are the places fewer in which he is said to die for many, than those which say he died for all; nor is it true, that what is in some places said of many, is in the same places said of all. But let us consider the passages themselves. And,

1. Begin with the text under consideration, on which this observation is made; "that the same Scripture which saith, Christ gave his life a ransom for many, says also, that he gave himself a ransom for all." This is, indeed, said in the same book of Scripture, but not in the same passage of Scripture; nor is the text referred to (1 Tim. 2:6), to be understood of every individual of mankind, but either of some of all sorts, or of the Gentiles as well as Jews, as has

been shown in the former part of this work; and in which sense, perhaps, the word many, in this text, is to be taken, as Grotius himself upon it observes. Moreover, all those for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, are either ransomed by it, or they are not; that all are not ransomed, or redeemed from sin, the law, Satan, and the second death, is evident, since many live under the power of their sins, and, at last, die in them; and, having sinned against the law, are under it, and the curses of it, and will be punished by it; nor are they delivered from the bondage of Satan, but are led captive by him at his will, all their days, and their everlasting portion is the second death. Now, if some persons, for whom Christ gave his life a ransom, are not ransomed, then that shocking absurdity, which follows upon the notion of men's justification by their own obedience to the law, follows upon this, namely, that Christ is dead in vain, that so far he gave his life for a ransom in vain; wherefore it will be rightly concluded, that he did not give his life ransom for every individual man. Besides, such who are ransomed by Christ, are represented as a peculiar people (Titus 2:14; Isa. 35:10; Jer. 31:11); they are called the ransomed of the Lord, to distinguish them from others, and by the name of Jacob, which, when mystically or figuratively understood, only designs the church of God. Add to this, that such whom Christ gave his life a ransom for, are described by such characters as cannot agree with every individual of mankind, such as the church, the children of God, his sheep and people (Eph. 5:2, 25; John 10:15; 11:51, 52; Matthew 1:21), unless all mankind can be thought to be the church of God, the sheep of Christ, and his special people.

2. It is further observed, that he who said, This is my blood shed for many, for the remission of sins, said also, for that very reason, drink ye all of it, for it was shed for you, for the remission of sins." But it should be considered, that the all Christ bid to drink of the cup were his immediate disciples and apostles; and, should it be extended to others, it can only design such who are the true disciples of Christ; who only share in the remission of sins, and therefore ought only to drink of the cup. If the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of the sins of all mankind, then all their sins would be remitted, or Christ's blood must be shed in vain; but it is certain, that the sins

of all men are not remitted; the sins of many will be brought into judgment, and for them, they will be everlastingly punished. And, therefore, there is reason to believe Christ's blood was not shed for them, since there is such an efficacy in that blood, to cleanse from all sin; and God, on the account of it, is just and faithful to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:7, 9).

3. "That there is no inconsistency betwixt dying for many and for all, is said to be evident from this consideration, that even in the same chapter the apostle saith, that by one sin of Adam many died, Romans 5:15, and all died, (v. 12); many were made sinners (v. 19), and all sinned (v. 12); and that by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous, di>kaioi katastaqh<son tai, shall be justified (v. 19); and that by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life, (v. 18)." To which I answer, that it will be readily allowed, that the many that sinned and died in Adam, and through his offense, are the same with the all that sinned and died in him on the account of it, and that these intend all mankind, to whom Adam was a representative head; also it will be granted, that the many who are made righteous by the obedience of Christ, are the same with the all on whom the free gift comes to justification of life; but then these regard not all mankind, but such to whom he is a representative head, and who are his spiritual seed and offspring; for if all mankind, were made righteous and justified by Christ, they would be all saved and glorified; whom he justified, them he also glorified, and none would be condemned; whereas the sentence, go, ye cursed, etc., will not only be pronounced, but executed on many.

4. It is also urged, "that in the same epistle in which it is said, Christ bore the sins of many, it is expressly said, he tasted death for every man." As to the latter expression, it has been made to appear, in the former part of this performance, that it is to be understood not of every individual man, but of the sons, the children, the brethren, the church, and seed of Abraham, spoken of in the context; and as to the former, the many cannot be extended to all mankind; since, if Christ bore, the sins of them all, they must be put away, finished, made an end of, and never be found more; nor shall they be borne by them in a judicial way; whereas the sins of many go beforehand

to judgment, of which they will be convicted, and for which they will be righteously punished. Besides, the persons whose sins Christ bore, being laid on him, are represented as particular and peculiar persons, the seed of Christ, and whom he justifies (Isa. 53:6, 11,12; 1 Pet. 2:24).

2ndly It is observed, “That as when the kindness designed by Christ’s death to all upon the conditions of the Gospel is expressed, it is said Christ died for all; so when the effect and benefit of it is expressed, the word many is most proper; for his blood shed procures remission of sins only to penitent believers: and in this sense Christ gave his life a ransom only for many, even for as many as would believe and obey his Gospel.” But this is to separate the design and effect of Christ’s death, and to assert, that it does not reach its designed effect, which is to render it so far in vain. Besides, this makes the efficacy of his death to depend on the faith, repentance, and obedience of men; and, after all, many can only mean some, and not all, since all do not repent, believe, and obey.

Section 2

John 10:15.

And I lay down my life for the sheep.

The argument from hence, in favour of the doctrine of particular redemption, is taken from the character of the persons for whom Christ laid down his life, who are his sheep, whom he is said to know, and they are said to know him, hear his voice, and follow him; to whom he gives eternal life, so as that they shall never perish: all which is not true of every individual of mankind. In some parallel places they are said to be his friends, for whom he laid down his life (John 15:13), and are distinguished from others; being such who keep the commandments of Christ, which all men do not; as having the secrets of Christ communicated to them, which servants have not; and as being chosen and ordained by Christ to go and bring forth fruit, which is not the case of all mankind. And in Ephesians 5:25, they are said to be the church, for whom Christ gave himself; which must be distinct from the world, and can design no other than the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven: and, therefore, since these are the discriminating characters of the persons for whom Christ died, it follows, that he died for some only, and not for every individual of human nature. In answer to this,

1. It is observed, that “in none of these places it is said that Christ died only for his sheep, for his friends, or for his church; and, therefore, none of them say anything in contradiction to our assertion” of general redemption. I reply, this objection is much like what the Papists make against the doctrine of justification by faith. They own the Scriptures say, that we are justified by faith, but not by faith only. Now it may with as much propriety be said, that other, besides those which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham, because the Scriptures do not say that they which be of faith only are blessed with him, or that there are more gods and more mediators than one, because the text does not say, there is only one God, and only one Mediator; yea, it might be urged with equal strength, that men may love other women besides their own wives, in the same manner they love them, because it is not said, husbands love your wives only, as it may that Christ loved others, and gave himself for others, besides his church; because it is not said, he loved his church only and gave himself for his church only. But, though this restrictive word is not expressed, it is evidently implied; for, if Christ laid down his life, and gave himself for every individual man, these peculiar and discriminating characters would be utterly unnecessary. And, after all, it is owned by our opponents, that “eventually Christ is the Savior of his body, and died only for his sheep and friends.”

2. The argument is retorted upon thus; “He that died for his friends, and for his enemies, for the church of God, and for the unrighteous, that he might bring them to the church of God; for the sheep that heard his voice, and for the lost ones that did not hearken to his voice, died for all. But Christ died for his friends, etc., therefore he died for all.” The fallacy of this argument will easily appear, when it is observed, that they are, the same individual persons who are styled the enemies and friends of Christ, the unrighteous, and the church, the lost sheep, and such as hearken to Christ’s voice; being the former as considered in their unregenerate estate, and the latter through the power of his grace upon them.

Section 3

John 17:9.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

The death of Christ, which was the oblation of

himself as a sacrifice, and his intercession, are the two principal parts of his priestly office; and relate to the same persons. Those for whom he died, for them he also maketh intercession; and for whom he is the propitiation, for them he is an advocate with the Father; and for whom he sanctified, or sacrificed himself, for them he prays (Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1, 2; John 17:9, 19). Now, such who have an interest in his prayers, are a special people, opposed to the world, and distinguished from them by the peculiar character of being given to Christ by the Father; and therefore those for whom he died, being the same persons, must be a special and peculiar people. It follows then that Christ died not for every individual of mankind, since he does not intercede for every one. But,

1. This is said “to be contrary both to reason and the Holy Scripture: to reason; for can it rationally be imagined that he, who was perfect in charity, should be wanting in this highest act of charity? that the beloved Son of God should charge this upon us as our duty, to pray for our enemies, and he himself neglect it? Moreover how often doth he say of the Jews, Ye are of the world; and yet says to them, *eij e|gnwv*, How do I wish that thou hadst known in this thy day the things which do belong to thy peace! And hanging on the cross, he said, Father, forgive them, they know not what they do: thus did he make intercession for the transgressors. Now, this prayer implies a possibility of their receiving forgiveness, and that, a disposition in God to grant it; and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as will be acceptable, if they do their parts towards the obtaining of it.” To which I reply, that it is certain Christ was perfect in charity; nor was he wanting in this highest instance of it, praying for his enemies; and yet did not pray for every individual man; and though he charges it on us to pray for our enemies, yet not for every particular person: there are some we are not to pray for (1 John 5:16). Nor do the instances produced prove, that Christ prayed for all the individuals of human nature. The passage in Luke 19:42, regards only the Jews, and is no prayer at all, much less for their eternal salvation: since it only concerns their civil and temporal, not their spiritual and eternal peace; and is only an instance of Christ’s human compassion towards a people whose condition was irretrievable by prayer or other ways. His prayer on the cross was heard and answered, being made, not

for all his enemies, but for such who were afterwards converted, as three thousand of them were under one sermon; and their number after that was increased; which prayer not only implied a possibility, but a certainty of their receiving forgiveness of sins upon the foot of a satisfaction; which was acceptable and available, not for anything done by them towards the obtaining of it, it being perfect in itself; but because of the dignity of Christ’s person, and the virtue of his blood and sacrifice. find thus indeed he made intercession for transgressors. But then these were no other than his own people, for whose transgressions he was stricken, wounded, and bruised; the many whose sins he bore, and whom he justified, (Isa. 53:5, 8, 11, 12).

2. It is urged, that “our Lord says not this absolutely, but only in respect to that very prayer he was then offering up for his apostles; in which he was asking those things which could agree to them alone.” But it is absolutely said, I pray not for the world; nor is this prayer Christ was then offering up, peculiar to the apostles. In the beginning of it he takes notice, that his Father had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him, (v. 2). Now were the eleven apostles the many, and the only ones the Father had given to Christ, and to whom he gives eternal life? Did Christ only manifest his Father’s name, glory, and gospel, to them? Are they the only persons opposed unto and distinguished from the world? Yea, does not Christ say of the persons he is praying for, All mine are thine, and thine are mine, (v. 10), which manifestly includes and designs the whole election of grace? And, as if it was observed on purpose to obviate such an objection, he says (v. 20), Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. Besides, the things he asks for are such as were not peculiar to them as apostles, but common to them with other saints; such as preservation from the evil of the world (vv. 11,15); sanctification through the truth (vv. 17, 19); perfect union (vv. 21, 23), and eternal glory (v. 24).

3. It is observed, that this very prayer in which he saith, I pray not for the world, was made for the sake of the world, and with respect to their saving faith (vv. 21, 23). And out of that affection to the world, and with design that the preaching of the apostle to

them might be more effectual for their conversion and salvation.” But it should also be observed, that the word world is an ambiguous one, and is used in various senses in this prayer; and in the passages referred to does not intend such who were opposed unto, and distinguished from those who were given by the Father to Christ, as it does in the text under consideration; but the elect of God in an unconverted state, who should be brought under the ministry of the apostles, and other preachers of the Gospel, to believe on Christ, to own him whom the Father had sent, and to know and partake of that love and favor which God bears to his own people.

Section 4

Romans 8:34.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.

The argument from these words, in favor of peculiar, and against universal redemption, stands thus: Those for whom Christ died are God’s elect; and these in virtue of his, death are freed from condemnation, and may boldly say, Who is he that condemneth? But God’s elect, are not all men, or all men are not God’s elect; nor are all men freed from condemnation by the death of Christ; nor can they all say, Who is he that condemneth? It follows, that Christ died not for all men. That those for whom Christ died are God’s elect, is evident from the connection of the words with the preceding verse: Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect: It is God that justifieth, that is, his elect; Who is he that condemneth? that is, the elect of God: It is Christ that died, that is, for God’s elect. Should it be said, as it is, that by God’s elect are meant true believers; it should be observed, that they are not denominated God’s elect from their being true believers, but they become true believers in consequence of their being God’s elect. Besides, should this sense of the phrase be admitted of, it will be of no service; for if, instead of God’s elect, we read true believers, the sense of the words will be this; Who shalt lay anything to the charge of true believers? It is God that justifieth true believers? Who is he that condemneth true believers? It is Christ that died for true believers. Now all men are not true believers, to whom Christ is precious; nor have all men that faith which works by love. Moreover, that all for whom Christ died are, by his

death, freed from condemnation, and may say, Who is he that condemneth? will abundantly appear from these considerations; that Christ, by dying, has had the sentence of condemnation they deserved, executed on him, in their room and stead; sin, the cause of condemnation, is removed by his death, the full pardon of it procured, and a justifying righteousness brought in, with which the law and justice of God, are fully satisfied: and therefore, consistent with the justice of God, the persons for whom Christ died cannot be condemned; and should any of them be condemned, his death would not be a security from condemnation; for would it be a sufficient foundation for the apostle’s triumph of faith. Now it is certain that all men are not secured from condemnation; there is a world that will be condemned (1 Cor. 11:32). Whence it follows, that Christ died not for all men. To this is excepted,

1. “That this argument supposeth, that Christ died for none who shall hereafter be condemned” Which is very true; for should any be condemned for whom Christ died, his dying for them must be in vain and be no security against condemnation: and whereas it is asked, “Must it not hence follow, that none of the unbelieving Jews among whom Christ preached, nor none of the unbelieving world to whom the apostles preached, shall be condemned for not believing in him? Since they could never be obliged to do so for whom he never died which is contrary to John 3:18, Mark 16:16. “It may be replied, that the Jews and Gentiles to whom Christ is preached, are obliged to believe that Christ is God, the Son of God, the true Messiah, etc., according to the tenor of the revelation made to them; and may be justly condemned for not believing in him as such, even though he died not for them; for that he died for them, is what they are not obliged to believe, that being no part of the revelation made to them; nor will they be condemned for not believing that he died for them, but for their neglect, contempt, and unbelief of him and his Gospel, which is the sense of the passage alleged.

2. It is said, that “there is no such proposition in the Scripture as this, that all for whom Christ died may say, who shall condemn them? but only that the persons there spoken of may say this, who were the sons and heirs of God, (vv. 14-17); had received the first- fruits of the Spirit (v. 23); loved God (v. 28); and were justified by him; (v. 33).” To which I answer, that though this proposition is not expressed in so

many words in Scripture, yet it is strongly supported by the passage under consideration; and should it be admitted, that only the persons spoken of in the context may say this, yet it is certain, that all who are partakers of the same grace and have received the same Spirit, may also say so too; yea, all the elect, even all that Christ died for, may say so sooner or later: for though the elect themselves cannot say this till they have believed, yet as their faith and repentance do not interest them in Christ, nor in his death, nor in the benefits of it; so they do not say so, as is suggested, upon their faith and repentance, but upon the account of Christ’s death. Besides, our argument does not barely rest upon the elect, or those for whom Christ died, saying, or being able to say this, but upon the doctrine contained in it; that all those for whom Christ died, are by his death secured from condemnation; if therefore, any of the sons and daughters of men shall be condemned, as multitudes will be, we conclude that Christ died not for them.

Section 5

Romans 8:32.

He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

The us all, or all us, for whom God has delivered up his Son, are no other than the predestinated, called, justified, and glorified (v. 30), which cannot be said of every individual of mankind. Moreover, those on whose account God spared not his Son, but delivered him up into the hands of justice and death, in their room and stead, to be a sacrifice and ransom for them, will certainly be spared by him, and be delivered from the wrath to come; it being consistent neither with the justice nor with the love of God, to cast his wrath upon them, or deliver them up to eternal punishment. Now, it is certain, that some persons are not spared by him, nor do escape eternal damnation: whence it must needs follow, that Christ being not spared: was not on their account; otherwise they would have been spared; and that though he was delivered up to justice, and to death, yet not for them; otherwise they would have escaped everlasting destruction. Besides, to all those for whom God has delivered up his Son, he freely gives all things: but there are thousands in the world to whom God does not give his Son, and all things freely with him; and therefore, it may be

strongly concluded, that for these he did not deliver him up. In answer to this it is said,

1. That this argument, as before, supposes “that Christ died only for those who shall be saved, and so liable to all the absurdities before mentioned; and to these that God could not equitably require all men to repent, nor could be equitably require of them obedience to his laws.” To which I reply, that we freely own the assertion, and abide by it, that Christ died only for those who shall be saved; the end of his dying being salvation: if any for whom he died should not be saved, the end of his death would not be answered; and so be in vain with respect to them. As to its being liable to the former absurdities, these have been removed; and as to the additional ones, it is certain that God might have required repentance and obedience of men, if Christ had never died for any, or at all; as has been observed in the former part, of this work.

2. It is here, as before said, “That there, is no such proposition in Scripture as this, to all those for whom God delivered up his Son, he will give all things: the Scripture, cited respects only us, who are the adopted sons of God, etc.” I reply, that this Scripture does abundantly confirm the truth of the proposition: for admitting that it only respects the adopted sons of God, to whom God gives the blessings of the new covenant: not because they have performed the conditions of it, as is intimated; for then he could not be said to give them freely; yet the Apostle’s argument does not proceed upon their being the sons of God, and still less, upon their having fulfilled the conditions of the covenant, but upon God’s delivering up his Son for them, and therefore will hold good with respect to all those for whom he has delivered him up, as it did with respect to them. For it may be as strongly concluded, that God will give all things freely to all those for whom he has delivered up his Son, as that he would bestow them on these particular persons: since there is the same reason for the one as for the other. Else there is no force in the Apostle’s reasoning, no weight in his argument, nor any real conviction or solid consolation to be received from it; since it might be replied to him, that God might deliver up his Son for persons, and yet not freely give all things with him to them.

Section 6

Romans 5:10.

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

The argument from these words, in favour of particular, and against universal redemption, stands thus: such for whom Christ died are reconciled to God by his death; and such who are reconciled to God by his death shall be saved by his life. If therefore Christ died for all men, and all men are reconciled to God by his death, then all men shall be saved by his life. But all will not be saved by his life; therefore all men are not reconciled to God by his death, nor did he die for all men. In answer to which,

1st. It is observed, that “this argument supposes that Christ died to reconcile no man to God who shall not be saved.” It is very true, and we not only suppose but affirm it, and argue thus: Those for whom Christ died to reconcile them to God, are either reconciled to him or they are not; if they are not reconciled to him, then Christ with respect to them must die in vain; if they are reconciled to him, then according to this text they shall be saved. Whence it necessarily follows, that he died to reconcile none to God, who shall not be saved. But then it is said, it must follow,

1. That no man can be condemned at the last day for neglecting that great salvation tendered to, or purchased for him; Christ having neither purchased for or offered to them any salvation, unless he offered to them that salvation which he never died to purchase for them.” It is certain, that for those who shall not be saved, salvation was not purchased, nor should it be offered to them, nor indeed to any. Such for whom salvation is purchased, are the church whom Christ has purchased with his own blood; and to these, this salvation is not offered, but applied. The Gospel is not an offer, but the power of God unto salvation, to these persons. And as for others, they will be condemned at the last day, for their sins and transgressions against the law of God. And such who have had the opportunity of hearing the Gospel, and have neglected, despised, and reproached it, their condemnation will be thereby aggravated. But,

2. It is also said, that “it must follow from hence, that all who are not saved, never had any Savior or Redeemer, and so were never in a capacity to sin against a Savior; nor can their sins be aggravated by

this consideration that they are committed against redeeming love. I reply, that savior and saved are relative terms, and mutually put for each other: a Savior supposes persons saved, and the saved supposes a Savior. Now Christ can be a Savior to no more than to them who are saved; and to such who are not saved, he is no Savior; and yet such may be capable of sinning against him as a Savior, though not as their Savior; they may deny him to be the Savior, despise, reproach, and neglect him as such, as Jews, Deists, and others, have done. And though their sins are not aggravated by this consideration, that they are committed against redeeming love, as having any share in it themselves, yet may be aggravated by their contempt of it, as the blessing of others. Moreover, Christ may be sinned against by these persons as a Saviour, in a way of providence, though not in a way of grace; and their sins may be aggravated, as being committed against his providential goodness, if not against his redeeming love. Though strictly, and properly speaking, sin is not against Christ as a Saviour, but against God as the Lawgiver; and not against redeeming love, but a law of righteousness.

2ndly It is allowed, that the conclusion of this argument, all that are reconciled to Christ (God I suppose is meant) shall be saved, may be true; but not that all, for whom Christ died, are reconciled to

God.” But if all for whom Christ died are not reconciled to God, then one principal end of his death, which was to make reconciliation for sin, is not answered; and consequently his death must be so far in vain. And whereas it is observed, that “Christ died for them when sinners, unjust, ungodly, and unbelievers, who cannot be actually reconciled to God, as none can, until they believe and are justified; and that reconciliation by the death of Christ, is only by faith in it; and that God never sent his Son to purchase actual reconciliation for any but conditionally, if, and when they believed.” I reply, that though no man is reconciled to God’s way and method of salvation by Christ, or has peace in his soul, flowing from a sense of atonement and justification by the blood of Christ, until he believes; which is meant by the phrase, much more being reconciled; and regards not any performance of Christ’s, but the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul: yet this hinders not but that men, whilst sinners, ungodly, and unbelievers, may

be reconciled to God by the death of Christ; that is to say, that their sins may be expiated, and fully atoned for; for faith is not the cause or condition of this reconciliation; faith does not make peace with God, or reconciliation for sin, but receives the atonement already made. Nor is it anywhere said, either that God sent his Son to procure reconciliation, or that Christ has obtained it on condition of man’s believing. The scheme of reconciliation was drawn by God without any respect to faith, and was completely obtained by Christ without any consideration of anything done, or to be done by us. The consequence of which is reconciliation of our souls to this way of peace, by the Spirit of God; and the sure and certain effect of this, is everlasting salvation to all those who are thus reconciled.

Section 7

John 15:13.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man laid down his life for his friend.

These words contain an argument in favor of the doctrine of particular redemption, taken from the greatness of Christ’s love in laying down his life for men, and may be formed thus: Those for whom Christ died, he loves with the greatest love: but he does not love every individual man with the greatest love; therefore he died not for every individual man. In answer to this argument, it is said,

1. That it “plainly supposes, that Christ died for none who shall not actually be saved; whence it must follow, that only the elect are, or can be guilty of sinning against the love of God in Christ Jesus.” To which may be replied, that we not only suppose but affirm, that Christ died for none who shall not actually be saved; and that for this reason, because Christ must have died in vain for such persons. But God forbid it should be said, that his death was in vain, in any one single instance. Nor are we afraid of the consequence of this affirmation, that only the elect are, or can be guilty of sinning against the love of God in Christ Jesus; since sin is properly against a law, sin is the transgression of the law. And though some men may be said to sin against the love of God in Christ, when they sin against God, notwithstanding their enjoyment of it, which is an aggravation of their sin, and in which sense they only can be guilty who do enjoy it; yet others may sin against providential

kindness, and indeed against special love, when they despise the gospel, and ministers who publish it, and that itself, because it is discriminating.

2. That “there is no assertion in the holy Scripture, that those for whom Christ died, he loved with the greatest love. Christ only says, that one man shows no greater love to another, than that of laying down his life for his friend. But this he neither did nor could say of the love of the Father, nor of himself: for God commended his love to us, that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us; and he died for the ungodly, the just for the unjust; and therefore this text is nothing to the purpose.” To which I reply, that though this assertion is not expressed in so many words in the holy Scripture, it may be easily proved by it; and is manifestly implied in the words of this text. For when Christ speaks of the love of one man to another, by laying down his life for his people, as the greatest instance of it, he tacitly hints at his own love in laying down his life for him; for in the preceding verses, he is speaking of his love to his disciples, which he represents as equal to his Father’s love to him, and as a pattern and example of theirs one to another; and in the verses following, applies the character of friends unto them. And though Christ is said to die for his, while sinners, and for the ungodly and unjust; yet these are the same persons whom he calls friends, they being by nature as sinful and wicked as others. Which epithets and characters are made use of, not to express any greater, but the same act of love in dying for them, which is illustrated by their sinfulness and unworthiness.

3. “It is granted, Christ showed the greatest love of benevolence to all for whom he died; but then it is added, that he shows his love of friendship and beneficence only to those that bear a true reciprocal affection to him.” Which love of friendship and beneficence, it is said, “depends on our repentance, conversion, faith, and obedience.” Now not to take any notice of the distinction of Christ’s love, into that of benevolence and beneficence, being a groundless one, when, like himself, it is, the same yesterday, today, and for ever; Christ’s death does not merely express a love of benevolence, or only shows that he wished them well for whom he died, or willed good things for them; but was an act of beneficence, or an actual doing good things for them; since by it he reconciled

them to God, brought them near unto him, redeemed them from all iniquity, finished their transgressions, made an end of their sins, and brought in everlasting righteousness for them. Nor does what is called a love of beneficence, depend on our repentance, conversion, faith, and obedience: for though Christ loves them that love him, and grace is upon all them that do so, yet it is not their love that is the cause of his; but on the contrary, they love him, because he first loved them. Moreover, were there any foundation for this distinction of the love of Christ, yet his dying for men, which is styled his love of benevolence, is a greater expression of his love than the application of the salutary effects of his death, which is reckoned his love of beneficence; and he that has a share in the former, will certainly enjoy the latter; the apostle argues from the one to the other, as from the greater to the lesser; when he says, If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. (Rom. 5:10.)

CHAPTER IV OF EFFICACIOUS GRACE

The celebrated writer chiefly attended to, has filled up above twenty pages in stating the question about the grace of God in conversion.

The sum of which is, that there are some inward operations of the Spirit vouchsafed in that work; but that these only consist in representing divine truths to our understandings, and bringing them to our remembrance, and thereby raising some ideas in the brain, and making some impressions on it; which he allows to be physical, and irresistible in their production, and in which men are wholly passive; but utterly denies that any supernatural habits are infused, or that any supernatural aid is requisite to the conversion of a sinner besides the aforementioned. He observes that the word grace in scripture, always signifies the favour and goodness of God, but never any supernatural or infused habit: contrary to Romans 5:20, 21, and 6:14, 2 Corinthians 8:7, and 9:8, 14, Colossians 3:16, 1 Timothy 1:14, and 2 Peter 3:18, with many others: yet owns, that the foresaid ideas raised in the brain, according to their nature, use, tendency, and effects, may be called either exciting,

or restraining, or preventing, or assisting, or the subsequent of God; and may be either sufficient or efficacious, common or special. My business in the following Sections will be to prove, that the work of grace or conversion, is an internal one, wholly owing to the efficacious grace of God, and wrought in the soul by a supernatural, irresistible, and insuperable power, in the production of which man is purely passive; and to vindicate the passages of scripture made use of in proof of this doctrine, which are objected to.

Section 1

Ephesians 1:19, 20.

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.

Since the apostle, in these words, plainly intimates, that the work of grace upon the hearts of believers is to be ascribed not only to the power of God, but to the greatness, yea, the exceeding greatness of his power, and which is represented as equal to that which was put forth in raising Christ from the dead; we think we have good reason to conclude, that this work is a work of almighty, irresistible; and insuperable power, and in which men, in the first production of it, are purely passive. It is indeed said, that “it must be absurd hence to infer, that the power of God working faith in believers is equal to that which effected the resurrection of our Lord, and that we must be therefore purely passive in the whole work of our conversion.” But certain it is, that the power here spoken of is said to be kata< th<n ejne>rgeian, according to the working or energy of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead. And if the work of faith and conversion is intended, men must be passive under the energetical influence of divine power effecting it, as the body of Christ was, when, by the same power, it was raised to life. But let us attend to the reasons given:

1. It is said, that “this power is not consistent with the persuasions and exhortations used in Scripture to move men to repent, and turn themselves from their iniquity.” I reply that the exhortations to repent and turn from iniquity do not regard the first work of conversion, or the inward work of grace upon the soul, which is here designed, but an outward reformation of life. Besides, supposing the exhortations referred to

respect the internal work of faith and conversion, they may be attended with that power from God, who makes use of them, so as to produce such principles of life and grace, in which men are purely passive; by virtue of which they may become active, and be enabled to answer to such exhortations; even as the command of Christ to Lazarus to come forth was attended with such a divine power as produced a principle of life in him, in which he was purely passive; though by virtue of it he became active, came forth, and answered the word of command.

2. This is also said to be inconsistent “with a rational choice.” I answer, that no doubt, whilst men are in a state of nature, they are able, without the special and powerful grace of God, to make a rational choice in things natural and civil, but not in things spiritual and eternal. How should they, when they are under the power of sin, influenced by their corrupt and deceitful lusts, and enslaved by Satan? Such men will always choose their own ways, for their soul delighteth in their abominations; which makes the powerful and efficacious grace of God necessary to enlighten their understandings, inform their judgments, guide their affections, and influence their wills.

3. It is urged that if this was the case, “it could not properly be said that they turned, but only that they were turned, to the Lord.” To which may be replied, that when the Scriptures speak of the internal work of conversion upon the heart, it is expressed in tike passive form, they were turned, see Jeremiah 31:18, 1 Peter 2:25. And when they speak of external reformation, or of such a turning to the Lord as is the fruit of faith, then it is expressed in the active form, they turned to him, see Acts 11:21.

4. It is observed, that “this exposition is not agreeable to the words; for the apostle speaks not of the power exercised on us to render us believers, but of the power which shall be exercised on us who believe already.” But nothing is more evident, than that the apostle speaks not of a power which shall be exercised on believers, but of a power which is exercised upon them, and is continued to be so; and is the same with that which was put forth when they first trusted in Christ, and must be continued to carry on and perfect the good work. Now, if the exceeding greatness of God’s power is necessary to carry on and perfect the work of faith, it must be much more so to

produce, plant, and form it at first. It is asserted, that the apostle speaks “not of the power to be exercised on our souls, to raise them from a death in sin to a life of righteousness, but of the power to be exercised on our dead bodies, to give them a glorious resurrection to eternal life, as he had none already in the body of our head Christ Jesus.” But though the apostle, in order to illustrate that power which is exalted towards them that believe, takes notice of the power which was wrought in Christ when he was raised from the dead; yet he says not one syllable concerning the resurrection of the saints. Moreover, the apostle is speaking not of a power to be exercised, but of one that is now exercised upon believers; whereas the resurrection of our dead bodies is an act of God’s power, which is to be exercised; it is future, yet to come. Besides, this power is limited to believers; whereas the resurrection of the dead will be both of the just and unjust; and the resurrection of the one will be as much an instance of the exceeding greatness of God’s power, as the resurrection of the other. Add to this, that at the resurrection the people of God will no longer bear the character of believers, (for faith will be changed into vision,) but that of saints and just men, being in themselves made perfectly so; whereas the subjects of this power are such who believe. To conclude, these words stand in connection with Ephesians 2:1: And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, which is the plain instance of God’s power the apostle had in his view; for all that is said between them, concerning the resurrection, exaltation, and headship of Christ, may be read in a parenthesis, and are only mentioned to illustrate and set forth the exceeding greatness of the power of God in this instance of it.

Section 2

1 Corinthians 5:17.

[with Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 2:10, and 4:24].

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The work of grace upon the soul being expressed in these passages by kainh< kti>siv, a new creation, or creature, and a being created in Christ Jesus, manifestly shows, that it is to be ascribed to the efficacious grace of God, and that man is purely passive in it. But it is observed,

1. “That this metaphor affords no certain proof that wheresoever it is used, the person it respecteth must

be purely passive, and have done nothing towards the act styled creation, is evident from Isaiah 43:1, and 54:16.” To which I reply, that if the metaphor elsewhere used affords no certain proof, that the person it respecteth must be purely passive, and have done nothing towards the act styled creation, yet, if it does in the instances before us, it is sufficient to our purpose; now nothing appears to the contrary. And, indeed, the other passages referred to are far from making it evident, that the metaphor affords no certain proof of the person’s passiveness whom it respecteth; not Isaiah 43:1, where God is said to have created Jacob, and formed Israel, which is not to be understood literally of the people of the Jews, when God formed there as a nation, or body politic, or when he constituted them to be his church and people, and they entered into covenant to have him for their God; but of the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, as appears from verse 5-7, 19-21, compared with 1 Peter 2:9, 10, and designs this new creation work of grace upon their souls in effectual vocation; by which God forms them for himself, that they may show forth his praise. Now, though they are active in showing forth the praise of God, yet are entirely passive in being created and formed for that purpose. So in the other instance, in Isaiah 54:16: I have created the waster to destroy. Though the waster is active in destroying, yet he is purely passive in being created, appointed, and raised up to destroy.

2. It is urged, that man is not holy passive in the case before us is “certain, from the nature of faith and godly sorrow, which are men’s acts, and not God’s, and from God’s frequent calls upon the wicked to turn from their transgressions to the Lord.” I reply, that when we say that men are passive in the work of grace upon them, we speak not of the exercise of grace, in which, it is allowed, men are active, but of the implantation and production of grace in them. Though men, and not God; believe and repent, yet faith and repentance are the gifts of his grace and the produce of his power. And though they are active in turning to the Lord, yet this is in consequence of their being first turned by him. Besides, God’s frequent calls to men to turn themselves, regard not the first work of conversion, but an external reformation of life, as the fruit, effect, and evidence of it.

3. It is further observed, that “God is, in Scripture,

said to create that which he brings into a new and better state, as in Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 65:17, 19. To this sense the Scripture plainly leads us, when it saith, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. And all the Greek fathers confirm this exposition, by saying, that this new creation only importeth, *μεταίχθησις*, a change for the better.” Admitting that this is the sense of the word create, in the places cited, and that the sense of the Greek fathers is just, the question before us is not whether this new creation is a change for the better, but, whether this is to be ascribed to the irresistible and efficacious grace of God, in which man is passive, or to the active power of man’s free will. But neither the sense of the Greek fathers is just and proper, which seems to imply that man, before this new creation, was in a good state, though this changes him into a better. Whereas this is not an improvement of what he was, or had before, but an infusion of that into him which he had not. Nor does it appear so manifestly to be the sense of the word create, in the places referred to; not in Psalm 51:10, Create in me a clean heart, which strongly expresses the sense David had of his fall, of his own inability to help himself, and of his need of so much of divine power to restore him, as is put forth in an act of creation. And from hence it may be rightly concluded, that if a fallen believer, who has the grace of God in him, is not able to create a clean heart in himself, much less able is an unregenerate sinner. Nor in Isaiah 65:17, where it is said, Behold, I create a new heaven, and a new earth; since it follows, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. Nor in verse 19, Behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy; which will be done, not barely by renewing, or bringing into a better state the former individuals, which before constituted Jerusalem, or the church, but by an immediate thorough conversion of multitudes, which shall be added to her; for then the earth shall be made to bring forth in one day, and a nation shall be born at once (Isa. 66:8). Much less in the text before us, seeing it is immediately added, Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. This new creation is not an improvement, or a mending of the old principles of nature, but an infusion of new ones, and so is properly styled a creation.

Section 3

John 3:5.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Since the work of grace upon the soul is here expressed by a being born again, or from above; and since this is ascribed to water and the Spirit, not baptismal water, which has no regenerating virtue in it, nor is it absolutely necessary to salvation; but either the grace of the Spirit or spirit of grace, compared to water (Ezek. 36:25; John 4:14; 7:37-39); we conclude, that this is wrought by the omnipotent and unfrustrable grace of God, in which man is as passive as an infant is in its natural generation and birth. In answer to which it is said,

1. That “the falsehood of this argument is evident from this consideration, that this new birth is ascribed to the word and ministers of God (Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23; Jam. 1:18; 1 Cor. 4:15), who work upon us by moral suasion; and since this cannot import, that they produce it by an irresistible action, in which we are purely passive, it will not follow that God, or his good Spirit, doth so convert men, because they are said to be born of God, or of the Spirit.” To which I reply, that though faith comes by hearing, and we are said to be begotten by the word of God and truth, as a mean, yet faith is a gift of grace, and of the operation of God (Eph. 2:8; Col. 2:12; 2 Thess. 1:11); which work of faith, as it will be fulfilled, so it is begun and carried on by the power of God, which can never be resisted so as to be overcome. And though ministers are represented as spiritual fathers, yet they are only instruments by whom we believe; and were no more done, than what is the effect of moral suasion through them, the work would never be done at all. Moreover, it does not follow, that because they do not and cannot produce this work by an irresistible action, in which we are passive, that therefore God does not convert men in such a way; since it is certain he makes use of them in such a manner, as that the excellency of the power may appear to be of God, and not of man (2 Cor. 4:7.) Besides, we are never said to be born of the word, or of ministers, but by them; whereas we are said to be born of God, and of the Spirit, which is expressive not of bare means, or mere moral suasion, but of the powerful efficiency.

2. It is observed, that this “phrase is used by the Jews concerning their proselytes, they being then said

to be recensnati, newborn babes; and from them our Lord translates the metaphor to his disciples, renewed after the image of God in true holiness, and sanctified throughout in all their whole man.” But the phrase of being born of water and of the Spirit, is never used by the Jews concerning their proselytes. It is true, indeed, they have such a saying as this, *דלונץ ימד רג רייגתנץ װיפק*, One that is made a proselyte, is like a child new born: but then they used this not in a spiritual but in a civil sense, signifying by it, that such ceased from all natural and civil relations to parents, masters, etc. Such an one might marry his mother, or mother’s sister, be no longer under obligation to a master, standing no longer in any relation to them, being as a newborn babe; and might be admitted, in civil cases, as a witness equally with a Jew, with many other things of the like nature. And admitting that our Lord had reference to the use of this phrase among the Jews, it was to show, that another kind of birth was necessary to the enjoyment of the kingdom of God, that either the Jews, as being the descendants of Abraham, or than the proselytes, by coming over to the Jewish religion, had. Besides, since in the objection it is observed, that this metaphor is translated to such who are renewed after the image of God in true holiness, and sanctified throughout in all their whole man; yea, it is added, that there is such intrinsic change in the whole spirit, soul, and body, that they may be said to be much more other men, than Saul, when the Spirit of prophecy came upon him: and seeing it is owned, that this change is wrought within us by the operation of the Holy Spirit, why should it not be ascribed to the unfrustrable and irresistible power and grace of the Spirit, in which men are entirely passive?

Section 4

Ephesians 2:1.

[with Colossians 2:13]

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.

Men in an unregenerate state, being represented in these passages as dead in sin, shows, that whilst they are in such a state, they are as incapable of spiritual motion or action, or of quickening themselves, as a dead man is of natural motion, or action, or of raising himself from the dead. Whence it must needs follow, that the work of conversion is a work of God, and not man, and to be ascribed to the exceeding greatness of

his power; in which man is passive as a dead body is in its resurrection from the dead. In answer to which,

1st. It is said, “that the metaphor of being dead in trespasses and sins, cannot warrant our saying anything of unregenerate persons, which may properly be affirmed of the dead;” for,

1. “A dead body is void of all sense; whereas the unregenerate man is often under strong convictions, and a deep sense of his present misery.” To which I reply, that it is one thing for a man to be under strong convictions, and a deep sense of his present misery, or of the evil and mischief which comes by sin, which sense is purely natural; and another thing to be under real convictions, and a deep sense of the true evil and wickedness that is in sin, which is purely spiritual, and arises from the quickening influences of the Spirit of God.

2. A dead man cannot awake himself out of the sleep of death; but God saith to the spiritually dead man, Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life, it should have been light (Eph. 5:14). I reply, that these words are not spoken to the spiritually dead, but to professors of religion, as abundantly appears from the context; who were fallen into a drowsy, sleepy frame, which was very much owing to their conversation with dead sinners: wherefore the Apostle exhorts them, to rouse themselves from this lethargy, and arise, and depart from their dead companions, and unfruitful works of darkness, when they might expect more light and liveliness in their souls from Christ.

3. “A dead man cannot hear: but to the spiritually dead, God saith, Hear, and you souls shall live (Isa. 55:8).” To which may be replied, that there is a twofold hearing of the word; an external one, which regards the outward ministry of it, and an internal one, so as to understand it; the former, men spiritually dead may be capable of, but not of the latter; (see John 8:43, 47). Besides the persons spoken to in the passage of Scripture cited, were not spiritually dead, but were such as were quickened, who had a principle of spiritual life implanted in them. In consequence of which, they thirsted after spiritual things, verse 1, though greatly distressed under a sense of their spiritual poverty. Wherefore, the Lord encourages them to hearken to him, and listen to his covenant, grace and promises, that they might live comfortably.

4. “It would be absurd to exhort a dead body to turn about and live; whereas God thinks it not incongruous to say to persons spiritually dead, Turn yourselves, and ye shall live” (Ezek. 18:32; 33:11). I reply, that the passages referred to, do not regard such who were spiritually dead; since they concern the whole house of Israel, and every one of them: of whom it cannot be said, that they were dead in trespasses and sins: nor do the exhortations relate to the first work of conversion, but to an external reformation of them as a body politic, that they might peaceably live in their own land, and comfortably enjoy the good things of it.

5. “Good Christians are said to be dead to sin (Rom. 6:2, 11); to the law (Gal. 2:19), and to the world (Gal. 6:14).” Now if hence we cannot truly argue, that they cannot sin at all, that they can do nothing relating to the world, or to the law; neither can we argue from the metaphor of being dead in trespasses and sins, that we can do nothing in obedience to the calls of God, or compliance with the motions of his word and Spirit. To which I reply, that the meaning of the phrases in the passages mentioned is, that believers are freed from the damning power of sin, and from the curse and condemnation of the law, and are delivered from this present evil world. Now, whereas we can truly argue from hence, that believers are so dead to sin, the law, and the world, and these to them, as that they cannot condemn, damn, or destroy them; so we can truly argue from the metaphor, of being dead in trespasses and sins, that men can do nothing spiritually good, until God powerfully calls them by his grace, and they feel the quickening influences and motions of his Spirit.

2ndly In answer to the argument from these Scriptures, it is observed, that “both the places cited concern only the Gentile world; and so we cannot argue from those words, which do so certainly relate to the worst of Heathens, that this must be the natural state of all men: or, that the same power is requisite to convert the unregenerate Christian, and the worst of Heathens.” I reply, that these persons spoken of were Heathens, is readily granted; but that they were the worst of Heathens is not so manifest, though, probably, they were as bad as any. However, I cannot but take notice of the unregenerate Christian, as a mere paradox, a contradiction in terms; since no man can be truly a Christian but he that is regenerated by

the Spirit of Christ. But, passing these things, let it be observed, that the same character of being dead in a moral or spiritual sense, is given to unregenerate Jews, which is here given to the unconverted Gentiles (Matthew 8:22; John 5:25). For that they were Jews, and not Gentiles, our Lord speaks to and of in the places referred to, is evident from this consideration, that as yet the Gospel was not sent to the Gentiles; nor were there any among them as yet who heard his voice or followed him. Nothing is more a certain and true than this, that he, or she, that liveth in pleasure, whether Jew or Gentile, are dead while they live. Besides, the apostle says the very same things, in the same words, of himself, who was a Jew, and a devout one, and of others, while unconverted, as he does of these worst of Heathens (Eph. 2:4, 5). So that we may truly argue, and safely conclude, that this must be the natural state of all men; and that the same power is requisite to convert an unregenerate Jew, yea, an unregenerate man living where Christianity is professed, and the worst of Heathens; since the same characters belong to them.

Section 5

1 Corinthians 2:14.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

The natural man is not barely the sensual man, who is abandoned and given up wholly to his carnal lust and pleasures; since he is not the only person who is ignorant of spiritual things; which sense of the phrase the Arminians were formerly fond of, though they have now quitted it; but rather the man of reason, who is merely yuci>kov, has nothing but a soul, or bare reason in him, destitute of the grace of God; which is the case of every man in a natural state. Now this man, whilst he is such, and by the mere light of nature, cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. The utmost knowledge he can have of the doctrines of the Gospel, here intended, is merely notional and speculative, not spiritual and experimental. The reason is, because they are spiritually discerned, that is, tried and judged in a spiritual way. Nor can he receive them, so as to love and approve of them; because they are foolishness unto him, absurd and ridiculous. Wherefore, a divine

operation of grace upon his understanding, affections, and will, is absolutely necessary, in order to his spiritual knowledge, affectionate reception of, and hearty subjection to, the Gospel of Christ; and without this he will never understand it spiritually, nor receive and embrace it cordially. But to this are excepted,

1. That “the natural man here is not barely the unregenerate man; but the wise man, and disputer of the world, who will admit of nothing but what he can see proved by reason; and so receives not things revealed by the Spirit.” I reply, admitting this sense of the phrase, it follows, that if an unregenerate wise man, one of the greatest abilities, and most refined parts, in whom reason is sublimated, and wound up to its highest pitch it can well be, in unsanctified nature, cannot know and receive spiritual things; then an unregenerate foolish man, or one of meaner abilities, and of a lower rank and size, can never, as such, understand and embrace them. The apostle has pitched upon in instance which must necessarily conclude all men that are unregenerate, in a state of ignorance of spiritual things, and in an incapacity of knowing them, without the special illuminating grace of the Spirit.

2. That “the apostle speaks not of the inability of a Heathen to understand the meaning of any revelation discovered unto him: for how, then, it is asked, is it discovered to him? but of the necessity of a supernatural revelation, that the hidden wisdom of God might be made know to the world.” In answer, a Heathen, whether a philosopher, or a man of a more ordinary size, may be capable of understanding the literal, grammatical meaning of a revelation made to him, even of the external revelation God has made to the world; as that the import of it is, among other things, that Jesus is the Messiah, was born of a virgin, suffered, died, and rose again, and thereby procured salvation for men; and yet, have no spiritual sense and apprehension of these things, any relish for them, gust of them, or faith in them; all which he will remain a stranger to, unless accompanied with a special, internal revelation, and application of them to him by the Spirit of God. The necessity of which, and not of an external, supernatural revelation, the apostle here demonstrates; for the latter, the natural man, whether among Jews or Greeks, had; otherwise, it could not with any propriety be said, that he receiveth not, or

rejects these things, and accounts them foolishness; which were in consequence of an external, supernatural revelation made in the ministry of the apostles, who preached Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the reeks foolishness (1 Cor. 1:23, 2:4); it being with respect to them unattended with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Section 6

2 Corinthians 3:5.

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.

The argument from hence, proving the insufficiency of man's free will, and the necessity of the grace of God to the doing of that which is spiritually good, stands thus: If men are insufficient of themselves to, or cannot by the strength of free will, think anything that is spiritually good, much less can they will, and still less perform, that which is so. But,

1. It is said, that this argument, "if it proves anything, proves too much; namely, that we are not sufficient of ourselves, logi>sasqai> ti, to think anything at all, whether it be good or bad." I reply, that neither the words of the apostle, nor our argument upon them, prove so much; nor the words of the apostle; since by ti, anything, he means either any good thing, or any evil thing, or any thing that is neither good nor evil; not any evil thing, for the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually (Gen. 6:5), nor any thing that is neither good nor evil; for men are capable of themselves of thinking of things natural and civil, which, in a moral sense, are neither good nor evil. It remains, then, that he means any good thing which respects God, and Christ, and faith in them; as when our Lord says, Without me ye can do nothing (John 15:5); his meaning is not, that we can do no natural or civil action of life, or no evil action, without him, but no good one. Nor does our argument, on these words of the apostle, prove so much; since it is limited to things which are spiritually good. Moreover, the logi>sasqai, here used, does not signify barely to think, but to think with judgment and affection (see Phil. 4:8), which no man, with respect to spiritual things, is capable of without the grace of God.

2. It is urged, that "the words relate to the apostles, and to them alone, and are a declaration of their own

insufficiency to carry on the great work of conversion of the world to the Christian faith by their own strength and wisdom, without the illuminations and powerful operations of the Holy Ghost." To which I answer, that the apostle is indeed speaking of the ministry of the Gospel by him and others, and of the success of it, and of their trust and confidence through Christ concerning it (vv. 3, 4); yet in these words he speaks in general terms; Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves, either with respect to the work of the ministry, or the conversion of souls, or our trust in God, or anything else that is of a spiritual nature: but our sufficiency, for every spiritual work, is of God. And then he proceeds to take notice particularly of their fitness for the ministry they had of God. Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament. Whereas, if the words in the fifth verse relate particularly to the sufficiency the apostles had from God for the work of the ministry he must be guilty of a very great tautology in the sixth verse; for the sense of both must be this; We are not sufficient for the work of the ministry of ourselves, but our sufficiency for it is of God; o{v kai, who also hath made us sufficient ministers of the New Testament. Besides, if the apostles were not sufficient of themselves to think, study, or collect anything together, fit for the ministry of the Gospel, and so as to be useful to the good of souls, much less must a natural man be able to think any spiritual good thing, and still less be able to do anything towards his regeneration, or in the real work of faith and conversion, which is entirely owing to the efficacious grace of God.

Section 7

John 15:5.

For without me, ye can do nothing.

That men in an unregenerate state are capable of performing natural and civil actions, and such as have the appearance of moral good, will be allowed; but that they are able to do that which is spiritually good, or any good thing in a spiritual manner, must be denied; for even believers themselves are not able to do anything of this kind of themselves, or without Christ, and the Spirit and grace of Christ, as is sufficiently evident from these words. But,

1. It is objected, that "these words of Christ are spoken expressly to those who were abiding in Christ,

and truly believed already." Be it so; if such were not able of themselves to do anything that is spiritually good, much less able are they who have no abiding in Christ, or true faith in him.

2. It is said, that these words being spoken to the twelve apostles, "signify, that without the gifts and powerful assistance of the Holy Spirit, who belonged only to them that abode in Christ, they could do nothing to convert the world." I reply, though these words are spoken to the apostles, yet not to them only; for our Lord's words throughout the context are so expressed, as that may be applied to any other persons under a profession of faith; much less are they spoken to them as apostles, but as in union, with Christ, believers in him, professing faith in him, as branches in him the vine, deriving all their grace, life, liveliness, and fruitfulness, from him, by which they performed every spiritual action; all which are far from being peculiar to them as apostles. Moreover, this sense of the words makes Christ to stand for the gifts and assistance of the Spirit; whereas the phrase without me; signifies separate, or apart from him, that is, from his person and grace, and not the gifts and assistance of his Spirit. Besides, it is not true that the Holy Spirit, with respect to his gifts and assistance, qualifying for and succeeding in the work of the ministry, only belonged to them that abode in Christ; since many may, and have had the Spirit in this sense, as Judas, who never had any real being or abiding in Christ.

3. It is observed from Gataker, "that cwri<v ejmou, without me, is the same as carique>ntev ajp ejmou~ being separated from me, ye can do nothing; which, if we extend to all true Christians, only signifies, that "without abiding in the faith, they cannot be faithful in the faith; and without their continuing united to Christ by the Spirit, they cannot bring forth the fruits of the Spirit." It is certain, that men without abiding in the faith, can never be faithful in it; and without continuing united to Christ, cannot bring forth the fruits of the Spirit; though all that are truly in the faith shall abide in it, and such as are really united to Christ, shall continue so, and bring forth fruit. But then, if these cannot bring forth fruit without abiding in the faith, and continuing united to Christ, how should such bring forth fruit who never were in the faith, nor in Christ? Gataker's observation, and which is also

Piscator's, is a very good one; and the sense of the words it confirms is this; that could the apostles, or any other believers, be supposed to be, or could possibly be separated from Christ, they would not be able to do anything that is truly and spiritually good. And if so, how should such who are cwri<v Cristou, without Christ (Eph. 2:12), as all unregenerate persons are, be capable of doing anything of that nature? It is true, they may be able to attend to the hearing of the word, by which faith comes, may ask, seek, and knock for the good Spirit, may consider of the ways of God, and turn their feet to his testimonies; but unless they are renewed by the Holy Ghost, are created in Christ Jesus, and have faith in him, they will not be able to do these, nor anything else in a spiritual manner. The Remonstrants themselves own, "that man in a sinful state, cannot of himself think, will, or do that which is truly good, and that it is necessary that he should be regenerated, and renewed of God in Christ by his Holy Spirit, in the understanding, affection, and will, and in all his powers, that he may be able rightly to understand, meditate, will, and perform that which is truly good; as it is written, Without me ye can do nothing."

Section 8

John 6:44.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

1. This passage of Scripture is no inconsiderate proof of the doctrine of the powerful and efficacious grace of God in the work of faith and conversion. To come to Christ, is to believe in him. This is not to be attributed to the free will and power of man, but is owing to the Father's drawing; which is to be understood not of moral suasion, but of the internal and powerful influence of his grace. This act of drawing, is an act of power, even almighty power; as appears from its being something distinct from and superior to both doctrines and miracles. The Capernaïtes had heard the doctrine of Christ, which was taught with authority, and had seen his miracles, which were full proofs of his being the Messiah; and yet believed not, but continued murmuring at his person and parentage. This gave occasion to Christ to observe to them, that something more than these was necessary to their coming to him, or savingly believing in him, even

the powerful and efficacious grace of the Father in drawing. Besides, if this act of drawing was only an act of moral suasion, and not of almighty power, then a lesser action is ascribed to the Father who sent Christ, than is to Christ himself; though he is here spoken of as Mediator; since he takes to himself the power of raising such up at the last day who come unto him, which must be allowed to be an act of omnipotence; when moral suasion is what belongs to every ordinary minister of the word. Add to this, if it be considered what men, in conversion, are drawn off from and to, from their beloved lusts and darling righteousness, to look unto and rely upon Christ alone for salvation; from what was before so very agreeable, to that which, previous to this work on their souls, was so very disagreeable; to what else can this be ascribed, but to unfrustrable and insuperable grace? But then, though this act of drawing is an act of power, yet not of force: God, in drawing of unwilling, makes willing in the day of his power; he enlightens the understanding, bends the will, gives a heart of flesh, sweetly allures by the power of his grace, and engages the soul to come to Christ, and give up itself unto him; he draws with the cords of a wan, with the bands of love (Hosea 11:4). Drawing, though it supposes power, yet not always co-action, or violence. Music draws the ear, love the heart, and pleasure the mind, trahit sua quemque voluptas. The Jews have a saying, that the proselytes in the days of the Messiah shall be *pyrwrg pyrg młwk*, all of them proselytes drawn, that is, such as shall freely and voluntarily become proselytes.

2. In answer to this sense of the word, it is said, “that to be drawn of God, cannot import our being moved by any inward and irresistible impressions to believe in Christ; for then no man could come to Christ without this irresistible impression; and then no other person could be blame-worthy for not believing on him, because they could not do it without that powerful attraction which God was not pleased to afford them nor could it be praiseworthy to believe in him, because they only did so when they could not choose but do it, as being moved in so doing by a force they were not able to resist.” To which I reply, that if by an irresistible impression, is meant such an internal influence of the grace of God upon the soul, which, though opposed, cannot be resisted so as to be overcome, and rendered in effectual, we

affirm, agreeable to these word of Christ, that without this no man can come to him; yet, notwithstanding this, persons may be blame-worthy, as the Jews were, for not believing on him as the Messiah; though without this powerful attraction they could not come to him, and believe in him to the saving of their souls. Besides, though the ability of coming to Christ in a spiritual manner is owing to the powerful grace of God in drawing; yet the disability of coming to Christ does not arise from a defect, or want of that powerful attraction, but from the corruption and vitiosity of nature, which being blame-worthy, what springs from it must be so likewise. Moreover, we readily know, that it is not praise-worthy in men to come to Christ, and believe in him, but that all the praise is due to God, and to his efficacious grace, by which they are what they are in conversion; since faith is the gift of God, and of his sole operation: nor could any come to Christ, unless it were given unto him of the Father; and therefore he ought to have all the praise and glory.

3. Whereas it is affirmed, that “to be drawn of God can only signify,

(1.) “To be persuaded and prevailed upon to come to Christ, by the consideration of the mighty works which God had done to justify that he was the true Messiah; to which Christ appeals as divine testimonies of him, and by which the unbelieving Jews became inexcusable.” I answer, it is true, that miracles were proofs of his Messiahship, and which left the Jews, who rejected him, without excuse; but then these works, properly speaking, were done by Christ himself, and the conviction of his being the Messiah from them, and the persuasion to come to him, and believe on him, on the account of them, were from the Spirit; and neither of them the acts of the Father, and so not intended by this act of drawing. Besides, multitudes of souls, both under the Old and New Testament, before, and since the coming of Christ, have been enabled to come to him for life and salvation, who never were persuaded and prevailed upon so to do, by the consideration of miracles. And many who did see the miracles of Christ, did not, in a spiritual manner, come to him, and believe in him. Wherefore our Lord ascribes faith in him to a superior power, to the unfrustrable influences of divine grace, which are here signified by the Father’s drawing. Or,

(2.) It is said, to be drawn by the Father signifies

“to be moved by the great promise of eternal life confirmed by these miracles to do it; for where there is a firm belief, and lively sense of that inestimable blessing, it must strongly engage to come to Christ, from whom it is only to be expected.” To which I answer, eternal life is, indeed, only to be expected from Christ; and when there is a firm belief and lively sense of it, as in him, and to be had from him, persons will be strongly engaged to go to him for it: but then, what is it that gives that firm belief, and fixes that lively sense of this blessing, so as strongly to engage to come to Christ for it, but the powerful and efficacious grace of God? The bare external revelation of the promise, though confirmed by miracles, will not do it. Instructions by the ministry of the word are not sufficient, unless accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. The following words are not a proof of it, It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me (John 6:45): which do intend mere external instructions, or objective teachings, for multitudes are in that way instructed who never come to Christ; but special teachings, such as are attended with the energy of divine grace, with the laws and doctrines of Christ put into the inward part, and written on the heart. Add to all this, our Lord himself explains what he means by the Father’s drawing (v. 65), where he says, No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father; which is more than affording means and motives, it is giving faith itself. What is said to answer to the argument from Matthew 7:18, and Romans 8:7, will be considered hereafter in the next chapter.

Section 9

Acts 11:18.

[with Ephesians 2:8]

Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

These scriptures prove that faith and repentance are the gifts of God, and owing to the powerful operation of his grace. Now

1. To confront this, it is said, “What God commands we must do; and therefore must be active in it: but God commands all men every where to repent (Acts 17:30), and to believe in the name of Christ (1 John 3:23), therefore we must be active in the works of

faith and repentance.” To which I reply, that though what God commands is the rule of man’s duty, yet not the measure of his strength. It is no good arguing from God’s commands, to man’s power in his present state. God requires men to keep the whole law; it does not follow from thence, that they are able to do it. So, though it is his commandment, that we should believe in his Son Jesus Christ, and repent; yet it is certain, that faith is not of ourselves, it is a gift of grace, and of the operation of God; and the same may be said of repentance. Moreover, though believers are active in the exercise of the graces of faith and repentance; for it is the convinced sinner, and not God or Christ, or the Spirit, who repents and believes; yet in both men are purely passive in the first production and implantation of them in their hearts. But we are told, that; it by this way of arguing, the Jews must have been purely passive in all their hardness of heart, Ahab’s false prophets in lying, the enemies of God’s church in all the evils they do to her, and in the blasphemies they utter against him; because God is said (Rom. 11:8; 1 Kings 22:23; Rev. 6:4, 8; 13:5, 7), to give a spirit of slumbering, a lying spirit, power to take peace from the earth, and a mouth speaking blasphemies. To which I answer, that these judicial acts of God, and as such the persons to whom they relate, were indeed passive in them, these being purely God’s acts, and not man’s; and yet the Jews were active in hardening their own hearts, Ahab’s prophets in following the suggestions of the lying spirit, and the enemies of God’s church in using their power to make war with the saints, and in opening their mouths in blasphemy against him.

2. This is laid down “as a general and rule, that where God is said to give any thing, the exercise of that faculty is still supposed which he hath given us already; and God is only said to give it by giving those faculties by which we are enabled to obtain it, and the means and motives which are sufficient to excite those faculties to the performance of their proper actions. Thus it is always with respect to natural and spiritual gifts; for thus God giveth riches and wisdom. Thus the Jews say, that God hath given repentance to the Gentiles, when, by Peter’s preaching to them peace through Jesus Christ, and promising remission of sins upon their repentance, they repented, and believed in Christ. So faith is said to be the gift of God; because

the objects of it are only by divine revelation made known, and are only confirmed, and made credible by the testimony God hath given to them.” But though the Gentiles repented, and believed in Christ, upon Peter’s preaching peace and pardon to them through him; yet it was not through the strength of their natural faculties, or barely through means and motives, exciting their faculties to the performance of these actions, but through the power of the Holy Ghost; for while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word (Acts 10:44); who produced in them these graces of faith and repentance, and assisted them in the exercise of them on their proper objects. Besides, if God may be said to give faith and repentance to men, when he only gives the means of them, and motives to them, he may be said equally to give faith and repentance to men, who do not believe and repent; which is a contradiction in terms, provided they have the same means and motives as those who do. And so Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, may be said to have faith and repentance given them; because they had the means of them, and motives to them; the doctrines of Christ were preached unto them, and his mighty works done among them; though our Lord upbraids them with their impenitence and unbelief. So, when faith is said to be the gift of God, if no more is meant by it, than that the objects of it are made known, confirmed, and rendered credible by a divine revelation; then all those may be said to have it given to them, to whom the objects of it are so made known and confirmed. Whereas there are multitudes, who through the external revelation of the word, know that Christ is the object of faith, and yet have no true faith in him. Therefore more is meant than this, even the donation of the grace itself; for it is given to men to believe, even actually to exercise faith. To which is required, besides the confirming evidence of revelation, the power and grace of God; for no man can come to Christ, that is, believe on him, except the Father draw him. Nor is it always true, with respect to natural gifts, that God gives riches and wisdom to men, when he gives them faculties, means, and motives of getting wealth and wisdom (see Eccl. 9:11). When he does give riches and wisdom, he gives more than barely faculties, means, and motives to get them; he gives riches and wisdom themselves: so when he gives faith and repentance, it is not merely

natural faculties capable of them, or the bare means of them, or motives inducing to them, but the things themselves.

Section 10

Acts 16:14.

Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul.

The heart of man is naturally shut up against God and Christ, and every thing that is spiritually good; and nothing less than divine power can open it, nor any other but he that have the key of the house of David, that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth (Rev. 3:7); which proves that conversion is God’s work, and wrought by the power of his grace. In answer to which,

1. It is owned, that “God inclined Lydia to do this; but the only question is said to be, whether he did it by any extraordinary and irresistible influence? This it seems reasonable to deny.” But, why should it seem reasonable to deny it? Surely, that action which overcomes resistance, and takes out of the way every thing that obstructs, must needs have an irresistible influence. Now, such is this action of opening a poor sinner’s heart; it overcomes the opposition within, and removes that which shut, and kept the heart shut to every thing that is spiritually good, and, therefore, must be done by an irresistible influence. Our author proceeds, and reasons thus: “Either she alone was ajxi>a, prepared, disposed, and fitted to receive this influence, and then she had done something already towards her conversion; or if it were absolutely necessary that; she might believe, and yet she alone, though no more fitted or prepared for it than the rest, received it; the other auditors for want of this extraordinary influence, must lie under a necessity of not believing; and so it could not be blame-worthy in them, that they did not believe.” I reply, whether Lydia was the only person or no converted, at this time, is not certain, no mention is made of any other; and that she was fitted and disposed to receive this influence does not appear, no not from her being sebome>nh to<n Qeo<n, one that worshipped God; for in Antioch there were many of these sebome>nwn gunai~kwn, devout and honorable women, who were so far from being fitted and disposed to believe, that they raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts (Acts 13:50).

And had she been fitted, prepared, and disposed to receive this influence, it does not follow that she had done something towards her conversion, since this might be, and yet no conversion; and, besides, this disposition might be of God, and not of herself. On the other hand it is urged, if she was no more fitted for it than others, and yet received it, the rest, for want of it, must lie under a necessity of not believing, and so could not be blamed for their unbelief. But it should be observed, that though such is the condition of man by the fall, that he cannot believe in Christ, without the powerful influence of divine grace, which God is not obliged to communicate; yet, it is not the withholding of that influence, or denying that grace, which lays him under a necessity of not believing, but it is the corruption of his nature that lays and holds him in the chains of unbelief; and, therefore, his unbelief is not to be imputed to the want of this powerful influence, which God is not obliged to give, but to the vitiosity and wickedness of his heart, on which account he is justly blame-worthy.

2. It is alleged, that “to open the heart, and to open the ear, are Scripture phrases of like import; for the effect of both is the same, namely, the rendering the person willing and inclined to do the thing. Now this God sometimes does by his afflicting hand, and sometimes by the preaching of the word; so that they, who have their hearts affected with, and inclined by it to what is good, may be said properly enough to have their hearts opened by it.” To which I reply, that both the opening of the ear and of the heart are God’s acts, and not man’s: and, though God sometimes does these things by afflictions, and by the preaching of the word, as moral instruments, yet neither the one nor the other will ever produce them, without the mighty power of his Spirit and grace accompanying them: and, whereas it is said, that such who have their hearts affected with the word, and inclined by it to that which is good, may be said to have their hearts opened by it. But who, or what is it that gives and produces this affection and inclination? All that hear it are not affected with it, and inclined by it: to what else can this be ascribed, but to the powerful and efficacious grace of God?

3. It is observed, that “God is here said to open the heart of Lydia, not to believe, but only prose>cein, to attend to the things spoken of Paul; that is, to

weigh and seriously consider of the greatness of the blessings promised to believers, namely, remission of sins and eternal life; and that attention produced faith in her.” I reply, that it is true, that faith comes by hearing, and attending to what is heard; but it is neither hearing nor attention that produces faith, but the grace and power of God: hence it is said to be the work of God, and of the operation of God (John 6:22; Col. 2:12). And, if such an act of God’s grace and power, as the opening of the heart, is necessary, to a proper, profitable, and useful attention to the word, and to a serious consideration of the blessings of it; how much more necessary must it be to the work of conversion, to true saving faith in Christ?

Section 11

Jeremiah 31:18.

[with Deuteronomy 30:6]

Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God.

Since God promises to circumcise the heart, and Ephraim here, being under afflictive providences, which had not such an effect upon him as to turn him heartily and effectually to the Lord, prays that he would take the work into his own hands more immediately, believing that then he should be thoroughly converted; we conclude, that the circumcision and conversion of the heart are the works of God in us, in which we are passive; that they are wrought by his powerful grace, without which all means are insufficient to produce them. Now,

1. In answer to such texts as these, in general, this is laid down as a most certain rule: “that when God doth require us to do what he himself doth promise, and hath made it our duty to perform, his promise is only to perform what is requisite, on his part, towards the work.” But this author should have informed us what that is which is requisite on God’s part, and what that is which is man’s duty to perform, towards the work of conversion. Whereas nothing is more certain, than that God does both require of us to do, and he himself promises to do, the whole work of conversion; which he does not by persuasion, or laying before us inducements to it, as is suggested, but by unfrustrable influence. And yet his command to do it does not imply that we are gods, or have equal power with him, as is intimated; nor does praying to him for the performance of what he requires of us,

and he has promised, suppose a desire to be excused from obeying his commands. The commands of God show his authority, and man's duty; the promises of God discover his grace and power, and are a relief to man's weakness, which no way lessen his obligation to duty.

2. It is observed, that "the same God, who promiseth to circumcise the hearts of his people, requires them to circumcise their own hearts (Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:5). And it is suggested, that the promise is conditional, namely, if they would call to mind the blessings and curses he had pronounced (v. 1), and turn to the Lord (v. 2), and that it is made to all their seed, to nations, and not particular persons." I reply, that the passages referred to have been considered in the former part of this performance; and as to the conditions mentioned, if they are conditions, they are not conditions of the circumcision of the hearts of God's people, but of turning their captivity. And though this promise is made to their seed, as well as to themselves, yet not to all their seed, much less to nations. Besides, it particularly regards the time of the Jews' conversion, when all the elect of God among them shall be saved.

3. It is said, that "seeing God so frequently requires of the same persons, that they should turn themselves from their transgressions, promising life to the penitent, and threatening those that would not with death; and seeing he complains so oft of his own people, and of that very Ephraim which made this prayer, that they would not turn to him; it must be absurd to urge this prayer to excuse men from a duty required by God under such dreadful penalties." To which may be returned: that the duty required by God, in the places referred to, does not design internal conversion, but external reformation; which latter, men may be capable of effecting, though not of the former. Though admitting internal conversion is meant, God's requiring it does not suppose man's ability to perform it, but his need of it; and is done with a view to bring him to a sense of his state, and that he may apply to God for it, as Ephraim did. Nor does such a prayer for conversion excuse men from obligation to turn to the Lord, or any duty respecting the outward walk and conversation; so far from it, that converting grace, when obtained, puts men into a capacity, and engages them to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world. And whereas

it is added, "that by comparing this prayer with the preceding chapter, in which God promises so oft to turn their captivity, it appears this is only a prayer that God would bring them out of that thralldom, like that of the Psalmist (Ps. 126:4)." Let it be observed, that this is a sense which the Jews themselves, who are ready to explain scriptures this way whenever they have the least opportunity, do not give into. The Targum paraphrases the words thus, dñlwpl anbyta, turn us to thy worship. Kimchi observes, that it is as if it was said hbwçtb yklbq, receive me by repentance. Besides, it is plain, that what Ephraim here prayed for, he quickly had, as appears from verse 19, upon which followed true repentance; and being a dear son, and pleasant child to God (v. 20), he comforts him by assuring him that he would have mercy on him; and as an evidence of it, bids him turn again to his cities, which indeed designs the turning of his captivity: but then this is manifestly distinguished from the turning Ephraim prayed for, and which he enjoyed before he had this encouragement to turn to his cities.

4. The Remonstrants formerly paraphrased the words thus: "As thou hast chastised Ephraim, O Lord, so chastise me; for though I am in part chastised, yet chastise me more and more:" and they farther suggest, "that they do not intend first conversion; since he being converted prays." In which may be observed, that this sense of the text introduces another person, speaking to the Lord, besides Ephraim, contrary to the express words, and plain reading of them: nor is the word bwç, here translated turn, ever used for affliction or chastisement in all the word of God, though sometimes for deliverance from it: nor is there any command, or example of men's praying for affliction; for though they sometimes pray, that afflictions maybe sanctified, and that they may be supported under or delivered from them, yet never, that they may be brought upon them, or increased. And as to what is intimated, that the text is not to be understood of first conversion, being the prayer of a converted man; it may be replied, that it does not appear that Ephraim (for no other person can be meant) was then converted, at least in his own apprehensions, but afterwards (see v. 19). Moreover, Ephraim is to be understood not of a single person, but of a body of men; many of whom, and it may be the greatest part, were not converted: nor is his

praying a sufficient evidence of his conversion; since a natural man is capable of praying, and of praying for conversion, under some awakenings of conscience. But be it so, that Ephraim was converted, and that he prayed not for the first work of conversion, but for the farther progress and carrying of it on, or for a renewal of it after backslidings; yet if this could not be done by himself, but required the grace and power of God; much less can the: first work of conversion be wrought by a graceless creature; and much more must that work require the powerful and efficacious grace of God.

Section 12

Jeremiah 31:33.

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.

These phrases of putting, and writing the law of God in the inward parts of the heart, do not mean barely a making known the nature of the moral law, as to the spirituality and perfection of it, or the glory and excellency of the gospel, its truths and ordinances; but a creating in the soul a real and heart affection for these things, and a subjecting of it to them by the power of divine grace; and indeed, are expressive of an internal work of the powerful grace of God upon the soul, in which man is as passive as a vessel is, in which any thing is put; or as paper and parchment on which any thing is written. Now, to this the following things are objected.

1st. That "these promises are made expressly to the whole house of Israel, to all with whom the old covenant was made, and whom God brought out of Egypt, and would bring again out of captivity; and therefore can be no covenant made with the elect of the house of Israel and Judah; because then the whole nation of the Jews must have been elected and converted; and because it is made with those who kept not his former covenant; whereas the elect always persist, say these men, in their covenant with God; this therefore can be no new covenant with them." To which I reply, that these promises are not made to the same individual persons, not to all, nor to any, with whom the old covenant was made, whom God brought out of Egypt, and whose carcasses fell in the

wilderness, but their posterity; for it is expressly said in verse 32, that this new covenant is not according to the covenant that God made with their fathers in the day he took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. And though they are made to the house of Israel, yet they are not said to be made to the whole house of Israel, and to all the children of Israel and Judah; and therefore might be made to the elect of the house of Israel. Whence it does not follow, that the whole nation of the Jews must have been elected and converted; nor was it made with those who kept not the former covenant; nor do we say that the elect always persist in their covenant with God; for we know that the covenants, vows, and promises they make, are often broken; but we say, that they always abide in God's covenant with them, and are always his people, and he their God; and which notwithstanding is a new covenant to them, especially under the gospel-dispensation, to which these promises refer, being under a new mode of administration, and always new in perpetual force and vigor. Besides, the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, may be taken literally or figuratively; if literally, this prophecy concerning them was accomplished in the times of Christ and his apostles, who first preached the gospel, and made known the new covenant of grace to the Jews; many of whom were converted under it, the gospel being the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16): they may be taken figuratively, and design the elect of God, whether among Jews or Gentiles; for as there was an Israel after the flesh, so there was one after the Spirit: even the whole Israel of God, the chosen vessels of salvation, to whom the new covenant and all the blessings of it peculiarly belong.

2ndly It is said, that "these words, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, import two things:

1. "That he would clearly make known his will to them, so that they need not be at much pains to find it out, as in Deuteronomy 30:11-14, Romans 10:8, and 2:14." To which I answer, that though these words import a clear and plain discovery of God's will, yet that is not all; for there may be, and is a clear and plain revelation of God's will externally made in the scriptures, and by the ministry of the word to some persons, in whose hearts nothing is internally put or

written: whence it follows that putting and writing the law of God in the heart, is something more, and what is distinct from, a bare making known the will of God, though never so clear and plain; and must intend an internal operation and application of God's grace. Moreover, where the knowledge of God, of his grace, mind and will, is spiritual, experimental, and saving, that follows upon, and is the fruit and effect of the putting and writing the law in the heart, as appears from the following verse; and is owned by the author of this exception. Once more, when the Gospel, which is the grand revelation of God's will, has a place in the hearts of any, it is owing to the powerful and efficacious grace of God that accompanies it, opens the heart, and lets it in; where it; is not only clearly known, but affectionately received, experimentally felt, and truly believed.

2. "And inculcating them on the soul by the Holy Spirit, so as that they may be still fresh upon the memory; (Deut. 6:6; 11:18, Prov. 3:1, 3). Whence it follows, that these promises cannot be so understood, as if God by them engaged to do the whole work, which he hath engaged us so expressly to perform." To which I reply, that the persons spoken to in the cited passages were not unconverted persons, but such who had been under the first work of conversion: and the phrases of laying up and writing the laws of God in their hearts intend more than a bare remembrance of them, even a strong affection for them, and close attachment to them; so the sin of Judah is said (Jer. 17:1) to be graven upon the table of the heart, which does not intend their consciousness of it, and the keeping of it in their memory; but on the contrary, stupidity, insensibility of it, indolence about it, and a stiff tenacious adherence to it, as well as affection for it. And should these phrases intend no more here, can it be supposed, that there should ever be an affection for the law of God, or a close adherence to the Gospel of Christ, in such whose carnal minds were enmity to God, and not subject to the law of God, nor could they be, without the powerful operation of God's mighty grace? Since then these words import, besides a dear knowledge of the law and Gospel, and an imprinting the eternal truths of both in the mind, a hearty affection for them, which issues in a professed subjection to them; this must be owing, not to the power and will of man, but to the unfrustrable and insuperable grace

of God. And this objector owns, that the inculcating, them on the soul must be purely passive. The passage in Jeremiah 32:49, will be considered under the head of the saints' perseverance.

Section 13

Ezekiel 11:36:26.

A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

These words, with those Ezekiel 11:19,20, prove that conversion is the work of God, and not of man; that man is passive in and cannot contribute to his regeneration and renovation, his heart being like a stone, hard and inflexible, on which no impressions are made until this hardness is removed; which man is incapable of, and is done by God, when he gives a heart of flesh, a soft and sensible one, or a new heart, and a new spirit, in which are new principles, affections, and resolutions; and which can be ascribed to nothing less than the omnipotent and unfrustrable grace of God. Now it is said that the arguments, taken from both these places, have two of the general faults which render all arguments of this nature null. As,

1st. "That they speak of all the whole house of Israel (Ezek. 11:15; 36:21, 22), to all that were gathered out of all countries, and brought to their own land (v. 24), and so belong not to the elect only." But it should be observed, that all the whole house of Israel, and every individual thereof, were not gathered out of all countries, upon the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, which seems to be here designed; nor are the whole house of Israel here spoken of, neither is it here promised, nor in Ezekiel 11:19, to the whole house of Israel, that God would give to them all a new heart, and a new spirit, only to some who are distinguished from them (v. 21), whose heart walked after the hart of their detestable things, and their abominations: and therefore the Lord threatens to recompense their ways upon their own heads. It remains then, that these promises were made to and fulfilled in the spiritual Israel, the elect of God among them, the people whom he foreknew. Farther,

1. It is said, if it "respects their return from the Babylonish captivity, it must be conditional, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and especially the complaints of the prophet Malachi, showing that they were never

fulfilled in many of them, and from Ezekiel 11:21." To which I answer, that these promises were not made to all the people of Israel, as has been observed; therefore there needed no condition to he either understood or expressed either in this or in the parallel text, to suit them to these people and times; for, though the people was wicked who returned from captivity, yet there was not only an external reformation made among them, but an inward sense of things was given to a large number of them, as appeared at the reading of the law to them by Ezra. And it may be observed, that the people was never so addicted to idolatry after their return from their captivity as before; so that the promises in this and the preceding verse had a considerable accomplishment at this time.

2. Moreover, it is also objected, that "according to this exposition it must follow, that not one good man came out of the captivity, not one of them with a new or a clean heart; but all of them with a heart of stone, which was to be taken away." I reply as before, that these promises were not made to them all; and therefore the consequence does not follow. Besides, some good men might, as no doubt did, come out of the captivity; though the majority might be wicked, who stood in need of the things promised. Moreover, good men stand daily in need of being renewed in the spirit of their minds, and often of having clean hearts created, and right spirits renewed in them.

3. It is also suggested, that this promise "relates to the conversion of the Jewish nation yet to come, and to them alone; and therefore all Christians may as well expect to be exempted from famine (v. 30), and to have increase of corn (v. 27), and their waste places and fenced cities built (vv. 33,35); as the other blessings promised here." To which I answer, that though the temporal blessings here promised were peculiar to the Jews, yet the spiritual ones are such as all real Christians not only may expect, but have; and therefore, admitting that the words refer to the time of the conversion of the Jews, inasmuch as Gentile believers are made partakers of the same spiritual blessings and promises, are called in the same hope of their calling, and saved by the same grace of the Lord Jesus, as the Jews will be; there is all the reason imaginable to conclude, that they are regenerated and converted by the same grace and power; God not making use of two different methods of conversion,

one among the Jews, and another among the Gentiles.

2ndly. It is observed, I that "God doth expressly command these persons, by the same prophet, to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit, Ezekiel 18:31, which assures us that something was required, on their parts, towards the completion of this promise." But these cannot be the same persons whom God, by the prophet, commands to make them a new heart, to whom he here promises to give one, if this promise relates, as it is said to do, to the conversion of the Jewish nation yet to come; seeing the persons God commands to make themselves a new heart were the house of Israel, then in being of Ezekiel's time; the meaning of which exhortation, and its consistence with man's passiveness, and the efficacious and unfrustrable grace of God in conversion, have been shown in the first part of this work.

Section 14

Philippians 2:13.

[with Hebrews 12:21]

For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

From these passages it appears, that the work of grace is the work of God only, which he produces by an irresistible and insuperable power, according to his sovereign will and pleasure; that there is no good thing in us, but what he works in us; and no good thing done by us, but what is owing to his efficacious grace; the will and power to do any thing spiritually good are both from him, for man, in his fallen state, has neither of himself. Now, "that God doth this is not denied: the question is, whether he doth it by a physical operation, unfrustrable by the will of man, or by internal suasion, or inducements to prevail upon us thus to will and do; and that he doth this only in this latter sense is said, to be evident, "1. From verse 12, where we are commanded to work out our own salvation, in which we cannot be purely passive; nor is it a reason, that God works in us both to will and to do, why we should, but rather why we should not will, or work at all; if both is and will be irresistibly performed without us. We are also bid to do this will fear an trembling; but surely, if God unfrustrably works in us both to will and to do, there can be no possibility of miscarrying, and so no ground for fear and trembling. Besides, the Philippians were exhorted to do this much more in St. Paul's absence

than in his presence. The only reason of which is, that he being present, stirred them up by his counsels and exhortations to do what was according to the mind of God, to which they in his absence were immediately excited by the suggestions of the Holy Spirit.” To all which I reply, that the salvation the apostle I exhorts the Philippians to work out was not the spiritual and eternal salvation of their souls in general, nor the work of conversion in particular, which was already wrought in them; but the duties of religion, or things which accompany salvation, as has been shown in the former part of this work; in which they might be active, though in the good work of grace upon their souls they had been passive. Nor could any thing be a greater encouragement to them, to be active in the discharge of duty, than this; that God had laid in them principles of action, had wrought in them both to will and to do. The fear and trembling, with which they were to do these things, is not a slavish fear lest the work of grace should miscarry, but a reverence of the Divine Being, and humility of soul, which become believers in the performance of every religious action and as for their obeying, much more in St. Paul’s absence than in his presence, this is no part of the exhortation, but is prefaced to it by way of commendation, in order to animate and excite them to it with more diligence and cheerfulness. After all, if God works in us not by an unfrustrable operation, but by an operation frustrable by the will of man, how does he work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure?

2. It is observed that the word ejnergei~ doth not require this sense is evident; “because in Scripture it occurs very often, when it must be understood not of a physical, but only of a moral operation (as in Eph. 2:2; 2 Thess. 2:7,9,11; Heb. 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:13; Gal. 5:6; Philemon 6; Rom. 7:5).” I answer, that this word always signifies a powerful and efficacious operation, agreeable to the nature of the person or thing which is said to work; so Satan and Antichrist are said to work (Eph. 2:9; 2 Thess. 2:7,9), and that effectually, with all power and lying wonders; so the word of God is powerful, and world effectually in them that believe (Heb. 4:19; 1 Thess. 2:13), when it comes not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost; or when it is clothed with a divine power, though the former of these texts seems rather to be understood of Christ, the essential Word, than of the

written word. So faith is said to work by love (Gal. 5:6), and the communication of it, and not charity, to be effectual (Philemon 6), when by the secret power of the Spirit it is influenced, and drawn forth into exercise, and shows itself by love and good works. So the motions of sin, in the hearts of unregenerate men, work powerfully, effectually, and without control, to bring forth fruit unto death (Rom. 7:5). And, where this word is made use of to express any action of God’s, it always signifies such an operation as is not to be frustrated, or made void)see Eph. 1:11; 3:20; Phil. 3:21; Col. 1:29), and that it has this signification in the text before us is evident, both from the general sense of the word, and the nature of the work. Add to this, in the King’s manuscript the words are read oJ ejnergw~n oJ guna>mei ejn uJmi~n , who worketh by his power in you; therefore, not by moral persuasion, but by the mighty power of his grace.

3. It is said, “that both these places speak of men already believing, and converted; and therefore must be impertinently alleged to prove men must be purely passive in the work of conversion.” But admitting this, which will be readily done, the allegation of them is not impertinent; since, if persons already believing and converted, are not able either to will or to do any thing spiritually good of themselves, much less able must unconverted persons be. And if so much is required to work in them both to will and to do, how much more is requisite in the regeneration and conversion of a dead sinner? And if the saints are so passive under the exertions of that power which enables them to act, insomuch that they do not and cannot act until it is put forth, much more must they be passive in the first production of the work of grace upon their souls.

Section 15

1 Corinthians 4:7.

*For who maketh thee to differ from another?
And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive?
Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*

Nor man’s free will, care, industry, and diligence, but efficacious grace makes the difference in conversion; as abundantly appears, when two men, equally enjoying the same means, and are equally called in an external way, and the one is converted, and the other not: for who is it, then, that puts the

difference? Not man, but God. Now,

1. It is excepted, “that the apostle manifestly speaks here of those extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, the gifts of tongues and prophecy, etc., which being infused without human industry, and conferred on Christians without any such cooperation of their faculties as is required to the exercise of any Christian duty or moral virtue, it cannot with like reason be inquired of these duties, as it may be of those gifts, Who made thee to differ from another in them? Nor can it from them be duly inferred, that no man doth any thing to make himself differ from another in any virtue or pious disposition, to which men are stirred up by powerful motives, and praised by God for doing what others neglected to do; as in the case of the Bereans, the elder and the younger son, the publicans and harlots, compared with the scribes and Pharisees, the penitent publican and the proud Pharisee.” To which may be replied, that there is not the least syllable said by the apostle, either in the text or context, of the gift of tongues, or of any other extraordinary gift of the Spirit; nor is he speaking to ministers, or of any gift of theirs, by which they were distinguished from other men, or from one another; but to private Christians, the members of the church at Corinth, who were striving about and boasting of their ministers, and crying up one to a neglect and contempt of another: one valued himself upon his being converted under such a man’s ministry, and being baptized by him; another under another man’s ministry, and being baptized by him, and of the good judgment each of them had formed, and the choice they had made of their respective ministers; wherefore, the apostle (1 Cor. 4:6) exhorts them not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of them be puffed up for one against another, that is, for one minister against another; for, adds he, who maketh thee to differ? Some of you have been converted raider this, and some under that man’s ministry; but these men have been only instruments in your conversion; it is God, who, by his grace, has made the difference between you and others; and if you have enjoyed any blessing under their respective ministrations, you have received it from God; and, therefore, should not glory either in yourselves or in them, but in God, who has distinguished you by his favors. Now, since the apostle speaks not to ministers, but to the body of the people, it does not appear that

he manifestly speaks of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit: for were they all workers of miracles? (1 Cor. 12:29,30). Had they all the gifts of healing? Or could they all speak with tongues, or all interpret? Besides, suppose the apostle does here speak of extraordinary gifts; since true saving grace in conversion is preferable in its nature and use to them all, and God is allowed to make a difference by the one, why not by the other? Shall we allow him to make a difference in and by the lesser instance of his favors, and not in the greater? Moreover, the apostle does not expressly instance in any one particular thing, but in general inquires, Who maketh thee to differ? in any thing, in any one instance whatever: What hast thou that thou didst not receive? nothing at all; and therefore holds good, and is equally true of the difference made in conversion, and of the blessings then bestowed, as of any thing else. As to Christian duties, or moral virtues, in the exercise of which men distinguish themselves from one another, that is not the point in question. The question is not, whether men may make themselves to differ from others in the performance of these things, but, whether one man, by the power of his free will, can make himself to differ from another in conversion; this difference, we affirm, is owing to the efficacious grace of God. Besides, the performance even of these things, in a spiritual manner, is not owing to the power of men’s free will, or barely to the exciting grace of God, or to men’s being stirred up to them by motives, but to the powerful grace of God enabling them so to act. What was it else but this grace, which so powerfully operated in the Bereans, as that they received the word readily, and searched the Scriptures with so much diligence, which remarkably distinguished them from the

Thessalonians? Was it not the grace of God which enabled the elder son to repent and go and work in his father’s vineyard, when the second or younger son was left to his own free will, and the bare resolutions of nature? To whom can it be ascribed, but to him who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens, that publicans and harlots should go into the kingdom of God before the self-willed scribes and Pharisees? And it was nothing less than the powerful grace of God which wrought in the heart of the penitent publican, and made him so; which gave him the sense he had of himself, and of

his need of mercy through a mediator, which rendered him more acceptable to God than the proud Pharisee.

2. “To the question, when two are equally called and one converted, Who is it that puts the difference? it is said, the answer, grounded on God’s own righteous judgment, will be this: that man puts the difference, and not God only, because God judges not his own acts, but the acts of men.” I reply, that this is a very improper answer to the question; which is not when two men are before the judge, the one is condemned and the other acquitted, who puts the difference? But when two men are equally called by the external ministry of the word, the one is converted and the other not, who makes the difference? The methods God takes in conversion, and which he will take in the last judgment, are very different, as the things themselves are; in the former, he proceeds according to his justice. Men will be judged according to their works, but none are saved, or called, or converted by them, or according to them; in conversion he makes a difference, in the future judgment he will find one, and act according to it. Men will be considered, in that awful day, not barely as converted or unconverted persons, but as righteous or stoners; none will be condemned because God did not convert them or call them by his grace, but because they sinned against his law. On the other hand, the saints will be acquitted as righteous persons, through the righteousness of Christ, which gives them a title to heaven, and for which regenerating and converting grace makes them meet.

Section 16

Ephesians 2:8, 9.

[with 1 Corinthians 1:29]

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

The arguments in favor of the efficacious grace of God in conversion, from these passages of scripture, are as follow,

1st. faith, through which men are saved, and which is so considerable apart of the work of grace that the whole is denominated from it; the work of faith is not of ourselves, it does not spring from nature, nor is it produced in us by our own power, but is entirely the gift of God’s grace, which he implants in us, enables us to exercise, supports and increases, and perfects, or

fulfills with power. To which is excepted, that “Faith is not here called the gift of God, but salvation by grace through faith.” I reply, admitting that the apostle does not so immediately refer to faith in particular, but to salvation in general, as the gift of God; yet, since this salvation is wholly of grace, and not of works, is through faith, not as a work, having any casual influence, but as a mean of God’s appointing, it cannot stand excluded from being a gift of God; nor is this the only place in which it is so called (see John 6:65, Phil. 1:29).

2ndly If salvation is wholly of grace, and not of works, then conversion, which is a considerable branch of salvation, is also of grace, and not of works; and consequently there is no room for boasting; whereas, If conversion were the work of man’s power and free will, and not the work of God’s powerful and efficacious grace, he would have whereof to boast. In answer to which,

1. It is said, that the phrase, Ye are saved by grace, “cannot mean that they are actually saved, but only that they were called to a state of salvation, enjoyed the means, and were put into the way of salvation by grace.” But, why not actually saved? Since salvation was not only in God’s purpose appointed for them, and was actually wrought out and obtained for them by Christ, but was also brought home, and really applied to their souls by the Spirit of God; so that they were now saved according to the mercy of God, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5). Besides, if all such may be said to be saved by grace, who are externally called, or enjoy the means, the gospel of the grace of God; then unbelievers, as well as believers, such who put away the word of God from them, as well as they that receive it, such to whom it is the savour of death, as well as those to whom it is the savour of life, may be said to be saved by grace.

2. It is affirmed, that “though actual salvation depends upon good works, or sincere obedience, and though faith is the condition of justification, and good works of salvation, yet is all boasting utterly excluded; because the revelation, which contains the matters and motives of faith, and the miracles which engage to it, is the free gift of God; and because the good works we do, proceed not from ourselves, but are the fruits of faith, and performed in the strength

of God. It is of his preventing and exciting grace that we will, and of his assisting grace that we are enabled to perform that will: and it is still of grace that any of these things, which deserve nothing from God, find acceptance with him.” I am very glad to observe, that all these things, last-mentioned, are earned to arise from the grace of God; which is far from agreeing with the scheme our author contends for throughout this performance of his, and contradicts the notion of salvation depending on good works; which notion is against the express letter of the text before us, as well as thwarts many other passages of Scripture (see Rom. 3:20,28; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5). Moreover, if actual salvation depends on good works, man has something to boast of; boasting is not excluded by the law, or doctrine of works, that is, by the doctrine of salvation by works; if Abraham, or any other man, were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory (Rom. 3:27; 4:2).

3. It is observed, “that the Scripture plainly grants that there is *kau>chma*, or matter or glorying, in things done by the assistance of the grace of God (as in 1 Cor. 9:15; 2 Cor. 11:10; 1:12; Gal. 6:4).” I reply, that the words *kau>chma*, and *kaucaomai*, are used by the apostle Paul, and do not signify an ascribing anything to one’s self, as proud boasters do; but a satisfaction, pleasure, and exultation of mind, as in the places referred to. The two first of which (1 Cor. 9:15; 2 Cor. 11:10), respect his preaching of the gospel, and not barely that, but the preaching of it without charge; which upon reflection, for many reasons, gave him an inward pleasure and satisfaction, and at the same time he declared, that though he preached the gospel, he had nothing to glory of. The next passage cited from 2 Corinthians 1:12, regards the agreeable life and conversation of the apostle, and other ministers in the world; which he attributes, not to fleshly wisdom, then there would be room for glorying; but to the grace of God, which was matter of rejoicing, though not of vain boasting. The last of these scriptures, Galatians 6:4, regards also the external conversion of the saints; which, when agreeable to the gospel of Christ, yields a pleasing reflection within a man’s self; so that betas no need to look out to others, to borrow any glory from them, by comparing himself with them, as the proud Pharisee did, when he said, God I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust,

adulterers, or even as this publican.

3rdly God has so contrived the business of our salvation, that no flesh should glory in his sight. Now if salvation, in any part of it, is to be ascribed to man, if conversion is not entirely God’s work, but man cooperates with him in the production of grace, then the whole glory of that work is not due to God. But,

1. This is thought to be “sufficiently accounted for by observing, that the principle, by which man cooperates with him in this work, is derived from him; and all the motives which excite this principle to act, arise purely from God’s preventing and exciting grace.” I confess, this is owning a great deal, but not enough: for this principle is not barely derived from God, but implanted by him; in which man is purely passive, and does not nor can he cooperate with him in the production of it. Moreover, though the motives which excite this principle to act are from the Lord, yet they must be attended with the powerful grace of God, or they will never excite the principle to act. Betides, though man is an agent, and acts for God, and his glory, under the influence of grace, in consequence of a principle of it wrought in him, yet he is no agent in the forming of that principle; were he, though an under one, part of the glory of it would belong to him; wherefore if God is chief agent, yet, if not a sole one in this work, the whole glory of it is not due to him.

2. It is observed, that “our Lord, and his apostles, often commend the good actions of men; and Christ will at last say to the righteous man, Well done, thou good and faithful servant.” But then it should be observed, that these praises and commendations do not regard the work of grace and conversion, but the fruits of it in the lives and conversations of the saints; which though God, of his great grace and goodness, is pleased to praise, commend, and signify his acceptance of, yet these persona are taught by the same grace to own, that when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants; and that it is by the grace of God they are what they are, and do what they do (Luke 17:10; 1 Cor. 15:10). And when Christ at the last day shall speak of their good works, and say to them (Matthew 25:35,37), I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, etc., they will reply, as having forgotten them, putting no trust in them, or ascribing the glory of them to themselves, When saw we thee an hungered, and

fed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink? etc.

CHAPTER VI
OF THE CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE

and the importance of the will of man to that
which is spiritually good

The learned writer, whose performance I am now considering, affirms, “that the doctrine which teacheth that man, by the fall, hath contracted such a disability to what is good, that without the special grace of God he can do nothing that is truly good, and is fallen under such a servitude to sin, as renders it necessary for him to be still doing evil, has no foundation in the holy Scriptures.” And, whereas “it is very reasonable to expect both plain and frequent testimonies of the holy Scriptures, saying, that man is, by the fall of Adam, become utterly unable to do anything that is good, or anything that God requires of him in an acceptable manner; yea, that by reason of the fall alone, his faculties are so horribly perverted, that he can do only what is evil, and cannot but do evil; the whole Scripture hath not one saying of this nature.” The falsehood of which will appear in the following sections; where I shall endeavor to make it evident, that such is the corruption of human nature, derived from Adam, and such man’s disability, contracted by it, that without the special grace of God he can do nothing spiritually good, and only that which is evil; and that from those very passages of Scripture, this author singles out, sad objects to as proofs of it.

Section 1

John 14:4

*Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?
Not one.*

Aben Ezra observes, that the sense of these words is the same with Psalm 2:5, and the meaning of them is, who can bring one that is pure, bahasd rbg ^n ^ybwjk, from a man defiled with sins? as the Targum paraphrases them; none but God can do this; of which there never was but one instance, the man Christ Jesus, who not descending, from Adam by ordinary generation, was not polluted with sin. Now Job makes mention of the corruption of nature, as the source of all the sorrows and frailty of man in general (vv. 1, 2), and as matter of humiliation to himself, and as a reason why he could not bear the strict judgment of

God, but must humbly plead for his grace and mercy, (v. 3). But, against this sense of the words,

1. It is objected, that they are obscure, and interpreters disagree about the meaning of them; and therefore can be no solid proof of the point in question. But, perhaps, the obscurity is not so much in the words as in the interpreters, who give either false or improper senses of them. Some understand them of the impurity of matter, out of which the body of man was formed at first; whereas, neither that matter, nor the body of man formed out of it, was impure. Others, of the vileness of man, when compared with God (as in John 4:17-19; 15:14,16; 25:4,5). When neither here, in the places cited, is any mention of a comparative uncleanness of men with God, but of the angels, the heavens, the moon and stars; from whence a real impurity in man is argued, who therefore must be abominable in the sight of God. Others think Job refers to the impurity of men’s actions; and that his meaning is, that nothing is to be expected from a polluted man, but what savors of the corruption of his nature. This is a truth, but not the truth of the text; yet not subversive of it, it rather confirms it.

2. It is urged, that Job here speaks not of a moral but physical uncleanness; such as diseases, filthy racers, etc., arising from the infirmity and corruptibility of nature; and that his meaning is, it was enough that he was attended with common infirmities, without being pressed with greater and extraordinary ones. But, are all men attended with diseases? Yea, are all so, who are born of distempered parents? Are all born with filthy ulcers? Was Job brought into the world with his boils upon him? If it should be said, though this is not the case of all men, yet there is the common infirmity of nature, the spring of all these disorders, in all men. It is true, indeed, that mini, in his fallen state, is subject to these things? but from whence does this infirmity of nature arise, but from the corruption and vitiosity of it?

3. It is said, that the meaning of this Scripture is, “that from parents, obnoxious to sin, will spring forth children; that when they come to discern between good and evil, will be obnoxious to sin also.” I answer, that parents and their children are not only obnoxious to sin, but are really sinners; and be it so, that they are only obnoxious to sin, from whence does this obnoxiousness arise? It must be either from example,

or from depravity; not from the former, since men are obnoxious to, and capable of committing sins they never saw committed; wherefore, this must spring from the corruption of nature.

Section 2

Psalm 51:5.

[with Psalm 58:3 and Isaiah 48:8]

*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did
my mother conceive me.*

David, having committed some very great sins, and being made sensible of them, ingeniously confesses them, and mourns over the depravity of his nature, the fountain of them; which he mentions not as an extenuation, but as an aggravation, of his iniquities, since he had been so early and so long a sinful creature. The sin and iniquity he speaks of he does not call his sin, and his iniquity, though it was so, being in his nature, but sin and iniquity, being common to him with all mankind, and which attended his conception and formation in the womb, before he was born, and so before he had committed any actual transgression; and, therefore, cannot design any thing else but the original corruption of his nature. Now, to this sense of the words many things are objected.

1. It is observed, from Clemens of Alexandria, Chrysostom, and Theodoret, that “David speaks this of his mother Eve, and of our first parents, whose posterity were begotten after they had sinned.” I reply, David indeed, might Well enough call Eve his too: then since she is the mother of an living; but could not, with any propriety, say that she conceived him: this could only be said of his immediate parent, not of his next grandmother, much less of Eve, at the distance of three thousand years. It is also certainly true of our first parents, that their posterity were begotten after they had sinned. But then it will follow, that if they were begotten not before, but after they had sinned, they must be begotten, not in the image of God, in which man was created, and was now lost by sin, but in the sinful and corrupt image of Adam; which was the case not only of Cain, but of Seth, and of all others who have since descended from him by ordinary generation, among whom David was one.

2. It is objected, that David here speaks not of his own, but of his mother’s sin, and a very broad intimation is given, that this was the sin of adultery; and, indeed, if he was conceived in a sin of his mother’s, what else

could it be? This shows, that these men are grievously pinched with this text, and miserably put to their shifts, to betake themselves to such an interpretation, at the expense of the character of an innocent person, of whom there is not the least suggestion of this kind in the sacred writings; but on the contrary, she is represented as a religious person. David valued himself upon his being related to her, and pleads, that he might be regarded by the Lord for her sake (Ps. 86:16; 116:16). Moreover, had this been the case, David must have been excluded from entrance into the congregation of the Lord; for there was a standing law (Deut. 23:2). in Israel, which forbade a bastard to enter there until the tenth generation; whereas it is certain, that David often went into the house of God with company, where he enjoyed much spiritual pleasure and delight (Ps. 43:4; 55:14; 122:1; Ps. 63:1, 2; Ps. 84:1, 10). Once more, it is beside David’s scope and design to expose the sins of others, much less his own parents, whilst he is confessing and lamenting his own; and to what purpose should he mention theirs, especially if he himself was not affected by them, and did not derive corrupt nature from them? To say no more, the particle b, in, relates not to his mother, but to himself; it is not said, my mother in sin, that is, being in sin, or through sin, conceived me; but, my mother conceived me in sin, that is, as soon as I was conceived in the womb, and the mass of human nature was shaped and quickened; or as soon as soul and body were united together, sin was in me, and I was in sin, or became a sinful creature. Some, who do not run this length, yet say, that the sin and iniquity in which David was conceived and shapen, was the sinfulness of his parents, in the acts of begetting and conceiving him, though in lawful wedlock. But this cannot be true; since tire propagation of the human species, by natural generation, is a principle of nature implanted by God him- serf, and therefore cannot be sinful; and is agreeable to the first law of nature, given to man in a state of innocence, be fruitful and multiply. Marriage was instituted by God in paradise, and in all ages has been honorable in all, when the bed is undefiled. Besides, one of the words here used ytlwt, translated shapen, is of the passive form, and designs something in which both David and his parents were entirely passive, and means no other than that amazing and surprising act of formation he so much admires in

Psalm 139:13-16. Others nterpret these words of his mother’s conceiving him in profluviis, which usually produces sw~ma ouj kaqaro<n kai< eujkra>ton, a body impure, ill tempered, and subject to evil passions. The Jews and Isidore are referred to for this sense of them, though the former, as far as I have been able to observe, say nothing of 2:14. Sol. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi, R. Aben Ezra, and R. Abendana, understand the words of [rh xry, the corruption of nature in man as soon as he is born. And as for Isidore, both elder and younger understand these words of original sin, in which David and all men are involved. However, nothing of this nature can be concluded from the sacred Scriptures concerning David, but rather the reverse; since he is taken notice of, as no other man is excepting Moses, for his being comely, ruddy, of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to (1 Sam. 16:12, 18); and so far from having an unclean body of an ill temperament, or subject to bad qualities.

3. It is observed, that David here makes no mention of Adam, and goes no higher than his mother, and, therefore, what he says makes nothing for original sin. In answer to which, it will be sufficient to say, that inasmuch as natural generation is the channel in which the corruption of nature is derived, David, in speaking of it, and his particular concern in it, had no need to take notice of any other than his immediate parents, through whom it was conveyed to him; for God hath made of one blood all nations of men (Acts 17:26). This blood being tainted in the fountain of it, the first man, must be so in its streams; and so all are corrupted that partake of it.

4. It is further urged, that David is speaking here only of himself, and not of all mankind: he does not say that all men, but that he was shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin; and, therefore, can be no proof of the original corruption of the whole human nature. To which may be replied, that what is here said of David is true of all men; since every imagination of the thoughts of men’s hearts, both in the old and in the new world, is evil (Gen. 6:5; 8:21) from their infancy; and that not only the wicked are estranged from the womb (Ps. 58:3), but the elect of God are, by nature, children of wrath, even as others (Eph. 2:3; 3); which suppose them to be guilty and polluted as others; and, how should it be otherwise? for that which is born of the flesh is flesh (John 3:3). Besides, the argument

from David to other men is very strong; for, if he who was so famous for his early religion and piety, a man after God’s own heart, raised up by him to fulfill all his will, from whose seed sprang unto Israel a Savior Jesus (Acts 13:22,23); if he was shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin, is it not reasonable to conclude, that this is the case of others? Who can stand up, and exempt himself from such a conception and birth, and say, he was not shapen and conceived in this manner?

5. If all this will not do to set aside the sense of the text we plead for, we are told that the words are an hyperbole, of the like kind with Job 31:18, Psalm 22:10,11, and Psalm 71:6, and Psalm 58:3, Isaiah 48:8, and mean no more than that he had not only sinned now, but very often from his childhood. To which may be answered, that to say that being shaped in iniquity, and conceived in sin, means no more than a frequency of sinning from the youth upwards, is to contradict the express letter of the text; nor should we depart from the literal sense of words, and put a figurative one upon them,, unless there is an absolute necessity, of which there can be none here, unless it be to serve a turn. The places referred to are no hyperboles. The words in Psalm 22:9,10, are not the words of David, but of Christ, who, through the care of Divine Providence, and powerful operation of the Holy Ghost, was preserved from the original taint of sin. Job 31:18, Psalm 71:5,6, ought not to be any more accounted hyperbolical expressions than those which say, that Jeremy was sanctified before he came out of the womb; and that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb (Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:15). But, admitting that the last-mentioned texts are aggravations of Job’s pity and compassion, and of David’s trust and confidence, it does not follow, that the words under consideration are hyperbolical exaggerations of sin, since the Psalmist is here making a sincere and hearty confession of sin, in which it is not usual with saints to hyperbolize, that is, either to make their sins lesser or greater than they are; and, indeed, the sinfulness of nature cannot well be hyperbolized; for the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jer. 17:9).

6. To confirm this hyperbolical sense of the text, the words of the Pharisees to the blind man are produced, thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach

us? On which it is observed, that had they a regard to original sin, they could not have justly objected this to him since he might have re-criminated them with it. To which I answer, it is very true, no doubt they were both born in sin alike; but then these words are no hyperbole, but express the real sentiments of these Pharisees, who had either given in to the Pythagorean notion of the transmigration of souls, and supposed that this man’s soul had sinned greatly in another body before, and therefore was grievously punished in this; or at least, they imagined that none were born in sin, but such who had some marks of deformity upon them, as blindness, lameness, and the like; but I hope we are not bound to believe the same things, nor should any expression or doctrine of theirs be urged to disprove any truth of the Gospel. As for Psalm 58:3, it is true of all men, that they are estranged from the womb from all righteousness, and alienated from God, and the life of God, being dead in trespasses and sins; and therefore it is no strange thing that they go astray ^fbm, from the belly; since they are devoid of the principles of real justice and truth: and hence, as soon as they are capable of speaking, they go about speaking lies. Now, to what can such early impieties be ascribed, but to the corruption of nature? To the same purpose are the words in Isaiah 48:8, and wast called a transgressor from the womb; in which the corruption of nature is represented as the spring and fountain of all that treachery, stubbornness, hypocrisy, and idolatry, the people of Israel are charged with in the context. It is objected that this passage implies something not common to all, but peculiar to the people of Israel, but surely if the people of Israel, who were an holy people to the Lord, and chosen by him to be a special people unto himself, above all people on the face of the earth (Deut. 7:6), were called transgressors from the womb, much more may others be so called. It is further alleged, that this does not regard their natural birth, but their coming out of Egypt, when they were formed into a civil state, and in a figurative sense was their birth; from which time they discovered, a proneness to impiety and idolatry. Be it so that this is the sense of the passage, to what can this impiety and idolatry be ascribed, when they were a people indulged with so many peculiar and special favors by God, but to the abominable corruption originally seated in their natures? As to what is usually objected

to this and the preceding scripture, that they cannot be understood of original sin; because these holy men, David and Isaiah, must object to, and upbraid these wicked men with that which they themselves were guilty of; I need only observe, that the words under consideration, are not the words of Isaiah, but of God himself, who in his eternal prescience foreknew the original and actual transgressions of these people; which he observes both to prove his own Deity, and point out to them the fountain of all their iniquities. As to the preceding passage, David might, with great propriety, take notice of the original corruption of the wicked, of which he was so sensible himself, and acknowledged in as strong, or stronger terms than here used: since his design is to expose the internal wickedness of some who appeared outwardly righteous, and made great pretensions to holiness, justice and truth, when, in their hearts, they wrought wickedness, which sprang from the original depravity of their natures, as appears from the connection of the words with the two foregoing verses.

Section 3

Genesis 6:5.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth; and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

This text represents not only the heart of man in general to be evil, but the thoughts of his heart; not only these, but the imagination r[y, the substratum of thought, the very first motion to it, and the formation of it; yea, every imagination, or formation, and that only so, nothing good in it, nay always, μwhy lk, every day; and so is a considerable proof of the general and original corruption of human nature: to which the following things are objected.

1st. That these words regard not all mankind, but only the antediluvian world: and not every one of them, since Noah is excepted as a just and perfect man; nor are they spoken of any sin common to all men, as original sin is supposed to be, but of some gross sins committed by the worst of men, who had corrupted themselves by a long course of continual impiety. To which I reply, that the former part of the text, and God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, has a special regard to the flagitious crimes of the men of that generation, which brought down the judgment of God upon them in an universal

deluge; but the latter part of the text, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, respects the fountain and spring of all their wickedness, which is the corruption of nature, common to them with all men that were before them, or have since risen up after them. The words are expressed in very general terms: it is not said, every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of these men, or the men of this generation, is only evil continually; but every imagination of the thoughts of men's hearts is so. Noah's being a just and perfect man, was owing to the free favor of God; for it is said, that he found grace in the eyes of the lord, and to the righteousness of Christ, of which he was a preacher; otherwise, by nature he was as corrupt, as much a child of wrath of others; no thanks to his nature that he was just and perfect, but to the distinguishing grace of God he was made a partaker of. Moreover, what is here expressed, is elsewhere said of all men without any exception. It is to me very probable, that the Psalmist has reference to this very passage before us in Psalm 14:2,3, which the apostle Paul, in Romans 3:9-12, without any restriction or limitation, applies to all men, Jews and Gentiles. Add to this, that the very same thing, in almost the same words, is said in Genesis 8:21, of man after the flood, as is here said of him before it; yea, when there was only Noah and his family in being. But, on this last cited text, two things are observed.

1. That the words should not be translated, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for, but, although, or for this, or upon this account, that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. And it is said, that the usual way of reading that text, carries in it this absurdity, that the same reason which moved God to destroy the world before, now moves him to spare it. But let it be observed, that the reading pleaded for, is contrary to the common sense of the particle *yk*, as these men themselves own, to the Targums of Onkelos, and Jonathan Ben Uzziel, who render it by *μwra* and *yra*, to the versions of the Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, Samaritan, and Vulgate Latin, and to many modern ones, which translate the particle *for*, and not *though*: nor is there any absurdity in the common reading; for as the phrase, in the other text, accounts for the justice of God, and his proceedings against the men of the other world, this here represents the inconvenience of the continuance

or frequency of such proceedings; since he must be always destroying the world, and the inhabitants of it, and consequently could have no church abiding; nor would there be any society of men subsisting, for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. Besides, should the reading contended for be admitted, for it will be owned that the particle may be sometimes so rendered, nothing will be got by it; should the words be read, I will not again curse the ground for man's sake, though the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, or for this, or upon this account, that the imagination of his heart is evil from his youth; either ending both expresses and implies, that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, which is the only thing for which we produce it.

2. It is objected, that "the word *wyr[gm]*, doth not signify from their birth, but only from their youth; for he speaks of the imaginations of their hearts, and so only of the time when they are able to entertain and prosecute the thoughts of their evil hearts; nor doth this phrase, it is said, signify an original, but only a long- contracted custom, an habitual course of doing what is either good, or evil, or indifferent." To which I reply, that the Lord here speaks not of what man did, but what was the imagination of his heart, the substratum of his thoughts, and which is antecedent to the entertainment and prosecution of them, that this was evil *wyr[m]*; which Onkelos renders by *jywy[zm]*, from his infancy; and agrees with the derivation of the word from *r[n]*, which signifies to shake out; and with the sense of the ancient, and some of the modern Jews, who say that the *[rh rxy]*, the evil figment, or corruption of nature, is in man from the time of his formation in the womb; or from his birth, as soon as *r[ynəm]* he is shook out of his mother's bowels. Moreover, some of the texts brought to disprove this sense of the phrase serve to confirm it.; particularly Job 31:18, Psalm 71:5,6, where from my youth, and from my mother's womb, are mentioned as terms synonymous. Add to this, that such an interpretation well agrees with other scriptures; where men are represented as shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin, and as transgressors from the womb (Ps. 51:5; Isa. 48:8). But to return to the consideration of what is further objected to our sense of the particular passage under consideration.

2ndly It is said, that "the wickedness the text

speaks of was voluntary, and was the moving cause of God's destroying the world by the flood; which cannot be said of original corruption, since that being always the same, would always have been a reason why he should do so; and besides, if the corruption of nature is here intended, in vain did God invite men to repentance by the ministry of Noah, and wait for it one hundred and twenty years; since, without the almighty power of God, they could no more conquer this, than they could change their sex, or raise a dead man to life." In answer to which, let it be observed, that though the wickedness spoken of in the former part of the text designs personal, actual, and voluntary transgressions; yet the evil imagination, in the latter part of it, intends the corruption of nature, which is the fountain of actual transgressions; nor is this doing any violence to the text, or separating what the Scripture has joined together; but distinguishing between the cause and the effect, the fountain and its streams, the tree and its fruit. Nor do I see any reason why original sin, and the corruption of nature, may not be thought, with actual transgressions, to be the cause of the flood; since all actual transgressions flow from thence; and especially, since infants, who sinned not after the similitude of Adam's transgression, suffered in the universal deluge; which cannot be accounted for, but by supposing original sin, or the corruption of nature, in them. Nor is it any sufficient objection to its being a cause of this calamity, that it had always been, and so must always, have been, a reason, for it; seeing God might defer such a strict and severe observance of it; partly until his elect in this interval were gathered in; partly to show his patience, forbearance, and long-suffering, until iniquity was fully ripe, and it is corruption had broken out, and showed itself to such a degree, that God must be, beyond all dispute, justified in his sharpest resentments against it. Nor was the long-suffering of God, which waited in the days of Noah, in vain: since, though such was the rooted corruption of human nature, that none can conquer it without the unfrustrable grace of God; yet these men, under the advantages they had, might have attained to an external repentance and reformation; which would have secured them from temporal destruction, and therefore were left inexcusable. Besides, God might, by these means, bring some of his elect to true repentance, whom he would not have perish, and

whom he might take to himself, before the general calamity; as well as he saved Noah and his family in the midst of it.

Section 4

John 3:6.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh.

These words are expressed by Christ to show that men, by their natural birth, are carnal, and stand in need of regeneration, In order to entrance into the kingdom of God; and the meaning of them is, that that which is born in a natural way, is not only corporeal, but corrupt and sinful; so the word *flesh* is often used (see Gen. 6:3; Rom. 8:1,5-8, Gal. 5:17,19). Hence man in his natural estate, can do nothing but what is carnal and sinful; and is wholly incapable of doing that which is spiritually good, until he is born of the Spirit. To which are excepted,

1. That this "exposition renders it impossible for a man to do any thing toward his own conversion; and so renders all God's commands of it, exhortations to it, promises of pardon for it, threats of death if neglected, and complaints against those who would not do it, vain and absurd." To which I answer, that it is, indeed, impossible, considering the. state of men, and the nature of regeneration and conversion, that he should be able to do any thing more towards it, than to make use of means; such as prayer, hearing the word, etc., in which God oftentimes is pleased to effect it, by the mighty power of his Spirit and grace. And as for commands and exhortations to regeneration, or promises of pardon to such who regenerate themselves, or threats of death to those who neglect it, or complaints against those who would not do it, I know of none in the whole word of God; what is referred to, only regards an external reformation of life and manners, and not regeneration, or the first work of conversion.

2. It is said, "that to be born of the flesh, here only signifies, that natural generation, by which a man is born into the world, of the vail of the flesh; and that this is the plain meaning of our Lord, that besides that natural birth, by which we receive only our flesh and body from our parents, there is need of a spiritual birth, to fit us for the kingdom of God." I reply, it will be allowed, that our Lord is speaking of natural generation by which a man is born into the world; though how that should be of the will of the flesh, if

flesh stands only for body, is not very intelligible: but then he speaks of men being born into the world as corrupt and sinful, which appears from the opposite part of the text, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, that is, that which is born of the Spirit of God is spiritual, as the new creature is; for by spirit, is not meant the soul, as is, when it is opposed to flesh, signifying the body, but that which is spiritual; and flesh being opposed to it, must signify that which is corrupt and sinful, as the nature of man is by his first birth: and therefore according to the plain meaning of our Lord, he must stand in need of a spiritual birth to fit him for the kingdom of God. And if man is not corrupt and sinful, what need would there be of regeneration? and since this is his case, though he does not lie under any force, or co- active necessity to do only that which is evil, to which his will is entirely free; yet he is in an utter incapacity to regenerate himself.

Section 5

Romans 7:18, 19.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

From these words the following things may be fairly concluded, namely, If no good thing dwells in a regenerate man, that is, in his flesh, much less in an unregenerate one, who is wholly flesh, carnal, and corrupt; and if in a renewed man, where there is a will, there is not a power to do that which is spiritually good, much less able is an unrenewed man to do that which is so, who has neither power nor will; and if such is the strength of corrupt nature in one that is born again, as often to hinder him from doing that good he would, and to put him on doing that evil he would not, how much greater must its strength be in unsanctified persons? These conclusions will appear to be just, if it is but allowed, that the apostle is here speaking of himself, and of himself as regenerate. But to this, the following things are excepted.

1st. “The scope of the place; which is to show the necessity of the abrogation of the law, from the inefficiency of it to deliver men from sin; since it rather increased it; to prove which, an unregenerate person, in whom sin reigns, was the most proper

instance the apostle could pitch upon.” But to this may be replied, that though the apostle, in the beginning of the chapter, is speaking of the abrogation of the law to believers by the body of Christ, yet, nearer the discourse in controversy, his obvious scope and design is to show the spirituality and perfection of the law; that it was holy, just, and good, and that it was owing to the weakness of man that it was not fulfilled. This he could not better illustrate and exemplify than in a regenerate person; for if such an one does not come up to the spirituality of the law, and is not able to keep it perfectly, it cannot be thought that an unregenerate man should.

2ndly The coherence of the words; It is observed, “that the apostle speaks of an unregenerate man from verse 7 to the 14th, and therefore, why should it be thought that he discontinues his discourse concerning him?” In answer to this it should be observed, that the apostle, even within the limited period, is not speaking of a man in a pure, natural estate, but of himself, under great convictions of sin, under the powerful work of the law upon his conscience, showing him the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Besides, the apostle changes the tense; for whereas, within the mentioned compass, he speaks in the past tense; from verse 14, to the end of the chapter, he uses the present tense. And therefore supposing, that in the former part of the chapter, he considers himself as unregenerate; there is good reason to conclude, he does not continue his discourse of himself as such, or of any unregenerate man. And whereas it is urged, that he says in verse 9, I was alive without the law once, or I lived without the law once; which it is observed cannot be true of him in his own person, seeing he was born a Jew, and brought up under the law all his days: it may be replied, that though he never lived without the letter of the law, yet without the knowledge of the spirituality and perfection of it; or that he was alive, that is, in a fair way for heaven and eternal life, in his own apprehensions, before the law came with power, and entered into his conscience; but then sin, which lay before as dead, revived, and he died to all his hopes of obtaining life by his obedience to it.

3rdly The most considerable objection is taken from the description and character of the parson spoken of; as,

1. “He is said to be carnal (v. 14), whereas

regenerate ones have crucified the flesh with the lusts, and are debtors, not to the flesh to live after the flesh (Gal. 5:24; Rom. 8:12).” I answer, though regenerate persons have crucified the flesh, and are not debtors to it to live after it, yet from some considerations may be denominated carnal; as partly from their first birth, and the corruption of nature they bring into the world with them; partly from the continuance of the flesh, in which dwells no good thing and with which they serve the law of sin; and partly from the lusts of the flesh, which remain in them, and war against them; and on account of which the Corinthians, though babes in Christ, and so regenerate ones, are styled and treated as carnal. Add to this, that the apostle here says of himself, I am carnal, in comparison of the law, which was spiritual. And, indeed, when compared with this, the holiest man in the world must be reckoned carnal; for if the holy angels, when compared with the Divine Being, are chargeable with folly, much more must the saints, in this state of imperfection, be accounted carnal in comparison of the spiritual law of God, which is a transcript of the divine nature.

2. “He is said to be sold under sin (v. 14), which is a character of the greatest sin-hers; as of Ahab (1 Kings 21:20, and others, Isa. 50:1), and even of revolvers from the true religion (1 Mac. 1:16), and signifies, that he was a servant and slave to sin; whereas regenerate persons are free from sin, and become the servants of righteousness. “I reply, that though the person spoken of is said to be sold under sin, yet not to sell himself to work wickedness, as Ahab and others did; between these there is a wide difference; in the one, man is passive, in the other, active; the one is against his will, the other with it. So, though the apostle was sold under sin, it was not his own act, and was against his will, as a renewed man; with his flesh he served the law of sin, but with his mind the law of God; which proves, that he speaks of himself as regenerate: for his character as unregenerate was, that he was serving, that is, readily, cheerfully, and willingly, divers lusts and pleasures. Besides, the apostle is to be understood of his other I, which was carnal, of the flesh, or old man, which was under sin; and not of the new man, which is not under the law of sin, but under grace, as a reigning, governing principle.

3. “He is said hot to do the good he would, but the evil which he would not (v. 16), whereas it is said of

regenerate persons, that they work out their salvation with fear and trembling, God working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure; that they will, in newness of life, and after the Spirit, and not after the flesh (Phil. 2:12,13; Rom. 6:4; 8:1).” To which I reply, that though regenerate ones do that which is good, ye not always, there is not a just man on earth, that doth good and sinneth not (Eccl. 7:20); nor does God always work in them to will and to do, but when he pleases, of his own good pleasure. Besides, the good this person did not, he willed it, he desired it; whereas a carnal man wills, desires, and savors the things of the flesh, and them only, and not the things o: the Spirit; and also hated the evil he did whereas an unregenerate man chooses his own ways, and his soul delights in his abominations: so that this character proves the person to be a regenerate, and not an unregenerate man.

4. “It is said of this person, that sin dwelleth in him (vv. 17, 20), but regenerate ones are dead to sin and alive to God, and the Spirit of Christ, and Christ himself dwells in them (Rom. 6:11; 8:11; Gal. 2:20).” To this may be replied, that though the saints are dead to sin being justified from it by the righteousness of Christ, and freed from the dominion of it by the power of divine grace, yet they are not delivered from the being of it; sin is in them, dwells in them, lives in them, though they do not live in sin, and sometimes very strongly works in them; all which is no contradiction to the inhabitation of Christ, and his Spirit in them. These dwell under the same roof with sin, but not in the same apartment; sin dwells in the flesh, in the old man, in the unrenewed self, in which dwells no good thing; Christ and the Spirit dwell in the new man, in the new heart, in the renewed self. Moreover, the saints in all ages have found, and have complained of sin dwelling in them, as Job, David, Solomon, the church in Isaiah’s time, and the beloved disciple John (Job 9:20; Ps. 38:3,4; Prov. 20:9; Isa. 14:6; 1 John 1:8). This character therefore agrees with a regenerate man.

5. This person affirms of himself that no good thing dwelt in him (v. 18), whereas there are many good things dwell in regenerate ones. This is very true, there are many good things in the saints; as the good work of grace and the good word of God, the good Spirit of Christ, and Christ himself, yea, God

the Father dwells in them, and makes his abode with them. But then let it be observed, how cautiously and with what limitation the apostle expresses himself: In me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing. Now had he spoken of himself as unregenerate, or in the person of an unregenerate man, he had no need to have used this restrictive clause; for who knows not, that in an unregenerate man dwells no good thing?

6. “This man is said to will but not to perform that which is good (v. 18), whereas regenerate men are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, and God works in them both to will and to do.” What has been said in answer to the third objection may be sufficient to remove this; for though the saints do that which is good, yet not always, nor does God always work in them to do, when they have a will to do that which is good. Besides, in unregenerate persons, there is no will present with them to that which is good; they desire not the knowledge of God’s ways; their carnal minds are enmity against God, and are not subject to the law of God; nor can they be subject to it, without the grace of God.

7. “This person complains that he was a captive of the law of sin (v. 23), whereas regenerate persons are freed from the law of sin and death (Rom. 7:2).” But though they are freed, from condemnation by sin which is what is meant in the place referred to, as appears front the context, and from the dominion of sin, yet not from the being of it, nor altogether from the power of it; for it sometimes brings into captivity, though even then it has not the dominion; a man may be taken prisoner, and carried captive, and yet remain a subject of his lawful prince; so the saints may be brought into captivity to the law of sin, and yet not be under the dominion of it, but continue under the reign of grace, and in the kingdom of God’s dear Son.

8. “This same person bitterly complains of a body of death, and desires to be delivered from it; which shows that he was detained by it, and under it.” I reply, that the desire of deliverance from the body of death shows that it was distressing, uneasy, and uncomfortable to him, but not that it had the dominion over him; he was delivered from condemnation by it, and from the government of it, and was vary desirous of being freed from the very being of it, which was so great a clog and encumbrance to him; and this none but a regenerate person truly desires, as none

but such an one knows from whence a deliverance of this kind comes, which proves the person speaking to be a renewed man, since he adds, Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

9. “The apostle elsewhere speaks of himself in a different manner, as one that walked worthy of the Gospel, to be imitated by others, and who was able to do all things through the grace of God (1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 4:13). But then this does not contradict what he here says in this chapter, which perfectly agrees with other passages of his, in which he owns his sinfulness and weakness, and ascribes all he did to the grace of God (see 1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 12:10; 1 Cor. 15:10). It is evident, from all his epistles, that this great man God lived under a continual sense of the corruption of his nature, his own unworthiness and inability.

10. “Origen, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and others, interpret these words of men under the thralldom and dominion of sin, through a long use and custom.” This interpretation of the words was indeed first given by Origen, was greedily caught at by Pelagius, revived by Socinus and his followers, and some popish writers, and at last adopted by the Arminians. But Methodius, a martyr, whose judgment Dr. Whitby seems fond of, first in the words of one Procius, and then in his own, delivers the sense of them agreeable to ours, understanding them of a regenerate man. Wherefore what Vorstius affirms is false, that all the ancients before Austin interpreted these words of unregenerate men. I shall now,

4thly. Subjoin some arguments, proving that this part of the chapter, from verse 14 to the end or it, is spoken by the apostle of himself, and of himself as regenerate.

1. The apostle all along speaks of himself in the first person: That which I do I allow not; what I hate that I do; I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; I delight in the law of God: I find a law in my members; yea, says he, With the mind I myself, *aujto*<v *ejgw*, serve the law of God; which can never be understood in a figurative sense as personating another; nor do the passages usually alleged prove such a way of speaking common, (as 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23; 13:1-3; Gal. 2:18,20).

2. When he speaks of his unregenerate state, and the first convictions of sin, he speaks of them as things

past: When we were in the flesh; I had not known sin, but by the law; Sin taking occasion by the law wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, deceived me, and by it slew me; I was alive without the law once, etc. But from verse 14 to the end of the chapter, he speaks in the present tense, of what he then was, and found: I am carnal, I do what I would not, I consent to the law that it is good, I delight in the law of God, etc.

3. The several things which are said of this person, cannot agree with the apostle, nor with any other, but as regenerate; such only hate evil, delight in the law of God, and serve it with their mind.

4. The distinction of flesh and spirit, the inward and outward man, is not applicable to any other but a regenerate man; for the spirit, and inward man, is not the soul, opposed to the body, but the spiritual man, the new man, the hidden man of the heart, the truth of grace, in opposition to the flesh, the old man, or corrupt nature. Now only the latter, and not the former, is to be found in an unregenerate man.

5. The struggle between flesh and spirit, between the law in the members and the law of the mind, proves that these words can belong to no other than a regenerate person; with which agrees Galatians 5:17. Only in the Shulamite (Song of Sol. 6:13.) true believers are to be ‘seen, as it were the company of two companies, flesh and spirit, sin and grace, warring against each other.

6. The thanksgiving for deliverance from sin through Christ, towards the close of the chapter, can only come from a believer; none but a regenerate man knows any thing of the nature of it, from whence it is, and can only be thankful for it.

Section 6

Romans 8:7, 8.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

The carnal mind, or to< fro>nhma th~v, which may be rendered the wisdom of the flesh, signifies the wisest and best part of man, the soul, with all its powers and faculties; and this being carnal is a strong proof of the wretched corruption of human nature. Besides, this carnal mind is not only an enemy to, but enmity itself against that God who made it, upholds it in life, and loads it with benefits; and therefore is

not subject to the law of God, which is holy, just, and good; nor indeed can it be, considering its state and circumstances, without the powerful and efficacious grace of God; wherefore the apostle’s conclusion is exceeding just, so lien they that are in the flesh, that is, in an unregenerate state, and are wholly carnal and corrupt, cannot please God; that is, do those things which are pleasing to him. To which is objected,

1. That “this text with the preceding one, were abused by the ancient heretics, to prove that the flesh, or body of tomb is, by nature, evil; and they that are in the body of flesh, cannot be subject to the law, or please God.” But what is this to us, who by the flesh in both places, understand not the body, to which wisdom does not belong, and in which men may please God, and be subject to his law, but the corrupt nature of man, or men, in an unregenerate estate; who, whilst such, are enemies to God, unsubjected to his law, and cannot please him?

2. It is owned, that “the apostle doth indeed say, that they who thus mind carnal things, while they continue so to do, cannot please God, or live in subjection to his laws; but does not say, that they cannot be made good; for by his frequent exhortations to these carnal men, to crucify and mortify the flesh, to put off the old man with his deeds, joined with threats and promises, plainly shows, that men may cease to live according to the flesh, and may obtain that assistance of the Spirit by which they shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, and live after the Spirit.” Upon which I observe, that all that are after: the flesh, or in an unrenewed state, mind carnal things; and since it is allowed, that while they continue so to do, as they will, so long as they remain unconverted, they cannot please God; the words prove what we produce them for, namely, the corruption of man’s nature, and his disability to do that which is spiritually good. But it is observed, that the apostle does not say such cannot be made good: nor do we say so, but we affirm, that they cannot make themselves good, and that they cannot be made good but by the grace of God; and that until they are made so, they cannot do that which is spiritually good, no more than an evil tree can bring forth good fruit. And as for the exhortations to crucify and mortify the flesh, and to put off the old man, the passages in Romans 8:13. Galatians 5:24, referred to, are not properly exhortations; and neither they, nor

the other, belong to carnal men, but to believers in Christ, who were Christ’s and had the spirit of Christ already; and were debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh, but to the Spirit, to live after the Spirit; and therefore fall short of proving that carnal men may make themselves good, or of themselves cease to live after the flesh.

CHAPTER VI
OF PERSEVERANCE

I now proceed to consider Dr. Whitby’s discourse on the perseverance of the saints. His first chapter is taken up in premising that which is granted on both sides, for the better stating of the question between us. For his own side he grants, that they, who are preserved to salvation, are so preserved by tie power of God through faith; that God has engaged his faithfulness, that all, who do not wickedly depart from him, shall never be forced from him by the power of any adversaries; and that God has promised perseverance in the ways of righteousness to the end, to those who constantly and conscientiously use the means prescribed by him for that end: but utterly denies, that God has promised to keep them by his power from making shipwreck of faith, and from falling into those sins he cautions them to avoid; or to interpose his power unfrustrably to engage all true believers to use the means prescribed by him. He gees on to observe, that the assertors of the doctrine of the saints’ final perseverance hold, that the foundation of it is the absolute election of persons to salvation, and to the means which shall unfrustrably conclude in it; that they grant that it is not from the strength, steadiness, and immutability of the new nature, renewed mind, will, and affections, but purely from the promise of God, that true believers cannot fall away; and that though they cannot fall totally and finally, yet may fall into horrid sins; such as may at present unfit them for heaven, require a renewal of grace, and by the guilt of which they stand condemned till they are renewed by faith and repentance. I own, that election is a foundation of the saints’ final perseverance, but it is not the only thing on which it is founded; nor does this show the inconsistency of two of our arguments for perseverance, taken from the prayers of the saints, and the intercession of Christ, as is intimated; since the saints may pray, as Christ did (John 17:1, 5),

for that which God has absolutely decreed, from all eternity, shall come to pass. And though we grant that it is from the promise, yet not purely from the promise of God, that true believers cannot fall away; for though we own that the new creature is imperfect, yet affirm that such is the nature, strength, and firmness of true grace, that it can never perish. Wherefore our arguments, taken from the nature of faith, conversion, and the new birth, sufficiently prove the doctrine we plead for. Moreover, though we allow that true believers may fall into gross sins, which may require a renewed exercise of faith and repentance, yet that they shall not deprive them either of meetness or right to heaven; nor do they ever stand condemned before God for them. The doctor’s second chapter contains arguments from scripture against the doctrine of the saints’ final perseverance, which have been considered in the former part of this work. His third and fourth chapters are an answer to those texts produced on our side in favor of the doctrine: the vindication of which texts is attempted, in the following Sections.

Section 1

John 13:1.

Having loved his own which were in the world he loved them unto the end.

These words are expressive of the unchangeable and everlasting love of Christ to his people; who are his own by choice, by his Father’s gift, and his own purchase. Now such shall certainly persevere to the end, and be eternally saved; for who shall separate from the love of Christ? But to this, the following things are objected.

1. That “Christ speaks not of them, whom he had chosen to eternal life, but of them only, whom he had chosen to be his apostles.” To which I reply that though Christ speaks of his apostles, yet not of them all; I speak not of you all, says he, I know whom I have chosen: and of whom he does speak, he does not speak of them as chosen to be apostles, but as men chosen to eternal life; which was not the case of them all, nor were they all his own in this special sense; one of them was a devil, and the son of perdition. Nor does he speak only of these. Were none his own but the apostles? Had he no propriety in any but them? Certainly he had: and if he loved his apostles unto the end, why may he not be thought to love all to the end, who are equally his own, and equally loved by

him as they were? 2. That Christ’s loving them to the end, only signifies “the affection he showed to them, by washing their feet when he was to leave them.” To which may be replied, that this was not so much an instance of affection to them, as of humility and meekness; and was designed as an instruction and example to them, how they should behave to each other; and at most was an instance only of his love to them, and what Judas had a share in with the rest of the apostles; and not to be compared with some other instances of his love, and which were nearer the end of his life, as particularly his shedding his blood for them on the cross. Now there is no comparison between washing the feet of his disciples with water, and washing us from our sins in his own blood.

3. That he here speaks “not of his love of them to the end of their lives, but of his own life on earth.” Christ’s love is not allowed to continue to the end of their lives, for that would prove their final perseverance; but the end of his life, as if his love ended with his life: whereas Christ still expresses his love to his people, by appearing in the presence of God, acting as an advocate, and interceding with the Father, and preparing mansions in his Father’s house for them. It is much, that the love of Christ to his own is not confined, by the writers of this cast, to supper time, or to the end of the supper; since it immediately follows, and supper being ended, which would scarce be a more jejune sense of the words than what is given. Why may not te>lov be understood of the end of their lives, as in Matthew 24:13? or of the end of the world? (vv. 6, 14), or of the end of all things, as in 1 Peter 4:7? Besides, eijv te>lov may be rendered continually, as it is in Luke 18:5, or for ever, in which sense it is used by the Septuagint in Psalm 9:6, 18, and Psalm 44:23, where it answers to t[nl, which signifies for ever: and agreeably the words may be read, Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them for ever, as they are rendered by the Ethiopic version. And then the sense of them is, that those who are Christ’s, are loved by him with an everlasting love; and therefore shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Section 2

John 17:12.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me, I have kept:

and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition: that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The argument formed from this text, in favor of the saints’ final perseverance, stands thus: If those who are given to Christ are so kept by him, from the evil that is in their own hearts, and in the world, as that they shall not be eternally lost; then they must and shall persevere unto the end. But those that are given to Christ, are so kept, etc., therefore, etc. To which is answered,

1. “That this passage was spoken only of the twelve apostles, as is evident from the whole context; and so there is no reason to extend it to all true believers.” What has been said under the preceding Section, is a sufficient reply to this: for though it is evident from the context, that Christ is speaking primarily, and more immediately of the apostles, yet not of them only, nor of them as apostles, but as members of him, given unto him, and believers in him, and so preserved by him. And if the preservation of them was secured to them, by being so, why may not the preservation of all other true believers be equally as sure and certain?

2. It is said, that “the very next chapter shows that this was spoken of their preservation from temporal death; Christ requesting that his disciples might be permitted to go away when he was apprehended, that this saying of his might be fulfilled (John 18:8, 9).” I reply, that though the very next chapter shows that these words of Christ were fulfilled in the temporal preservation of the disciples; yet it does not follow, that this was all, or that it was the principal thing designed by them; for Christ prays the Father that he would keep them as he had done. Now the rest of the petitions are of a spiritual kind; such as sanctification through the truth, perfect union and eternal glorification: wherefore, it is reasonable to suppose, that this was of the same nature also. Besides, if this was spoken of preservation from temporal death, the sense of the words must be this: those that thou gavest me, I have kept from a temporal death, and none of them is lost by a temporal death; but the son of perdition, he is lost by a temporal death: which last was not true; for Judas was yet alive, he had not at this time betrayed him; and it was not until after the condemnation of Christ that he went and hanged himself. Add to this, that as Christ had kept his disciples, so he prays that his Father would keep them (vv. 11,15). Now, if he

prayed for their preservation from temporal death, he was not heard; for every one of them died a violent death, suffered martyrdom, though they were all in a spiritual sense preserved to the kingdom and glory of God, as all true believers will be.

3. It is observed, that this passage taken in “our sense, is rather an argument that some of them, who were given by God to Christ, may perish; because it is affirmed, that one of them, who was thus given to Christ, did so.” To which I answer, that though Judas, the son of perdition, was given to Christ, and chosen by him as an apostle, yet he was not given to him by a special act of the Father’s grace, nor chosen in him, or by him, and united to him, as a member of him, as the rest of the apostles and all the elect of God are. I speak not of you all, says he (John 13:18), I know whom I have chosen, that is, to eternal life; for, otherwise,

he had chosen Judas as an apostle equally with the rest (John 6:70): have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? And from all the accounts that are given of him, it does not appear that he ever received the true grace of God; and therefore his perdition, to which he was appointed, which is the reason of his being called the son of perdition, is no instance of the apostacy Of a real saint, or true believer, or of one who, in a way of special grace, was given by the Father to Christ. Moreover *ejj mh*, which is rightly rendered by our translators but, is not exceptive, but adversative (see Gal. 1:7; Rev. 21:27), and does not imply, that Judas was one of those that were given to Christ, and that his perdition is an exception to the preservation of them all; but the sense of the text is, None of those that thou gavest me is lost; but the son of perdition is lost, he having never been given to me as an object of thy love, only as an apostle, and, therefore, is left to that perdition to which he was appointed; whereby the Scripture, that speaks of his destruction, will be fulfilled.

Section 3

Romans 11:29.

For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

The gifts of God, such as justification, pardon of sin, adoption, sanctification, and eternal life, flow from his immutable decree of election, as appears from the preceding verse. The calling here spoken of, is that internal, effectual calling, with which God’s

elect are called according to the purpose and grace of God. Now, since the purpose of God to bestow the gifts of his grace stands firm and sure, and these gifts, when bestowed in calling, are without repentance, and will never be taken away, the final perseverance of these called ones must be certain. And though the apostle is only speaking of the elect of God among the Jews, the argument holds equally good of all others, who have, or for whom God has designed, the same gifts and calling. But to this is excepted, that, This “passage is evidently spoken of those Jews who were then hardened, given up to a spiritual slumber, broken off from their own olive-tree, and in that state of infidelity in which they have continued almost one thousand seven hundred years; and only intimates, that God will, in his good time, receive them again into his favor.” But nothing is more evident, than that the apostle is speaking of the Jews in the latter day, and of God’s eternal purposes and promises of grace concerning them; which shall be accomplished when the fullness of the Gentiles is come in, towards whom he had gracious designs, for whom he had gifts in reserve, and whom he would call by his grace, in such a manner, as that neither his gifts nor his calling should be repented of, and so all Israel should be saved; and not of that present generation, much less of those Jews who were then hardened, given up to a spiritual slumber, and broken off; for these were the rest that were blinded, and are distinguished from the election that then obtained, and who never were called, nor had any spiritual gifts or saving blessings of grace bestowed on them. The arguments from the three last scriptures are said to need very little answer, as being wholly alien from the purpose, and very impertinent; but, whether they are so or no, the reader must judge. Our author proceeds to consider the arguments which seem to have a greater force in them, taken either from those scriptures which seem plainly, or by just consequence, to assert this doctrine, or else to promise this perseverance of the saints; the vindication of which will be attended to.

Section 4

Matthew 24:24.

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.

1st. The argument from hence, in favor of the perseverance of the saints, very much depends on their being the elect of God, the impossibility of their deception being placed to this their character; which designs particular persons absolutely, and from eternity, chosen to everlasting life, who therefore cannot be so deceived as to be lost for ever, since their election is an eternal act, and therefore cannot be made void by a temporal one: it passed before the persons had done either good or evil; wherefore, as no good thing done by them was the cause of it, so no evil thing can annul or frustrate it; which strongly concludes the sure and certain salvation of all who are interested in it. But it is said that by the elect we are to understand the choicest believers, or the persevering Christians. To which I reply, that it is certain that such who are truly converted, or are true believers, are persevering Christians, and such without dispute are the elect: but then the reason why they are, and are called the elect, is not because they are converted, are true believers, and persevering Christians; but, on the contrary, the reason why they are converted, become true believers, and so persevering Christians, is because they are elected. Conversion, faith, and perseverance, are not the causes or conditions, but fruits and effects of election: hence faith is styled the faith of God’s elect; (Titus 1:1; Acts 13:48.) and it is also said, that as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed; wherefore such cannot be finally deceived. Besides, to talk of the final seduction of a persevering Christian is a contradiction in terms: such an interpretation of the phrase must be absurd and impertinent; for who knows not, that a persevering Christian cannot be finally and totally deceived.

2ndly When we say, that the elect of God cannot be deceived, we allow that they may be, and are deceived before conversion. This is one part of their character, whilst unregenerate, (Titus 3:8) foolish, disobedient, deceived, etc., yea, that they may be, and oftentimes are deceived after conversion; but then this is in part only, and not totally; in some lesser, and not in the greater matters of faith; not so as to let go their hold of Christ, the head, and quit the doctrine of salvation by him, or fall into what the apostle calls (2 Pet. 2:1) damnable heresies. They may be seduced from the simplicity of the gospel, but not finally; for they shall be recovered out of the snare of the Devil, and not be

left to perish in such deceivings. To this are excepted,

1. That Christ solemnly exhorts his disciples to use the greatest caution that they be not deceived; and, in the same chapter, to watch and pray, lest the hour of temptation should come suddenly on them; which, surely, he would not do, if he knew that they could not be deceived. To which I reply, that inasmuch as they were liable to a partial seduction, and for a time, though not to a total and final one, there was good reason why these exhortations should be given and taken. Besides, such cautions might be useful to quicken their diligence to search and read the Scriptures, and by them try the spirits, whether they were of God or no, and by their fruits, their doctrines, discover impostors, and avoid them. Hence these cautions should not be improved into arguments against the final perseverance of the saints, seeing they may be considered as means of it.

2. That Christ here declares, that by reason of the extreme affliction of these times, many should be offended, and their love was cold. But it should be observed, that supposing true believers are intended, love in them may wax cold when it is not lost, which was the case of the church at Ephesus; and so is no proof of the saints falling from grace. Besides, the many that shall be deceived, offended, and fall off from the doctrine of faith are not the same persons with, but distinguished from, the elect, who cannot be deceived.

3rdly When we say, that it is impossible that the elect of God should be deceived, we mean not that it is impossible they should, considered in themselves, or if left to themselves, being, generally speaking, the foolish things of this world; or if left to that old Serpent, the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; or to false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive (1 Cor. 1:27; Rev. 12:10; Eph. 4:14): but we say it is impossible, considering the purposes and promises of God, the provisions of his grace, the security they have in the hands of Christ, and their presentation by the mighty power of God: and upon this account we judge, that their final and total deception is hero represented as impossible. But to this is excepted, that the phrase *ejj oguna>ton*, if it were possible, denotes only a great difficulty in the performance of an act possible, (see Acts 20:16; Rom.12:18; Matthew 26:39), and also that it does not

import what the event would be, but the vehemency of the endeavors should it respect the event, it is only with relation to the means here mentioned, being such as should prevail to seduce even Christians, were it possible for impostors, by lying signs and wonders, to deceive them who are invested with a power of working greater signs and wonders. To which I reply, the instances to prove that this phrase only denotes great difficulty, and not an absolute impossibility, are insufficient. The words of the apostle Paul (Acts 20:16), are conjectural; he knew not whether it was possible or no, that he could be at Jerusalem before Pentecost; of which sort, surely, the words of Christ here cannot be thought to be. The same apostle's exhortation in Romans 12:18, supposes, that which is matter of fact, that it is impossible to live peaceably, with some men; and what followed upon our Lord's petition in Matthew 26:39, shows that it was impossible that the cup should pass from him, considering the purpose of God, his covenant with him, and the salvation of his people. Moreover, should this phrase only import the vehemency of the endeavors of seducers, and not respect the event only with relation to the means here mentioned, great signs, and wonders, it follows, that if, notwithstanding the vehement endeavors of seducers, and the utmost they can do to deceive the saints; if, notwithstanding their showing great signs and wonders, they are not able to prevail over them, being invested with a power superior to them; it may be concluded and pronounced, that it is impossible they should be deceived either by them, or by any other, or by any other means; since these are the most effectual of any, being according to the working of Satan, with all power, and sign,, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: but says, the apostle, in the same place (2 Thess. 2:9,10,13), we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation; which is the saints grand security from a final and total deception, either by Satan or any of his emissaries.

Section 5

John 6:39, 40.

And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last

day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

The persons here spoken of, are such as were given by the Father to Christ in eternal election, and in the everlasting covenant of grace, and who in time are enabled to believe on him for life and salvation; concerning whom the will of God is, that Christ should lose none of them, nor anything that belongs to them, neither their souls nor their bodies, no, not the least dust, but that he should raise it up again, and that these should also have everlasting life; which is the will of the Father of Christ, as well as of their Father, and therefore will be strictly regarded. Besides, this is the will of God, and not man, which cannot be resisted, so as to be frustrated; and is eternal, and therefore cannot be made void by any temporal act; and consequently, these words furnish out a considerable argument in proof of the saints' final perseverance. To which is excepted,

1st. That "they treat not of the loss of believers by a defection from the faith, but of their perdition by death; wherefore Christ promises, that he would raise them from death to a salutary life." Be it so, that these words speak not of the saints' preservation from an apostasy from the faith, but of their resurrection at the last day; yet, since their resurrection will be the resurrection of life, or will be unto eternal life, they must persevere to the end, and die in the Lord, in order to enjoy such a resurrection. If, therefore, it is the will of God, that all those whom he has given to Christ, and who see the Son, and believe on him, should be raised unto eternal life, their perseverance in grace is out of question; and after the resurrection, they will be out of any danger of apostasy; for being raised, they will be caught up with living saints to meet the Lord, and shall be for ever with him.

2ndly It is said, that "promises and declarations of the like nature with these which engage that God will give eternal life to the believer, are only to be understood of such a faith as doth endure to the end, and belong only to such as continue in the faith: and then it is demonstratively evident, that perseverance is included in them; and therefore cannot be proved from them, without begging the question." To which I reply, that all true faith does endure to the end; it is an

incorruptible seed of grace; part of that living water, which springs up into everlasting life; is the gift of God; whose gifts and calling are without repentance; of the operation of God, which he begins and performs with power; Christ is the author and finisher of it, and his powerful and prevalent intercession secures it from ever failing: hence those who have it, shall continue in it; and therefore their perseverance is certain. And if perseverance is insured to true faith, and is included in these promises of eternal life to true believers, to them only do such promises belong; for such who fall away were never true believers: then it is demonstratively evident, that it is to be proved from them, and that without begging the question. But to this it is objected,

1. That such who fall away, "are expressly styled true believers, as others are." But the places where they are so expressly styled cannot be named; the instances alleged from Matthew 18:6, 15; Luke 8:13; Romans 14:14, 15, 20; 1 Corinthians 8:11; John 4:39, 42; Acts 8:10, and Acts 21:20, are insufficient proofs of it. Some of the persons instanced in, though they may be allowed to be true believers; yet it does not appear, from what is said of them, that they totally and finally fell away; such as the little ones that believed in Christ (Matthew 18:6), and the weak brother in Romans 14, and 1 Corinthians 8. Since what is said of their being offended and perishing, is not to be understood of eternal destruction, but of their being slighted and rejected, and their minds grieved, consciences wounded, and their spiritual peace broken in upon and interrupted; as has been shown in the former part of this work: nor does it appear that the Samaritans, who believed in Christ, all fell off from him to Simon Magus; since those who truly believed might be dead, and safe in heaven, before his infatuation began and spread in Samaria: besides, it is not very evident that they were true believers in Christ; they might give their assent to him, as the Messiah and Savior of the world, without having true saving faith in him for themselves: nor does it appear that many of those myriads of Jews that believed, afterwards fell away. The epistle to the Hebrews is no proof of it. And if any of them did, it will not be easily proved that they were true believers. And it is certain that those represented by the stony ground, in Luke 8:13, who believed for a while, and then fell away, had not the true grace of

God; since it is expressly said of them, that they had no root in them.

2. It is observed, "that this faith, that is, of such who fall away, as to its kind, is true; is evident from this consideration, that Christ and his apostles require such persons not to change it, but only to continue in it; not to believe with a faith true and real as to kind, but to be steadfast in the faith they had already. But the passages produced do not prove that Christ and his apostles spoke to such persons; not the passage in John 8:31, where our Lord says to the Jews that believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then ye are my disciples indeed; that is, you will appear to be really so, and will be made free by the truth; and consequently, it will be evident, that you are sons who shall abide in the house for ever, and never be cast out: nor the passage in Acts 14:22, where Paul and Barnabas exhort the believers, to continue in the faith; in which they do not give the least intimation, or supposition, that any of them should fall away, but, on the contrary, that through much tribulation, they should enter into the kingdom of God; and in order to their preservation to it, commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

3. It is said, that "this answer thwarts those numerous texts of scripture, which suspend the benefits promised to believers on their continuance in the faith." To which I answer, that the numerous scriptures referred to, which are Colossians 1:23; 1 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 3:6, 14; 1 John 2:25; Romans 11:22, do not represent continuance in the faith as a precarious and uncertain thing; or suppose, that true believers may fall away finally and totally; nor do they suspend the benefits promised to believers, on the continuance of their faith, as a condition of their enjoying them; but represent continuance in the faith, as the evidence of their partaking of some of them already, and as a pledge and assurance of their enjoying the rest here after.

4. It is further objected, that if this be the case, "all exhortations to steadfastness in the faith are enervated; and all declarations that we must be faithful to death, and endure to the end, are needless." To which I reply, that exhortations of this kind are not hereby enervated, nor are such declarations needless; since these may be, and are, made use of by the Spirit of God, for the increase of faith, and steadfastness in it; and so be the

means of the saint’s final perseverance. And whereas it is said, that the only distinction between a living and dead faith is, that the one is attended with, the other is without good works; and that the only difference between a temporary and saving faith, is this, that the one continues, and the other does not: it may be replied, that though good works are an evidence of a living faith, yet the life of faith does not consist in works, but in special acts of it on its proper object, Christ; and a temporary faith is only an assent to the truth of some propositions concerning Christ; but is not as saving faith, a going out unto him, depending on him, and believing in him, for the salvation of the soul.

Section 6

Romans 11:2.

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.

Though the number of God’s people, in some ages of the world, is very small, as it was among the Israelites at the time of the apostle’s writing this epistle, yet God has not, nor will he cast away, or cast off his people, whom he has foreknown; he may hide his face from them, afflict them in a fatherly way, and not immediately arise for their help; yet he will not cast them out of his affections, nor from his sight, nor out of the hands of his Son, nor out of the covenant of his grace, nor out of his family, or so as that they shall perish eternally: so far from it, that he takes the utmost delight and pleasure in them, gives them the greatest nearness to himself, lays them in his bosom, embraces them in his arms, keeps them as the apple of his eye, holds them by his right hand, and preserves them by his power unto salvation: the reasons of which are, his everlasting love unto them, his unchangeable purposes and promises concerning them, and because they are his jewels, his portion and inheritance: wherefore their final perseverance is certain. But to the argument from hence, it is objected. “That this text cannot relate to any foreknowledge God hath of his elect from all eternity, but only to his foreknowledge and choice of the Jewish nation, before any other nations of the world; and only signifies, that God had not entirely cast off his people, Israel.” To which I reply,

1. That it is most reasonable to conclude, that the word *proe>gnw*, is used in the same sense here, as it is elsewhere in this epistle; particularly in

Romans 8:29, 30, where God’s foreknowledge is spoken of as antecedent to predestination, vocation, justification, and glorification: and so must relate to God’s foreknowledge of his elect from all eternity, and not of the Jewish nation; since all of them are not predestinated, called, justified, and glorified.

2. Though the people of Israel were chosen to be a peculiar people above all people (Deut. 7:6; Amos 3:2), and were known before all the families of the earth: yet they were not all a foreknown people in the special sense; and which is the apostle’s sense of the phrase; all were not Israel that were of Israel (Rom. 9:6). Among that chosen and known people there were a special foreknown people, a remnant, according to the election of grace (Rom.11:5,7); who were the election that obtained when the rest were blinded. And these are the people God had not cast away; for as for the bulk, and body, and majority of that people, God had, or was about to cast them away, as is sufficiently evident from this chapter. And the apostle’s single instance of himself, and could he have instanced in seven thousand more, as in the times of Elias, would have been an insufficient proof of God’s not having cast away the bulk and body of that people; but is a full and pertinent one, of God’s not having cast away his special and foreknown people among them.

3. Though this text relates to the elect of God among the Jews, yet, inasmuch as the same characters belong to the elect of God among others, as that they are his special people, whom he has foreknown, being elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father (1 Pet. 1:2); it is equally true of them, as of the elect among the Jews, that God has not, nor will he, cast any of them away. The sense of the words in Romans 8:30, and the argument upon them, have been already considered and vindicated, under the head of ELECTION.

Section 7

Romans 8:38, 39.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If neither death, in any view of it, nor life under any consideration whatever, nor angels, good or bad, nor principalities, nor powers, civil magistrates, ever

so potent, tyrannical, fierce and cruel, nor things present, nor things to come, whether good or evil, nor height, nor depth, anything in heaven, earth or hell, nor any other creature, any person, or thing, within the compass of created beings, shall be able to separate from the love with which God loves his people; since it is the love of God, and not man; the love of him who changes not, and is besides in Christ Jesus our Lord; then those who are interested in it cannot perish, or fail of glory; for it is impossible that any should perish, and yet continue the objects of God’s love. Now,

1. It is owned, that these words respect not “the love with which we love God, but his affection towards us; and that the apostle only intimates, that such persons continuing in the love of God, shall be preserved by him from the temptations here mentioned; and so supported by his grace and Spirit as to be able to bear them.” And if so, since all such who have interest in the love of God, shall continue in it, what should hinder their final perseverance? And whereas it is observed, that “he does not say, the love of no Christian shall wax cold, Matthew 24:12, that none of them shall lose his first love (Rev. 2:4). And were there no cause to fear this, it is asked, why doth Christ exhort his disciples to abide in his love (John 15:9), and his apostles exhort others to keep themselves in the love of God (Jude 1:21), and to look diligently to it, that they fall not from the grace and favor of God (Heb. 12:15), and to continue in the grace of God (Acts 13:43)?” I answer, that the love even of true believers may wax cold and yet not cease, nor the love of God cease towards them; nor does the scripture anywhere say, that any of them has lost, or may lose, but only have left their first love; nor do the exhortations of Christ and his apostles, to abide in his love, and keep themselves in the love of God, suppose this, but are made use of as means to prevent it: and as for the two last passages referred to, they are not to be understood, either of the love of the saints to God, or of his love and favor to them, but of the doctrine of grace.

2. It is farther observed, “that the apostle does not say, that nothing can separate true believers from the love of God, or Christ; but only declares his persuasion, that nothing would do it, or that they had no cause to fear these things, or to be shaken from their steadfastness,

in expectation of those inestimable blessings God had promised to, and Christ had purchased for them, by any of “these tribulations.” But, if this persuasion of the apostle’s was a well-grounded one; and if there was no just cause of fearing these things; then it is certain, that nothing can separate true believers from the love of God. And besides, since “they have good ground to hope, that all the evils they shall bear shall conduce to their good, that Christ will still be ready to support them under them by his power, and to help their infirmities by his Spirit, and at last give them the glory prepared for the sons of God;” not only the apostle might well persuade himself, but they also may well persuade themselves, that nothing shall ever be able to separate them from this love of God: nor do the fears the apostle elsewhere expresses, of their being shaken and tempted, so as that his labor would be in vain, and the arguments and motives he offers to prevent this effect of temptations, contradict this persuasion: nor was this persuasion of his concerning them, that they would persevere, and continue steadfast in the love of God, to which they had so great inducements; but that nothing should separate them from the affection of God towards them; which sense this author himself before acknowledged; though he now thinks fit to contradict himself.

Section 8

Ephesians 1:13, 14.

[See also Ephesians 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:21,22].

In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise: which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

The argument from these passages of scripture, proving the saints’ final perseverance, may be thus formed: if true believers are sealed, certified and assured, by the Spirit of God, that they are the sons and heirs of God, and shall enjoy the heavenly inheritance: and if the same Spirit is the earnest and pledge of it, and that until the redemption of the purchased possession, or until the day of redemption; that is, until all those who are the possession of Christ, or his peculiar people, whom he has purchased with his blood, are redeemed from their mortality and corruption, which will be done in the resurrection morn, and not before; I say, if the Spirit of God does thus seal believers, and is, and continues to be an

earnest of their future glory, until this time; then they shall certainly and finally persevere. But the Spirit of God does do, and is all this to them, unto this time; therefore, they shall certainly and finally persevere. In answer to this it is said,

1st. “That these metaphors neither do, nor can signify that they, who have once the Spirit, can ever lose him, or cause him to depart from them, is evident from these considerations;

1. “That they who have been the temples of God, by virtue of his Spirit dwelling in them, may so corrupt this temple as to be themselves destroyed, as is demonstrable from 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17, and that they, whose bodies are the members of Christ, and who are one spirit with him, may make these bodies the members of an harlot; and so cease to be the members of Christ (1 Cor. 6:15).” I reply that these metaphors both can, and do signify that they, who have once the Spirit, can never wholly lose him, or cause him finally and totally to depart from them; for otherwise he would not be a sealer of them, nor an earnest of their inheritance to them, until the day of redemption: nor do the words of the apostle, in 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17, demonstrate that they, who have been the temples of God, may so corrupt this temple as to be themselves destroyed; but only that such, who attempt to corrupt or defile the temple and church of God, by bringing in among them damnable heresies, shall be destroyed by God; and not they who are the temples of God: nor do the words, in 1 Corinthians 6:15, prove that they, whose bodies are the embers of Christ, may make them the members of an harlot. The apostle only puts the question, Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? Which he answers with a God forbid. And his design is to show how unbecoming the sin of fornication is to such, whose bodies are the members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost; but does not in the least insinuate that such, who were truly so, might cease to be the members of Christ, or cause the Holy Spirit entirely to depart from them.

2. This is also said to be “farther evident from the apostle’s fears, that Satan might so far have tempted his Thessalonians, as to render all his labor vain among them; whom yet he acknowledges, had received the word with joy of the Holy Ghost, and were the elect

of God.” But it should be observed, that the apostle’s fears were not, lest, through Satan’s temptations, they might so fall away as to cause the Holy Spirit wholly to depart from them; but lest Satan, through false teachers, should so stagger their faith, that they should in any respect give way to erroneous principles and practices; and thereby not all his labor, but that part of it should be in vain, which he had bestowed upon them in establishing them in the truths of the gospel.

3. This is said to be still farther evident “from the exhortations in these epistles, directed to those men, who are said to have this seal and earnest of the Holy Spirit; as to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 6:1; 11:3, and 12:20, 21), and to the Ephesians, (Ephesians 5:3, 6; 3:13; 6:13). To which may be replied, that these exhortations, which regard the saints continuing in the doctrines of the gospel, avoiding sin, and withstanding temptations, though they imply danger to the saints, as considered in themselves, as of falling from some degree of steadfastness in the faith, and into sin, and of fainting in the evil day; yet do not suppose that they may, or shall fall finally and totally, or so as that the Holy Spirit would wholly withdraw from them; though they might so fall and faint as to grieve him, to do which would be unkind and ungenerous; since he is the sealer of their persons, and the earnest of their inheritance. Besides, these exhortations are to be considered as means, being designed, and doubtless as such were blessed, for the final perseverance of God’s sealed ones.

2ndly. In answer to the argument above, it is observed, that “the expressions are designed only to inform us that the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed to Christ’s church and members, gave them a just assurance of the truth of the Christian faith; and consequently of the farther blessings promised to his faithful persevering servants in the world to come. Hence it is evident, that they who had these first fruits of the Spirit, had thereupon an argument to satisfy them

of the future blessings promised to them. And hence they, by his Spirit, are said to have the earnest of their future inheritance, and to be sealed up to the day of redemption.” But let it be observed, that the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed to Christ’s church and members, does not only give a just assurance of the truth of the Christian faith, as a doctrine; but also assures believers of the truth of the grace of faith, and of all

other graces in them, and of their right to glory, and certain enjoyment of it. Moreover, if the Spirit, thus vouchsafed, gives a just assurance of farther blessings promised by Christ; and if such, who have these first fruits of the Spirit, have thereupon an argument to satisfy them of these blessings; then they may, with faith and patience, wait for the redemption of the body: and be assured that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, they have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; and that the Lord will deliver them from every evil work, and preserve them unto his heavenly kingdom (Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 5:1; 2 Timothy 4:18). The argument from 2 Timothy 2:19, is vindicated, under the head of Election, whither the reader is referred.

Section 9

1 Peter 1:5.

Who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

These words, in connection with the preceding verses, show that such as are elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, and are begotten again unto a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, are kept frouroume>nouv, as in a garrison, by, or in the power of God, safe and secure from a final and total falling away, through the grace of faith unto consummate salvation,, to be enjoyed for ever in heaven. In answer to which, it is said.

1. “That this place only proves that all, who are preserved to salvation, are so kept by the power of God; but not that all believers are so kept.” I reply, we do not say, that all believers are so kept; since there are some who are nominal believers, have no true grace, believe but for a time, and fall away; but then we say, that all true believers are so kept; otherwise the words of our Lord (Mark 16:16), would not be true, nor the will of his Father (John 6:40), be fulfilled; for how should every one that believes be saved, unless they are preserved unto salvation? And if those who are preserved unto salvation, are kept by the power of God unto it, as is owned; it follows, that since every true believer will be saved, and in order to it be preserved unto salvation, then every one of them is, and will be, kept by the power of God unto it.

2. It is farther said, that this place “proves only that they are kept through faith; that is, if they continue in the faith, and hold the beginning of their confidence

steadfast unto the end.” But it should be observed, that there is no if in the text; faith is not represented as a condition, but as a means of preservation, engaged by the power of God, for that is as much secured by the power of God as salvation itself, or preservation to it. Besides, such a sense of the words is no other than this, that these persons are kept by the power of God, if, or so long as, they keep themselves; which, as it greatly depreciates the power of God, and ascribes too much to the creature, so it is in itself exceeding trifling. Add to this, that if this faith, through which believers are kept to salvation, will render them victorious over the world, enable them to resist the temptations of the devil, to prefer afflictions before the pleasures of sin, and even to suffer death, not accepting deliverance, in expectation of a better resurrection; and, lastly, engage the power of God in their preservation, and so cause them out of weakness to be strong, all which is owned by our author; this, surely, proves that they shall certainly continue in the faith, and so be preserved safe unto the kingdom and glory of God.

Section 10

1 John 2:19.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us. But they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.

The meaning of these words is, that there were some persons in the apostle John’s time, who had made a profession, of religion, were members of the church, and some of them, perhaps, preachers; and yet departed from the faith they professed, withdrew themselves from the church or churches, to which they belonged, and set up separate assemblies of their own. These, the apostle says, were not of us; that is, they were not regenerated by the grace of God, and so apparently were not of the number of God’s chosen ones; for had they been born again of the incorruptible seed, had they had that anointing which abides, and from which persons are truly denominated Christians; as they would have appeared to have been chosen, so they would have continued in the faith, and have remained with the churches of Christ, and not have fallen into such errors and heresies, into which it is impossible that God’s elect, or true believers, should ever fall. But the defection of these persons was

permitted by God, that they might be made manifest, that they had never received the grace of God in truth. It follows, therefore, that as such who so fall were never true believers, so such who are true believers, shall never totally and finally fall away. To which is answered,

1. “That these words, they were not of us, cannot signify they were not of the number of the elect; but only they were not of the church in general, and of the mind of the apostles, and the church that adhered to them.” But surely the apostle would never deny that these persons were of the church, and of the same mind with it, at least in profession, antecedent to their going out; for had they not been in communion with the church, they could not be properly said to go out of it; and if they had not been of the same mind and faith and profession, they could not be said to depart from it. The reason this author gives, as an evidence of their not being of the church, “that from them they went out, and with them they might have remained,” is a reason invincibly proving that they were of them, as a church otherwise they could not have went out from them; with whom they not only might but would have remained, had their hearts been right with God. And whereas it is farther observed, that “they could not go out from the elect only, who are not visible, nor could they have remained with them, who were never of them;” it may be replied, that though they were never of them as elect, yet they were of them as a church, become visible by a profession of faith; and therefore could, as they did, go out from them as such; though had they been true believers in Christ, they would have appeared to have been elect likewise, and would have continued and remained with them both as elect and as a church. It is moreover added, that “their going out from them for a season, was no certain argument that they were not of the elect; since it is confessed, that they may fall totally, though not finally.” Who they are that have made this confession, I shall not inquire; for my own part, I affirm that God’s elect, or true believers in Christ, cannot totally fall, that is, wholly and entirely lose the grace of God bestowed on them, or wrought in them. However, the going out of these persons was in such a manner, that it was a certain argument that they were not of the elect; since they became antichrists (v. 18), the forerunners of the man of sin, avowed enemies to Christ, who denied

him to be the Christ (v. 22), or that he was come in the flesh (1 John 4:3), and therefore said to be of the world, and not of God (vv. 4-6).

2. It is said, that “the true sense of the words seems plainly to be this: these antichrists, or deceivers, went out from the apostles and churches of Judea (Acts 15:1,24), to preach destructive doctrines to the Gentiles, which both the church of Judea, and the apostles assembled for that purpose, flatly disowned and censured; by which it sufficiently appeared, that all the preachers of these doctrines were not of them.” But this sense of the words confines them to preachers only; whereas, though many of these antichrists might be preachers, yet not all; whoever denied the Father and the Son, or that Christ was come in the flesh, was an antichrist, whether he was in a public or private capacity. Besides, not the true and faithful ministers of the word, but private believers, are opposed to these persons in the following verse, But ye have an unction from the Holy One, etc. This sense of the words also makes the us to be the apostles, and churches of Judea; whereas, when the apostle John wrote this epistle, the rest of the apostles were all dead; and he speaks of these antichrists as men that were, in that last time, risen up among them, and went out from them; and, therefore, could not, with any propriety, say that they went out from the apostles. Besides, whenever this pronoun us is used elsewhere, in this epistle, it is never restrained to the apostles; but the apostle John in it includes, with himself, all true believers. Nor is there any reason to conclude, that he had in view the church of Judea, and a case in which that was concerned near forty years ago, but rather the churches of Asia, among whom he was, and particularly the church at Ephesus, where he is generally thought to have resided. Now the apostle Paul, many years before this, had told (Acts 20:29,30) the elders of the church, that after his departure, not only grievous wolves should enter in among them, but also of their own selves should men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them: and the apostle John lived to see these predictions fulfilled. Add to all this, that this sense of the words makes their going out to be merely local and corporal. —Now to go out from the apostles, in this sense, was not criminal; the persons that went down from Judea to Antioch (Acts 15:1, 24), are not blamed for going

thither, nor for going out from the apostles thither, but for troubling the disciples with words to the subverting of their souls. Nor was a corporal departure from the apostles any evidence of not being of the same mind with them, for they often departed one from another, and yet continued of the same mind and faith. The departure here spoken of was of men from the true church of Christ, both in doctrine and in affection; and that not of preachers only, but of others who were only nominal Christians, and was so understood by the ancient fathers, particularly Tertullian and Cyprian.

Section 11

1 John 3:9.

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

He that is born of God is one that is regenerated by the Spirit and grace of God; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, or spiritual; it is a new man, a new creature, which neither does, nor can commit sin; though it is as yet imperfect, there is no impurity in it, no bias, tendency; or inclination to sin, but all the reverse; it is born of an incorruptible seed which remains, it is a principle of grace which is of God, and can never be lost. Hence it follows, that regenerate persons cannot cease to be so. In answer to this, it is said,

1. “That these words cannot be intended to signify that he who is born of the Spirit and the word, can never fall from that state is evident; partly, because he hath been proved already that the Holy Spirit may depart and quit his habitation; and so he who was once born of the Spirit may cease to be so; and partly, because men may not continue in the word, nor the word abide in them, nor they in Christ, and may lose their interest in God, and the things which they had wrought, as is clearly intimated by these exhortations (1 John 2:24, 27, 28; 2 John 1:8, 9).” But it has been also already proved that the Holy Spirit does not finally and totally depart from true believers. Nor is it possible that he that is once born of the Spirit can cease to be so; a man can be but once regenerated; and he that is once born again cannot be again unborn. Nor do the exhortations referred to intimate that regenerate persons may not abide in the word, or that in them, or they not in Christ, or that they may lose their interest in God; but are so many encouragements

to the performance of duty, as a means of their final perseverance.

2. It is argued that “as those words of Christ (Matthew 7:18), and those of the apostle (Rom. 8:7), do not prove that corrupt tree cannot cease to be corrupt, and become good; or that the carnal mind cannot cease to be so, and become spiritual, so neither do these words prove that he who is born of God cannot cease to be so.” But it should be observed, that as the words of Christ and the apostle referred to, prove that a corrupt and carnal man cannot become good and spiritual without the powerful and efficacious grace of God, which can only make him so; so these words prove that a regenerate man cannot cease to be one, or in such sense sin as to be lost and perish; for this reason, because there is a principle of mighty grace in him, which overcomes the world, the flesh, and the devil. Again, it is urged, that “as these words in Matthew 12:34, John 7:7, and John 12:39, and John 14:17, do not signify an impossibility that it should be otherwise, but only their present indisposition to the contrary, and the aversation of their minds from those things which it is said they cannot do: so those words do not import any impossibility that they should do so, but only that they have at present that frame of spirit, which renders them strongly averse from sin, and indisposed to yield to any temptations to commit it.” But it is easy to observe, that the apostle does not conclude the regenerate man’s not sinning, or not being able to sin, from any present precarious frame of spirit; but from his constitution, as being born of God, and from the seed of God, a principle of grace remaining and abiding in him.

3. It is said, that “the interpretation which many of the ancient fathers give us of these words, are a demonstration that they believed not the doctrine of the saints’ perseverance; for they expound the words thus; He that is born of God sinneth not, neither can sin, quamdiu renatus est, whilst he is born of God; because he ceaseth to be a child of God when he sins.” Whether the ancient fathers believed the doctrine of the saints’ perseverance, or not, will be considered (God willing) in an after part of this work. Who the many of the ancient fathers are, that give this interpretation of the words, we are not told: not Ignatius, nor Clemens of Rome, nor of Alexandria, nor Irenaeus, nor Justin Martyr, nor Cyprian. Tertullian comes the nearest to

it, when he says, Haec non admittet omnino qui natus a Deo fuerit, non futurus Dei filius si admiserit; He that is born of God, will not at all commit these things, speaking of some grievous sins; should he commit them he would not be a child of God. His meaning I take to be this; should any one that professes to be born of God, commit such and such things, it would be evident that he was not a child of God: but he adds afterwards, We know that every one that is born of God, sinneth not; scilicet, delictum quod ad mortem eat, namely, the sin unto death.

Section 12

Isaiah 54:10.

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee.

These words contain an irresistible argument in favor of the saints' final perseverance; proving that they cannot fall from the grace of God, or ever be deprived of an interest in the covenant of peace, and the blessings of it. In which, the unalterableness of God's love to his people, and the immovableness of his covenant with them, are illustrated and confirmed, by the departure and removing of mountains and hills; when neither of these shall depart, nor be removed. Wherefore if the kindness of God to them never will depart from them, notwithstanding their fall in Adam, the depravity of their natures, their many actual sins before conversion, their frequent backslidings after; and though he hides his face from them as to sensible communion, and chides and chastises them in the course of his providence; if this is the case, I say, as it certainly is, then it is impossible that persons, thus held and embraced in the arms of everlasting love, should ever totally and finally fall away, so as to be lost and perish eternally. Moreover, if the covenant of peace is an immovable one, as there is the highest reason to believe it is; since God has not only said, but swore to it, that he will not break it nor alter the thing that is gone out of his lips; seeing it is made with Christ, with whom it shall stand fast: then the persons interested in it cannot fail of grace here, and glory hereafter, which are blessings secured for them in it. But, in answer to these arguments,

1. It is said, "that it is exceeding evident that this place, with some others, hereafter to be considered,

speaks of nations in the general, and not of a few private persons among them." To which I reply; that it is exceeding evident that the persons spoken to, which are no other than the church of Christ, are spoken to in the singular number, as appears from the words thou and thee used almost in every verse in the chapter; which is not very suitable to the nations in general. Besides, the relations that Jehovah stands in to these persons are such in which he does not stand to the nations in general; for, though he is the maker of them all, and the God of the whole earth; yet he is only a husband and a redeemer of particular persons (v. 5). Likewise, the expressions of God's love and kindness (vv. 7-10), are too strong to be applied to the nations in general; as well as the promises of glory and happiness (vv. 11, 12), and particularly, that all her children should be taught of the Lord, and great should be the peace of them (v. 13). Add to this, that these persons are distinguished from the nations in general (v. 3), and from those that should gather and rise up against them (vv. 15-17). And the whole prophecy, concerning them, concludes thus; this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord: which words contain in them both characters and privileges which do not belong to the nations in general.

2. It is further objected, that the prophet here speaks of the time of the Jews' general conversion to the faith; as is evident from verse 11, 12, compared with Revelation 21. But it unhappily falls out for this objector, that the prophet is speaking of the conversion of the Gentiles, and not of the Jews; as appears from verse 1-3, compared with Galatians 4:27, in which he predicts, that the instances of conversion among the Gentiles, at the first preaching of the Gospel to them, would be far more numerous than what

had been among the Jews. And it is evident from verse 11, 12, compared with Revelation 21: that he is there speaking of a very glorious state of the church among the Gentiles in the latter day; when their fullness shall come in, and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of that glorious state, and the kings of the earth shall bring the glory and honor of the nations to it (Rev. 21:19,23,24). And it is also very evident, that the prophet is speaking, in verse 12, of the time when the earth, not the land of Judea, but the Gentile world, shall be full of the knowledge

of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9). But supposing that the time of the Jews' conversion is here referred to, and the converted Jews are the only persons intended; how does this militate against the saints' final perseverance? Since these converted Jews will appear to have a share in that kindness which shall never depart from them, and to be interested in that covenant which shall never be removed. And it should be observed, that this exception destroys the former; for if the Jews, and their conversion are spoken of, then not the nations in general.

3. It is farther urged, that "the promise of a covenant of peace that should not fail, was made under a condition, as the words in Isaiah 55:3, show." To which I answer, that the phrases of inclining the ear, and hearkening to the Lord, mentioned in the place referred to, were not the conditions of God's making, that is, making known, and confirming his covenant to them; but the promises of making good, and applying the blessings of the covenant, is used as an encouragement to incline the ear to hearken to him. Besides were this covenant of peace a conditional one, depending on any thing to be performed by man, it would not be better than the old covenant; whereas the covenant of grace and peace, is represented as a new and a better one, established upon better promises (Heb. 8:6-8), which are absolute and unconditional. Add to this, that the covenant here spoken of, is represented to be such a one (v. 9), as was made with Noah. Now the covenant made with Noah was without any condition required on the part of man, as appears from Genesis 9:11.

Section 13

Isaiah 59:21.

As for me, this is my covenant with them saith the Lord, My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, or out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

These words are to be understood of the church of Christ under the New Testament dispensation, and of all true believers, which are the seed of the church, and her seed's seed in successive ages; being born in her, nursed up at her side, and are her children in a spiritual sense; among whom the Spirit and the Word, two grand blessings of the covenant of grace, shall

always remain, and never depart from them; and so contain a very considerable argument, not only of the continuance of the church of Christ in all ages, and of his Spirit and gospel in it, but of the final perseverance of particular saints. For, if the Spirit of the Lord shall not finally and totally depart from such, in whom he is as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, faith, adoption, etc., though his grace in them is not always in exercise, and he may, for a time, withdraw his sensible presence and gracious influence, then the saints shall finally persevere, and cannot perish; for it is impossible they should ever perish with him in them, who is "the well of living water springing up unto eternal life:" the abiding seed in them, who is "greater than he that is in the world;" and will "perform the good work of grace begun in them, until the day of Christ." Moreover, if the gospel, though it may depart from a nation, as it did from the Jews, and has done for others, and from visible, particular congregated churches such as the seven churches of Asia, and out of the mouths of formal professors, who may drop, deny, and blaspheme it; shall never depart out of the mouths of such who have received it in the love of it, and in whose hearts it works effectually, then they shall finally persevere; since this "gospel is the power of God unto salvation" to them, and the "engrafted word able to save" them. But, in answer to this, it is urged,

1. That the words are a conditional promise, being made with such who turn from transgression, (v. 20), and on the account of their so doing; and no longer binding, than that is continued. To which may be replied, that there is not the least appearance of a condition in the words, or in the preceding verse referred to: it is not said, If they turn away from transgression then my spirit and my words shall not depart from them. Their turning away from transgression is mentioned not as the cause, or condition of God's covenant with them, and of these articles in it; but only as descriptive of the persons interested therein. Besides, as the words are cited by the apostle Paul in Romans 11:27, they contain an absolute promise of what the Redeemer would do for them when he came, and not what they should do themselves.

2. It is observed, "that something external, and peculiar to the Israelites, is here promised." To which I reply; whatever may be said for the words of the

Lord being in their mouths, as something external; it is certain that the Spirit of the Lord being upon, or in them (for I[, is put for b, as Kimchi explains the words) designs nothing external, nor the gifts of the Spirit, either ordinary, or extraordinary; but the internal operations of his grace, in which sense the phrase is used in Isaiah 44:3, 4. Moreover, though the Jews, under the Old Testament dispensation had many external things peculiar to themselves, in which they had the advantage of the Gentiles; yet, under the New Testament dispensation, there is no difference made between believing Jews, and believing Gentiles (see Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Besides, these promises were not made to the Israelites or Jews, literally considered; but to the church of Christ, and true believers in him, figuratively signified by Zion and Jacob.

3. It is added, “that these promises regard a particular time from which they commenced, from henceforth, and for ever; and particular persons, who are distinctly and emphatically, and by a climax, mentioned; from thy mouth, and the mouth of thy seed, and of thy seed’s seed. Whereas the promise of perseverance, according to our notions of it, must belong equally to all the elect in all ages, before, as well as after, these promises were made.” To which I answer, that the covenant here spoken of regards the new covenant, or the administration of that covenant of grace, under the gospel dispensation, which was to take place from the coming of the Redeemer (v. 20), the date intended, nor was there any need to include more; nor could more be included in these promises than the saints under the gospel dispensation. And the reason why the church, her seed, and seed’s seed, are so distinctly mentioned, may be to remove all doubts and scruples from the minds of believers, in all the periods of that dispensation, and the more strongly to confirm them in the belief of these things.

4. It is said, “that the apostle Paul plainly refers these words to the time of the Jews’ conversion to the faith; who, when brought home to Christ, should never fall from him. Be it so, that they do more particularly belong to that time, than any other: this sense of them is far from militating against the saints’ final perseverance; since it strongly proves that the Jews, when converted, shall not fatally and totally fall away; which is not a blessing peculiar to them, but what they will have in common with Gentile

believers.

5. It is urged, that if these promises belong to the elect, the seed of the elect, and their seed’s seed, must be elected also; whereas it is certain, from experience, that the seed of the elect are often very wicked; and therefore not elect, but reprobates.” It must be owned, that there would be a good deal of force in this objection, were the words to be understood of believers, and their natural seed and offspring, as such; and therefore such who understand the words in this sense, would do well to consider how they betray the doctrine of perseverance into the hands of our opponents. But when it is, observed, that these words respect not the children of the flesh, or the natural seed of believers, but the children of the promise, who are counted for the seed (Rom. 9:7) there will appear no weight in the objection.

Section 14

Hosea 2:19, 20.

And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.

The certain and final perseverance of the elect, appears very evident from this passage of scripture. For, if the Lord Jesus Christ does, by an act of his free grace betroth his people to himself; and that in righteousness, in the wedding garment of his own righteousness; and also in judgment, which may intend the powerful protection of them from all insults and injuries; and likewise in loving-kindness, and in mercies, which he has shown in dying for them, in nourishing and cherishing of them, and in sympathizing with them, as well as in faithfulness, which he will never suffer to fail; and all this for ever; so that this marriage relation shall never cease; I say if Christ has thus closely and eternally joined and united his people to himself, it is not possible they should ever be separated from him; or so fall from his grace as to be eternally lost. But to this, the following things are objected.

1. That these words are spoken “of them, who came out of the land of Egypt, who had burnt incense to Balaam, and whose feast days were new moons

and sabbaths, and so cannot concern the elect only, or their final perseverance.” To which I reply, that it is very evident, that though these words are spoken of the Israelites, yet not of the same individual persons who came out of Egypt, or who had burnt incense to Balaam; but regard other persons and times, even the times when the ceremonial law was to be abolished, and the new moons, sabbaths, and solemn feasts, made to cease (v. 11), when the land of Judea with its vines and fig-trees, shall be destroyed (v. 12), and which are distinguished from the days of the youth of this people, as a body politic, when they came out of the land of Egypt (v. 15), and so concern the elect of God among that people, who being allured into the wilderness of the Gentile world (v. 14), were met with, and converted under the ministry of the apostles, and so openly betrothed unto the Lord Jesus Christ: and was a pledge of what will be more largely done at the time of their general conversion; when it shall be said, the marriage of the Lamb is come. Besides, these words regard not only the elect of God among the Jews, but among the Gentiles also, as appears from Romans 9:23-26.

2. It is objected, that “if these spiritual promises respect the elect, then the temporal ones must do so likewise; and then they must abound with corn, and wins and oil (v. 22), which yet were never looked upon as promises made to the elect, much less as things peculiarly belonging to them.” But why these should not be looked upon as promises made to the elect, I see not: does not God take care of his own elect in temporal things? which, though not peculiar to them, yet are given to them in a peculiar manner, being blessings indeed to them, whilst they are curses to others. Besides, nothing is more evident than that oftentimes, in the writings of the Old Testament, temporal blessings are spoken of, as figurative of spiritual ones.

3. It is moreover observed, “that the promise here made to Israel, is only made to her returning to her first husband, (v. 7),” and is not an absolute, but a conditional one. But whoever reads it with any care, will easily see that it is expressed in the most absolute and unconditional terms; no less than three times, to express the certainty of the thing, does the Lord say, I will betroth thee unto me, and adds, and thou shalt know the Lord; that is, believe in him, own,

acknowledge, love, honor, and obey him, as thy lord and husband. He does not say, if thou wilt own and acknowledge me, love, honor and obey me, or return to me, and remain inviolably chaste and faithful to me, then I will betroth thee to myself; nor is there any connection between these words and verse 7. And was there any between them; yet even they are delivered in very absolute terms thus, she shall say under strong convictions of mind, and impressions made by powerful and efficacious grace, I will go and return to husband, for then it was better with me than now.

Section 15

Jeremiah 32:40.

And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

If the covenant God makes with his people is an everlasting one, interest in it indissoluble, the grace of it always sufficient, its blessings irreversible, its promises sure, and the mediator of it always the same, than which nothing is more certain; if God, the maker of this covenant, will not turn away his love and affections from them, but will do them all the good he has either purposed or promised, and if he puts his fear in their hearts, so as that they shall not depart totally from him; their final perseverance must be abundantly secured. Now, in answer to this it is said,

1. That “these promises are made expressly to the whole house of Israel, and to all the children of Israel and Judah; and therefore cannot concern the elect only, or their final perseverance.” I reply, that Israel and Judah were typical of God’s elect, under the gospel dispensation; and supposing that they are literally intended, it is enough to secure the faithfulness of God in these promises, that they were made good to his elect among them. The apostle has taught us to answer such an objection in this manner, when he says (Rom. 9:6; 11:1, 2, 7), “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel; God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew; the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” Besides, the words all and whole, are neither in the text, nor context; and were they, yet, if these promises regard the time of the Jews’ conversion as this author pleads

for, when all Israel shall be saved, and so appear to be elected, these must needs concern the elect only, and their final perseverance.

2. It is objected, that “these promises are for ‘the good of their children after them,’ who therefore must be elected also; whereas it is certain from experience, that the seed of the elect are often very wicked persons.” To which may be replied, that God does not here promise to make an everlasting covenant with their children, nor that he will not turn away from their children to do them good, nor that he will put his fear in the hearts of their children that they shall not depart from him; only that he “will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear him for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them; which is true, since the religious conduct of parents towards their children, the religious examples set them, and the religious education given them, may be in many instances for their good, even though many of them may prove wicked, and without supposing them all to be elected.

3. It is excepted, that “if these spiritual promises respect the elect, then the promises of temporal blessings being made to the same persons, must respect them also; and so they must all abide safely in the land of Canaan and buy there fields for money.” In answer to which, it is easy to observe, that very frequently in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, especially when God promises temporal blessings, and particularly deliverance from captivity to the people of the Jews in general, he takes the opportunity to make mention of some spiritual blessings which were peculiar to his elect among them, and who in common shared the temporal blessings with them; which spiritual ones are the same, his elect in all ages, and in all nations, partake of. Besides the temporal blessings promised to the Jews were, in many instances, figurative of spiritual ones, which God’s elect among the Gentiles, as well as Jews in the times of the gospel, were to enjoy; who though they are not blessed with the temporal blessings promised to Abraham, and his natural seed, yet are “blessed with faithful Abraham,” and his spiritual seed, with all spiritual blessings.

4. The promises here made are said to be conditional; whereas there is not the least indication of a condition in any of them, but are expressed in

the strongest and most absolute manner imaginable. I will make an everlasting covenant with them, I will not turn away from them, I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me: as are also the passages referred to, to be joined with these promises, though without any reason (as Jer. 24:7; 3:19; Isa. 55:3). The text in Jeremiah 12:16, the only conditional one mentioned, regards not the people of Israel, but their evil neighbors, as is evident both from the text and context.

5. It is urged, that “the promise is not an absolute promise, that they should fear him always; but only an indication, that his kind providences should be such towards them as should lay upon them the highest obligations to continue steadfast in his fear: le and lebalti being often used, not to signify the certainty of the event, but the design and purpose of God in affording the means (so Deut. 10:13; 17:19, 20; 4:10; John 16:1; Ezek. 11:19, 20). “But, if this is not an absolute promise, I will put ray fear in their hearts, what can be called so? And surely, God’s putting his fear in their hearts, is more than by kind providences to lay upon them the highest obligations to continue steadfast in his fear, or barely affording means thereof; but must intend an internal, special, powerful operation, and implantation of his grace in their hearts. Nor does the word here used, signify only God’s design, and not the certainty of the event. The text should not be read that they may not depart, but, that they shall not depart from me. The Hebrew particle, ytlbl, lebilti, not lebalti, signifies the certainty of the event, as well as design; (see Lev. 26:15; Deut. 4:21; Ezek. 20:15), nor is it used, but in one of the passages referred to by the learned objector; and it is very odd that John 16:1, should stand among the instances of the sense of a Hebrew particle. Besides, admitting that it signifies here the design and purpose of God, this is not to be separated from the event, which is certain by it; since his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.

6. Whereas it is further objected, that “this text only contains a promise, that when the Jewish nation shall be converted at the close of the world, they should never fall off any more from being his people, as they had done before.” This is so far from militating against the doctrine of the saints’ final perseverance, that it serves to confirm it; since, when the Jews shall

be converted, they shall not fall away, but “all Israel shall be saved;” so all God’s elect, being converted, whether among Jews or Gentiles, shall certainly persevere to the end, and be saved; seeing they are converted by the same grace, and kept by the same power, as the Jews then will be. The Remonstrants own, that this promise regards the Gentiles under the New Testament.

Section 16

John 14:16.

[with John 4:14, and John 6:35]

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

The other Comforter Christ prays to his Father for, is no other than the Spirit of truth (v. 17), which is the Holy Ghost (v. 26), who, when he once takes up his residence in the hearts of any, never departs, but abides for ever; otherwise, this prayer of Christ would not be answered. Whence it follows that true believers, who are the temples of the Holy Spirit, shall certainly persevere to the end, and not be eternally destroyed. In answer to this,

1. It is affirmed, “that the Holy Spirit may entirely depart from them, in whom he once inhabited.” This is said, but not proved: the graces of the Spirit may be very low as to the exercise of them, believers may be without the comforts and gracious influences of the Spirit; they may so vex and grieve him, as that he may leave them, for a while, without his sensible presence; and yet not entirely depart from them who know him, and have had an experience of his powerful operation on them; for he dwelleth with them, and shall be in them, and that for ever.

2. It is urged, that this “promise is only made on condition that they continue so to love Christ as to keep his commandments. To which I reply: that this promise is entirely absolute, nor is there the least intimation of a condition in it: Christ says not, if ye love me so as to keep my commandments, I will pray the Father; or, if ye do keep my commandments, the Father will give you another, Comforter; or, if ye do whatsoever I enjoin you, then the Spirit shall abide with you forever; but he says, I will pray, he shall give, that he may abide. Besides, the giving of the Spirit to

the Lord’s people, is antecedent to their keeping of the commands of Christ, and in order to cause them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them (Ezek. 36:27).

3. It is said, that this promise “seems only to concern Christ’s apostles, with whom he was then corporally present; or to concern only the Spirit’s presence with his church in general, not in the heart of every Christian; for so Christ himself abode not with them.” I answer; admitting that it concerns the apostles only, it will be allowed, it is to be hoped, that it secured their perseverance: and why may not the perseverance of others be as certain, who have been all made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 4:13), have received the same spirit of faith, and have been baptized into one and the same body? Though if this promise only concerned the apostles, why should it be said, that he may abide with you for ever? It seems rather to concern a succession of men, of believers unto the end of the world (see Isa. 54:21). Moreover, should it be thought that it rather concerns the presence of the Spirit with the church of Christ in general; the Spirit dwells there, by dwelling in the hearts of particular believers; where also Christ dwells by faith, and with whom he makes his abode: it is in the hearts of particular saints, that the Spirit of the Lord is a well of water springing up into everlasting life; which must certainly secure their final perseverance: for he is a well of water, to supply all their wants, and satisfy their thirst, and as such abides for ever, and can never be expelled; otherwise, it could not be said to be springing up into everlasting life, nor be the earnest of their future inheritance, though this text now mentioned (John 4:14, together with John 6:35), He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst, it is said, may be understood of Christ’s doctrine; and the meaning be, “he that cometh to learn my doctrine, and believeth it when he hath learnt it, shall need no further teaching in order to his future happiness; because the observance of what he hath learned from me already will bring him to eternal life.” Now, besides the falsehood of the last sentence, which attributes eternal life to what they have learnt, being contrary to the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, which only bring persons to it; let it be observed, that sensible sinners come to Christ, not barely to learn

his doctrine; but they come to him as the bread of life, for food for their souls, for righteousness and eternal life, for grace here, and glory hereafter. Besides, they first learn the doctrine of eternal life and salvation, and him, in some measure, before they come to him for it: Every man that hath heard and learnt of the Father, cometh unto me; and such shall be preserved and nourished unto everlasting life.

Section 17

John 10:28.

And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

These words are spoken of the sheep of Christ who hear his voice and follow him, true believers; whose final perseverance, and everlasting safety, are here strongly asserted: for if Christ gives them eternal life, they can never be hurt of the second death; if he says they shall never perish, who dare say they may or shall? And, if none can pluck them out of his hands, they must be safe, and shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. But,

1. It is said, that “the frequent cautions and exhortations directed in the scripture to Christ’s sheep, not to fall from grace, but continue steadfast in the faith, are certain demonstrations that they may do so” To which I reply, that there is not one single caution, or exhortation, much less frequent ones, directed in the scripture to Christ’s sheep not to fall from grace; they are, indeed, directed to take heed lest they fall; but not lest they fall from grace: they may fall into many sins, snares and temptations, which make such cautions necessary; and yet not lest they fall from grace. Where any intimations are given of the danger any are in of falling from, or failing of the grace of God, as in Galatians 5:4, Hebrews. 12:15, these are to be understood, not of the grace and favor of God in his own heart towards them, nor of his grace implanted in them; but of the doctrine of grace they had made a profession of. And, though there are exhortations directed in scripture to the saints to continue steadfast in the faith; yet these, at most, only suppose, that they are in danger of falling, or that they may fall from some degree of steadfastness in it; and which they may be left to, without falling

finally and totally from the grace of God. Besides, such exhortations are designed to make and keep them steadfast and immovable in it, and are made use of, and blessed by the Spirit of God, as means of their final perseverance; and therefore are not in vain, nor should they be improved into arguments against it.

2. It is urged, as a direct answer to this text, “that Christ here only promises his sheep should never perish through any defect on His part, or by the force of any plucking them by violence out of his hands: not but by the allurements of the world, the flesh and the devil, they may choose to go from him, though they are not snatched out of his hands.” To which I reply, that the promise here made, that Christ’s sheep shall never perish, is absolute and full, not depending on any thing to be performed on the part of the sheep; the fulfillment of it wholly and entirely lying on Christ. If therefore they shall never perish through any defect on his part, they shall never perish at all; since he is both able and willing to keep them from falling, and has a power to give, as well as to promise, eternal life to them. Moreover, if Christ’s sheep cannot be plucked out of his hands by the force and violence of all their adversaries, then they shall never perish; and this the particle kai, which, as the learned writer at tended to observes, is here illative, shows they shall never perish; for none shall pluck them out of my hands. Now, if these sheep may perish and come short of eternal life then the illation, the consequence, is not just proper and pertinent, and is to be denied since it may be objected, that they may be lost by some means or other, though they cannot by force and power, be snatched out of Christ’s hands. But Christ says they shall never perish, and gives this as the reason of it. Besides, as the world, the flesh and the devil, cannot, by open force and power, pull Christ’s sheep out of his hands; so neither can they, by secret allurements, snares and temptations, draw them from thence (see 1 Cor. 10:13). Add to this, that it is not only contrary to the will of the Father who has committed these sheep to the care of Christ, but also to the love and affection which Christ has expressed towards them particularly by laying down his life for them; and even to his office as the great shepherd of them, to suffer any of them to be lost in any way whatever; for it is his work and business, as such, not only to protect his sheep from the open rapine and violence of their enemies;

but also to preserve them from secret snares, and to restore them, even when they, either of themselves or through temptation, wander and go astray: and this he does as the good shepherd; he seeks that which was lost, and brings again that which was either driven, or which went away; and so not one of them shall perish, but have everlasting life.

3. It is farther observed, that “this text seems only to speak of such sheep, who have already persevered; and so is not a promise of perseverance, but of the reward of it, eternal felicity, which shall be incapable of interruption.” But this is not to be gathered, as is said, from the former verse, where Christ describes his sheep as such who hear his voice, and follow him; which represents them as then hearing his voice, and at that time following him: but not as having hearkened to his voice, and having followed him to the end: and therefore he may be reasonably supposed to promise that they should hear his voice, and follow him still unto the end; since he adds, I give unto them eternal life; the promise of it, a right unto it, that grace which makes meet for it, and is connected with it, pledges, and foretastes of it; and therefore, they shall never perish, but everlastingly enjoy it. Besides, if these words speak only of such

who have already persevered, it speaks not of living saints who now hear Christ’s voice and follow him in this militant state, but of the saints that are dead; for none can be said to have already persevered to the end, but such as are dead. And the saints, as soon as they die, are in heaven, enjoying eternal life, in no fear or danger, no not in their own apprehensions of perishing, or of being plucked out of Christ’s hands; and so stand in no need of such promises to support faith, or to comfort them under trials from the world, the flesh and the devil, which no more attend them; and as these words, in this sense of them, are needless to the saints above, so they must be useless to those below; since, notwithstanding what is said in them, Christ’s sheep, whilst in this state, may be plucked out of his hands, even by force and violence, as well as drawn from him by deceits and allurements; and so perish eternally, and never enjoy everlasting life.

Section 18

1 Corinthians 1:8, 9.

[With 1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 1:6;

1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24; 2 Thessalonians 3:3.]

Who shall also confirm you to the end, that ye be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom, ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The argument from these passages of scripture, in favor of the doctrine of the saints’ final perseverance, stands thus: If God’s fidelity be engaged to confirm them unblameable to the end, whom he hath called to the communion of his Son; if his faithfulness will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will make a way to escape; if St. Paul had ground of confidence that “he, who had begun the good work h his Philippians, would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; if it be part of God’s fidelity to sanctify them wholly, and to preserve their whole spirit, soul and body, blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ whom he hath called; then must they persevere to the end, but all these are the express assertions of the holy scriptures; therefore, now,

1st. For a general answer to all these texts, it is proposed to consideration, “that God in scripture is often said to do a thing, when he does that which hath a proper tendency to the effect, and is sufficient to procure it, and hath done all that was requisite on his part in order to it; so that if the effect be not wrought in us, it is by reason of some defect in us, or some neglect of doing that which he hath given us sufficient means and motives to perform.” Of which divers instances are produced out of Ezekiel 24:13; Jeremiah 13:11; Isaiah 48:17, 18, and Isaiah 43:21-23; Jeremiah 51:9; Romans 1:20, 21, and Romans 2:3,4; 2 Corinthians 5:19,20; Titus 2:11, 12; Acts 2:47: 1 Corinthians 1:18. To which I reply, that this rule can only hold good in moral cases, in which God only acts as a moral agent; but not in such which require a divine operation and almighty power, and solely belong to him to begin, carry on and finish, all which he promises absolutely to perform, which is the case before us. Besides, the instances produced are very impertinent. When God is said to have purged Jerusalem, and she was not purged, it does not signify what he had done sufficient for her purgation; but what he had commanded to be done, and was not done. When he is said to have caused the whole house of Israel to cleave unto him, as the girdle cleaves to the loins of a man; it is expressive, not of what he has done, which proved ineffectual; but of the temporal good things he had bestowed on that people;

which showed them to be a people near into him, and which he mentions to expose their base ingratitude, who, notwithstanding, would not hearken to him. When he is said to teach Israel to profit, and lead him in the way he should go, though he hearkened to his commandments, it is to be understood of those moral instructions, and civil laws given to them, as a nation, which, had they hearkened to, would have issued in their temporal peace and prosperity.

The people the Lord had formed for himself, are not the same with Jacob and Israel, of whom he complains that they were weary of him; but the Gentiles, whom he had determined to call, and did call by his grace, that they might show forth his praise: (see 1 Pet. 2:9, 10). As for what is said of Babylon, we would have healed Babylon, and she is not healed; they are not the words of God; but either of the Israelites or of some others concerned for her temporal welfare. The heathens had not only the means to know God imparted to them by his providence, but they did know him as the God of nature, though they did not glorify him as such; and therefore were given up to judicial blindness. The goodness of God, indeed, has a tendency to lead persons to repentance; and one would think, if any means or motives would do it, this would; and yet such is the hardness of men's hearts, that they will still remain impenitent, unless God exerts his powerful and efficacious grace. When God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, he actually reconciled them to himself, and forgave their iniquities; nor is this contradicted by the exhortation of the apostle, Be ye reconciled to God; since that is spoken to believers, and regards their peaceable submission to the dispensations of providence, and to the order and ordinances, discipline and laws of Christ, in his house. The gospel of the grace of God is called saving grace, not because it teacheth us to do that which, if we conscientiously perform, we shall be saved; but because it brings the good news of complete salvation by Jesus Christ. The converted Jews are, indeed, styled *οἱ σωζομενοι*, the saved; but then it can never be proved, to the end of the world, that any one of them, whom the Lord then added to the church, and are said to be such as should be saved, ever fell away so as to be lost and perish. Nor are all the members of the church at Corinth styled the

saved, much less those who repented not of their sins and iniquities, but all those, and only those, who were called by grace, whether Jews or Gentiles (v. 24). But,

2ndly Our author proceeds to a particular answer to the texts alleged; and,

1. To words cited from 1 Corinthians 1:8, 9, and observes, that “these cannot contain a promise of perseverance made to the elect only among the Corinthians; because,

(1.) “The apostle plainly speaks to the whole body of the church at Corinth.” Be it so, inasmuch as the whole body of this Church, and the several members of it, were under a visible profession of Christianity, and were considered as sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, and so looked upon as the elect of God; upon this supposition, which is no uncharitable one, the apostle might affirm, with the greatest assurance, that God would confirm them to the end blameless. Moreover, though this epistle was in general directed to church of God, which is at Corinth, yet the apostle had a particular regard to such among them, who were truly sanctified in Church, and really called to be saints; and not only them, but all that in every place, as well as at Corinth, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours, (v. 2). Besides, those whom the apostle says, God is faithful to confirm to the end, are such whom he had called not externally, or to some outward privileges, but unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ.

(2.) “Because he speaks not only of their not falling away finally, but of their being preserved unblameable; whereas it is certain that the elect are not always so preserved.” I observe, that it is allowed that the apostle speaks of these persons not falling away finally, which is the thing we contend for; and also of their being preserved blameless, which it is suggested cannot be said of the elect because they are not always so preserved. Which, if understood of them in themselves, and in this life, it will be readily granted, that they are not all of them, nor any of them always so preserved; but then they are all of them always so preserved in Christ and will appear so in the day of our lord Jesus; for they are chosen in his, that they should be holy, and without blame before him in love (Eph. 1:4).

(3.) The sense of these words, according to the ancients is said to be this; “God is faithful, who hath

promised to them that obey the Gospel, *υἱοθεσι>an*, the adoption; that is, the redemption of the body, or that they shall be partakers of that kingdom and glory to which he hath called them.” But the phrase, to them that obey the Gospel, is neither in the text, nor context: and supposing it had been in either, or should it be thought to be implied, those that truly obey the Gospel are called by grace, and such as the elect of God: if therefore God is faithful, who has promised them the adoption, to which they are predestinated, according to the good pleasure of his will (Eph. 1:5), or, that they shall be partakers of the kingdom and glory to which he has called them; then they must persevere to the end.

(4.) These words are said to be “well expounded by Grotius, thus: He will do, *good suarum est partium*, all that is requisite of his part, to render you unblameable to the end; so that you shall not fail of being so through any want of divine grace requisite to that end, or any unfaithfulness on his part to his promise.” To which I reply: that Scripture is not of private interpretation; nor are we bound down to the sense given of Scripture, either by ancient or modern interpreters. That these words are not well expounded by Grotius, appears from this consideration, that God's faithfulness is engaged to confirm to the end unblameable, not in part, but in whole; the work is wholly his, what he has promised to do, and will faithfully perform. And therefore, if the saints shall not fail of being so, through, any want of divine grace requisite to that end, whose grace is sufficient (2 Cor. 12:8) for it; or through any unfaithfulness to his promise, who, though we behave not, yet abides faithful (2 Tim. 2:13); it is certain that they shall be confirmed to the end, and be preserved blameless, or in other words, finally persevere. The text in Colossians 1:22, 23, is not conditional, but descriptive of the persons who shall be presented unblameable, and unreprouable in the sight of God.

2. To the words in 1 Corinthians 10:13, it is answered,

(1.) “That these words ought not to be restrained to the elect; for the preceding ones are spoken to the whole church at Corinth.” What has been said to a like objection to the sense of the foregoing text, may be a sufficient reply to this.

(2.) It is said, “this text must be impertinently

alleged; because it only contains a promise of ability sufficient to resist temptations, if men will use it; but doth not contain an engagement that this strength shall be effectual, or certainly informed to the end.” But these words do not contain a promise of sufficient ability to resist temptations, but of sufficient strength to bear them; which strength God put into his people, and does not leave it barely to their use, but makes his strength perfect in their weakness (1 Cor. 12:8). Besides, these words do not contain only a promise of this, but also that God will make a way to escape, that they may be able to bear them.

(3.) This author says, “I have showed, when I discoursed of the cautions given to believers, that in the words immediately preceding and following, there is a plain indication that they, who truly think they stand, may fall, as did the Jews there mentioned, and might be guilty of idolatry; which he (the apostle) himself declares to be a sin exclusive from the kingdom of Christ (1 Cor. 6:9).” And I have also showed, in answer to it, that there is not, in those words, a plain indication that they, who truly think they stand, may fall; but that such, who seem to themselves and others to stand, may fall: and that, supposing them spoken to true believers, such exhortations may be useful to them, to preserve them from partial falls to which they are subject, and be blessed to them as means of their final perseverance.

3. To the words cited from Philippians 1:6, it is answered,

(1.) “That it is evident the apostle speaks not out of any opinion of the election of any, much less of all the Philippians to eternal life, or of the certainty of their perseverance to the end; for why then doth he exhort them as he does in Philippians 2:12, 16, and Philippians 4:1?” I answer, that these exhortations are so far from militating against either their election of God, or perseverance to the end, that they express the fruits and effects of those things, through which men are chosen unto salvation; and which, as has been before observed, are made use of, and blessed as the means of the saints' final perseverance.

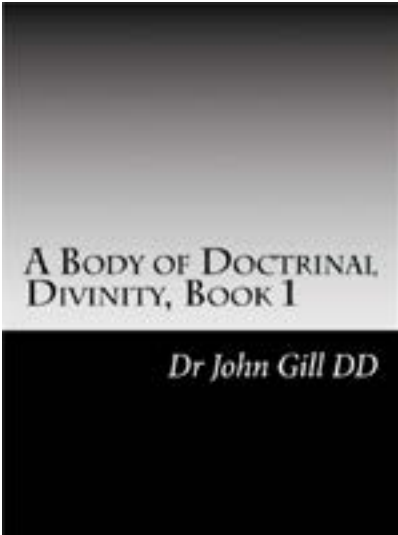
(2.) It is affirmed, that “he (the apostle) speaks this from a judgment of charity; because, says he, it is just or fit for me to conceive thus of you, by reason of that great affection you have for me, and your patience under the like sufferings.” I reply, that the apostle

does, indeed, speak from a judgment of charity in verse 7, when he says, Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all; where the word all is used, which is not in verse 6, and seems to be carefully omitted by our author in his citation of verse 7. Now the apostle, from a judgment of charity, did say this of them all; but with the strongest confidence of them in whom the good work was begun. A judgment of charity is precarious and uncertain; but the persuasion of the apostle was sure and firm, and which lie expresses with a view to encourage a like persuasion of their own salvation in the hearts of those he writes to; which surely must be more than a judgment of charity concerning themselves, and their own state and condition. Besides, a judgment of charity proceeds upon external signs; whereas the apostle’s confidence and firm persuasion was grounded, not on their affection to him, or patience under suffering, but upon the nature, of the good work of grace begun, in them, and upon the promise and power of God to perform it; and was greatly encouraged by their continuance in an inward, spiritual fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now (v. 5).

4. It is said, that “those words (1 Thess. 5:23, 14), and for the same reason the words cited from 2 Thessalonians 3:3, do only signify that he (God)will not be wanting, on his part, towards sanctifying and preserving them blameless unto the end; for it the fidelity of God required he should do this without their care and industry, or should work in them certainly and absolutely that care, and the apostle believed this; how could he fear, lest these Thessalonians should be so overcome by Satan’s temptations, as that his labor with them might have been in rain?” To which I reply, that the care and industry of God’s people, in the use of means, are very proper and requisite, and what the grace of God wrought in their souls will put them upon: nor are they set aside, or rendered useless, by the promise and faithfulness of God in keeping them; but rather made more necessary and useful thereby. But then it should be observed, that God’s fidelity is engaged to sanctify them wholly, and to preserve their whole spirit, soul, and body, blameless; so that the work is entirely his own; and that until the coming of Christ; after which there will be no danger nor fear of apostasy; whence it must needs follow, that the saints shall certainly persevere

to the end; nor do the fears expressed by the apostle, concerning the Thessalonians, contradict it; since these fears do not concern their eternal salvation; but lest, through the afflictions that attended the gospel, their faith should be in any measure weakened though not dropped; or lest they should be any way corrupted from the simplicity of the Gospel; and so his labor, in instructing and establishing them in gospel truths, be so far in vain.

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Of The Final State Of Man

THE PAROUSIA



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

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 making no mistake, eschatology 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.

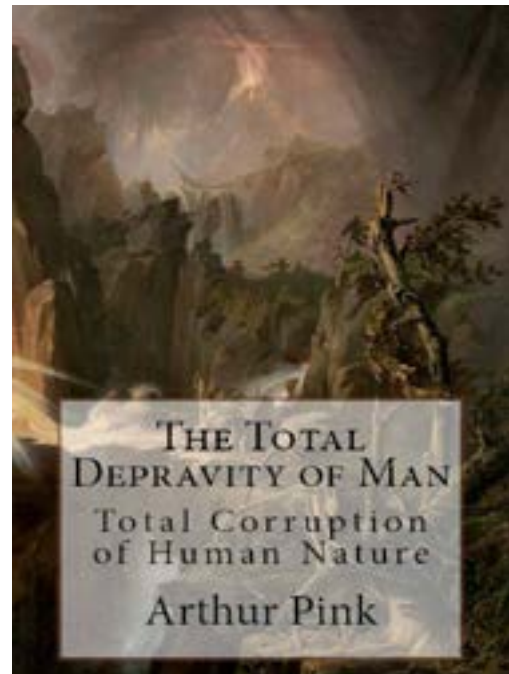
Russell’s work is a stunning rejection – and corrective -- of what the “Orthodox” historical “Creedal” church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the “divines” missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell’s main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

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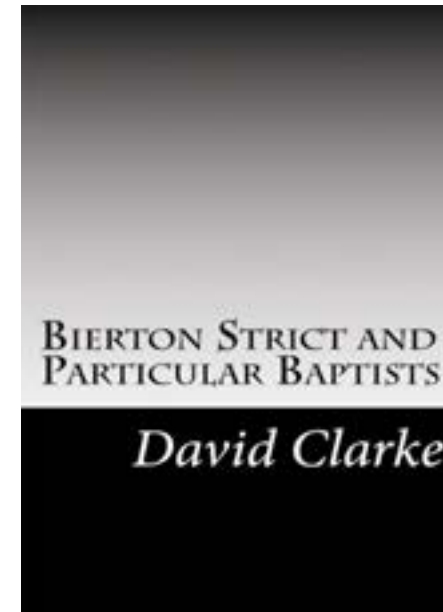
THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN



This republication of A.W. Pink’s work, The Total Depravity of Man, is intended to introduce Christians, of this generation, to those truths that seem to have been lost among Evangelical Christians. It is believed that a right understanding of man’s fall in Adam will lead the believer to see the necessity salvation by the a sovereign choice, by God, of men to salvation and the reality of particular redemption. These doctrines are known as the doctrines of grace some times referred to as Calvinism. These truth are held by Particular Baptists to this day as can be read in the First London Baptist Confession of faith, of 1644. These truths have met with opposition from various quarters resulting in controversy not only from Arminian’s but also among Calvinists. It is intended that his book will help the believer come to a biblical understanding of the total depravity and inability for man to save him self and that mans salvation depended entirely upon the grace and mercy of God alone. That the gospel of Christ declares this truth very clearly and is the antidote to all false religion.

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BIERTON STRICT AND PARTICULAR BAPTISTS 2nd Edition



This book tells the story and life of David Clarke in the form of an autobiography. It is no ordinary book in that David and his brother were both notorious criminals in the 60’s, living in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, where they were MODs and were both sent to prison for and malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license . They were however both converted from crime to Christ and turned their lives around. This story tells of David’s conversion to Christianity in 1970 and that of Michael’s conversion, 1999 some 30 years later. It tells of their time in HMP Canterbury Prison and David’s time in HMP Wormwood Scrubs and Dover Borstal. It also tells of David’s criminal activity and the crimes he committed before his miraculous conversion from crime to Christ, during a bad experience on LSD, in 1970. It tells how he became a Christian over night and how he learned to read in order to come to a fuller knowledge of the gospel. He learned to read through reading the bible and classical Christian literature. David tells of the events that led to him making a confession to the police about 24 crimes he had committed since leaving Dover Borstal in 1968 and of the court case where he was not sentenced. It tells how David’s educated himself and went on to Higher education, and graduated with a Certificate in Education and how he went on to teach Electronics, for over 20 years, in colleges of Higher and Further Education. It tells of his life as a member

of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist church, which was a Gospel Standard cause, and how he was called by the Lord and sent by the church to preach the gospel. David tells of the various difficulties that he faced once he discovered the many doctrinal errors amongst the various Christian groups he met and of the opposition that he experience when he sought to correct them. David recorded his experience and finding in his book “The Bierton Crisis” 1984, written to help others. David’s tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion in 1970 and continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996. David tells how Michael too was converted to Christianity through reading C.S. Lewis’s book, “Mere Christianity”, and him being convinced that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. David then tells of his mission to the Philippines, to bring help and assistance to Michael, in 2001 and of their joint venture in helping in the rehabilitation of many former convicted criminals, not only in New Bilibid Prison but other Jails in the Philippines. David tells how he felt compelled to write this story in his book , “Converted On LSD Trip”. once he got news of his brothers arrest, in the Philippines, via ITN Television news broadcast, in 1995. This book was published when he got news of his brothers conversion from crime to Christ in 1999, which was after serving 5 years of his 16 year sentence. This story is told in their joint book, “Trojan Warriors”, that contains the testimonies of 66 notorious criminals who too had turned there lives around, from crime to Christ, 22 of which testimonies are men on Death Row. David say he believes his story could be of great help to any one seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ but sadly Michael died in New Bilibid Prison of tuberculosis, in 2005 before their vision of bringing help to many was realized.

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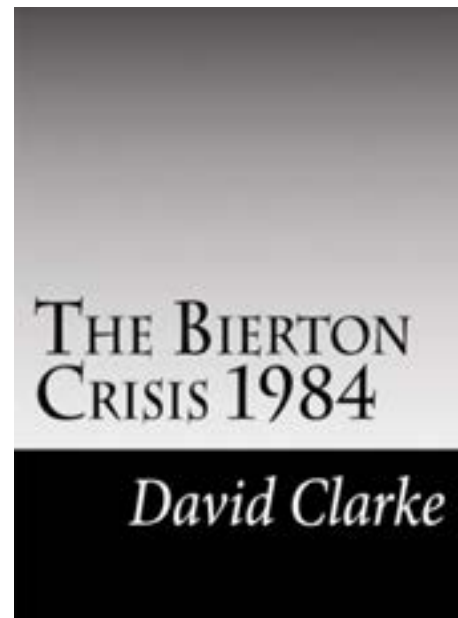
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THE BIERTON CRISIS



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

The Bierton Church was formed in 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 Bierton 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 Bierton 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 Bierton 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 Bierton 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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About the Author

David Clarke was born in Oldham Lancashire, in 1949. He was educated and trained as a lecturer, at Wolverhampton Polytechnic, and graduated with a Certificate in Education, awarded by Birmingham University, in 1978. He became a Christian after a bad experience on LSD and joined the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists church, in 1976. The church became a Gospel Standard cause on 16th January 1981. He became the church secretary and was called by the Lord and sent to peach by the church in 1982. The Bierton Chapel closed in 2002.

However his earlier life had been rather different. He and his brother Michael were both convicted

criminals living in Aylesbury in then 60's and were sent to prison for malicious wounding and carrying a fire arm without a license.

On the 16th January 1970, David had a bad trip on LSD, during which time he called out to God to help him and Jesus spoke to him. He learned to read to educate himself and went on to Higher Education and for the next 14 years read the bible, various classical Christian literature it was then he joined the Bierton Church.

Due to errors in doctrine and practice David withdrew from the Bierton church over issues of conscience however due to the strict rules of membership he remained in membership of the church. Those issues of conscience are discussed in this book "The Bierton Crisis".

Michael, was unaffected by David's conversion and continued his flamboyant style and was arrested 25 years later and sentenced to prison for a 16 years prison, in the Philippines. When David got news of brothers conversion from crime to Christ, in 1999, he published their story in his book, "Converted on LSD Trip".

David then went on a mission of help to his brother and they worked together in assisting many former criminals in New Bilibid Prison, on their road of reformation, This story is told in their book, "Trojan Warriors".

On his return from mission work in the Philippines in 2003, he was encouraged, by the Bierton church overseer, to re open the chapel. To his dismay he discovered that the unregistered trust deed of the chapel had been passed on to a set of trustees that were not elected by the church. They were not sympathetic to the doctrinal views of the Bierton church and refused permission for him to reopen the chapel. They also denied his church membership in London Central County Court, in 2006. They sold the chapel and used the money from the sale for their own use. This book relates this story.

MARY, MARY QUITE CONTRARY

Second Edition:

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



This second edition is a true story telling how David Clarke, the author, encountered opposition from the elders of a church, in England who were intent on appointing women as elders. David believed this was wrong and clearly going against the word of God. The New Testament forbids a woman from teaching and being appointed as an elder in a church, with good reason this is not chauvinism but the wisdom of God. It is hoped this book will be a help to many. It is written due to the various responses already received, some in positive favor and others the complete opposite. Your response would be valued.

Some believe we live in a day of rank apostasy, that was spoken about in scripture, that would occur before the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ and is now not limited to the unbelieving nominal Christian society because much of it is accepted by the professing Christian world. David Clarke hits head on one of the tenets of the apostasy, which has exploded internationally. Its is believed by some that a time like this had been prophesied by Isaiah. Isaiah 3:12 (KJV), "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths".

The tenet which David Clarke hits head on is the

one of women preachers and women elders in the churches. Isaiah states that women were ruling over the people of God, when the men should have been in leadership roles. The Scripture states that “they which lead thee cause thee to err.”

In this book you will find a confrontation between elders and the word of God. When church leaders neglect the truths of Scripture and base everything they believe on as their “personal opinion”, then the paths have been destroyed for the Christian, as Isaiah teaches.

One of the outgrowths of the charismatic movement, is the teaching that women are just as qualified as men to be elders and pastors. This is not to say that women are lacking leadership qualities but the Bible is very clear that they are not to rule over men and are not to have rule in the churches. It is unfortunate that many feminized men in the church kowtow behind the concept that disallowing women rule in the churches is not showing them love. The reality is that being disobedient to the commands of Scripture is nothing more than rebellion against God. 1 Samuel 15:3 speaks about rebellion being as the sin of witchcraft. God has given specific instructions concerning the churches and their structure and who are we to claim that we know more than God.

The deep apostasy which many churches have accepted is made visible in this book but not only churches, Bible colleges have also acquiesced to disobeying the Bible and have endorsed women rulers in the church. It is a shame that those who bring the truth are considered the troublemakers in the churches. Tell me, what kind of love do you show someone when you actually help them to be disobedient to God? Will they still love you when they are in hell paying for their sins of rebellion?

It is time for Christian men to step up and be men. 1 Corinthians 16:13 (KJV), “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong”.

David believes that if any believer, teacher, preacher or minister is wrong over this issues he testified too then he cannot help but be wrong in his teaching regarding salvation, church order, family order and eschatology. David would really value anyone who could prove him wrong.

This book needs to be in the library of all Christians to help them oppose the incursion of women rulers in

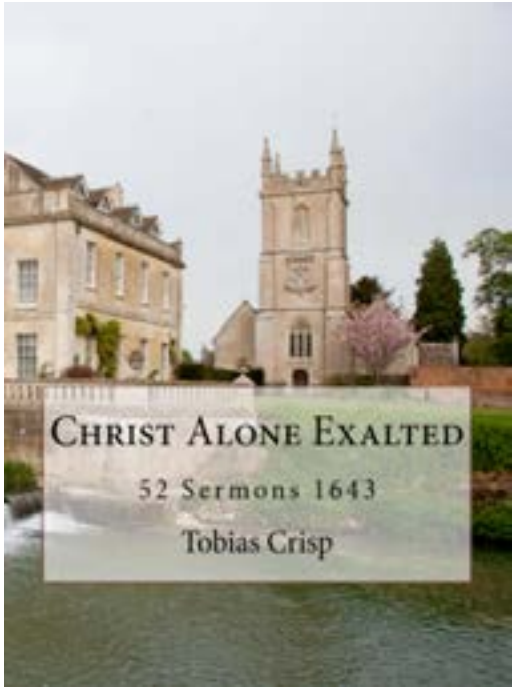
the church. It is still not too late to bring about a repentance on the part of church leaders for allowing themselves to be swayed by false teaching. A strong church obeys God, a weak and dying one disobeys God, regardless of how many attend.

(This is the foreword by Dr. Ken Matto)
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CHRIST ALONE EXALTED

in 3 volumes



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

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