

The Everlasting Covenant

By Dr John Gill

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Publisher Preface

The publisher is the only surviving member of the Bierton Particular Baptists and his story of conversion from crime to Christ is told in, ‘Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists,’ advertised at the end of this book. At his conversion the publisher could hardly read. He educated himself by reading the bible and classical Christian literature and this book, ‘The Everlasting Covenant’, by John Gill, extracted from John Gill’s, ‘A Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity’, was one of the writings that enabled him to understand the doctrines of grace and join the Bierton Particular Baptist Church, in 1976.

About the Author

Dr. John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life.

In his biography of John Gill, Augustus Toplady states: “Perhaps, no man, since the days of St. Augustin, has written so largely, in defense of the system of Grace; and, certainly, no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more closely, judiciously, and successfully”. What was said of Edward the Black Prince, “That he never fought a battle, which he did not win”; what has been remarked of the great Duke of Marlborough, “That he never undertook a siege, which he did not carry”; may be justly accommodated to our great Philosopher and Divine: who, so far as the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are concerned, never besieged an error, which he did not force from its strong holds; nor ever encountered an adversary, whom he did not baffle and subdue.”

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1. Of The Everlasting Council Between The Three Divine Persons, Concerning The Salvation Of Men.

Having treated of the internal and immanent¹ acts in the divine mind, and which are eternal; I shall next consider the operations and transactions among the three divine persons when alone, before the world began, or any creature was in being; and which are, chiefly the council and covenant of God, respecting the salvation of men: these are generally blended together by divines; and indeed it is difficult to consider them distinctly with exactness and precision; but I think they are to be distinguished, and the one to be considered as leading on, and as preparatory and introductory to the other, though both of an eternal date; and shall begin with the council of God, held between the three divine persons, Father, Son and Spirit, concerning the affair of man's salvation before the world was. And it will be proper to enquire.

1. First, In what sense counsel, consultation and deliberation, can be ascribed to God, to the divine persons; and,

1a. This is not to be understood as expressive of any want of knowledge, or of the least degree of ignorance in God, or of his being at a loss in forming the scheme of salvation; since he is a God of knowledge, of all knowledge, is perfect in knowledge, wanting nothing; is the only wise and all-wise God, whose understanding is infinite, and reaches to all things, and nothing can escape it: want of knowledge is often the case with men, and therefore they deliberate with themselves, and consult with others; but it is not so with God; wherefore,

1b. Consultation in him is not in order to gain more knowledge, or to obtain more satisfaction, and so more pleasure in the review of things; for since his understanding is infinite, there can be no accession to it, nor increase of

¹ See Body of Doctrinal Divinity under this topic

knowledge in it: men consult with themselves, and reason on things in their own minds, or consult with others to gain more knowledge; and if this is not the result of it, yet it gives them satisfaction and pleasure, when those they have an high opinion of agree with them, and approve of their schemes; this makes their minds more easy, and confirms and settles them; and thus in the multitude of counselors there is safety and delight; see Prov. 11:14 27:9. Nor,

1c. Does a council held between the three divine persons suppose any inequality between them; usually indeed with men, in matters of moment and difficulty, persons supposed to be of superior abilities are consulted, and their judgment taken; as Ahithophel by David, and the Israelites, whose counsel with them was as the oracles of God; but this is not to be supposed here, when the Father consults with the Son and Spirit, it is not because they have knowledge superior to him, or that he needs any information from them; they are one in nature; and are equal in knowledge and understanding; the Father is omniscient, the Son knows all things, and the Spirit searches the deep things of God; and yet may consult together; and three persons of equal knowledge and judgment among men may consult together about an affair of importance, without supposing any superiority and inferiority in them.

1d. Nor is consultation in God continued, carried on and protracted to any length, as it often is with men, who when they have a matter of difficulty before them, do not suddenly and at once determine; but take time and consider it in every point of view, that they may fix on the wisest and most rational method of acting; consultations on an affair have been sometimes held many days successively; but so it is not with God, counsel with him is as quick as thought, yea, it is no other than his thought, and therefore they go together, Ps 33:11. But,

Secondly, To give some proof that there was a council

between the divine persons concerning the salvation of men.

2a. An argument in favour of this may be drawn from the purpose of God; all whose purposes are called his counsels because they are founded in the highest wisdom, “Isa 25:1” now the purpose of God respecting the salvation of men, is the basis and foundation of the council held concerning it, in which purpose, as well as council, all the three persons are concerned; for the scheme of salvation, which is, “the manifold wisdom of God, is according to the eternal purpose which he” (God the Father) “purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”, Eph. 3:10,11 and the Son was not only privy to this purpose or counsel, and agreed to it; but the Spirit also, who searches “the deep things of God”, and approves of them, which are no other than the purposes and counsels of his heart, 1Co 2:10.

2b. It appears there was a consultation held about the salvation of men from the gospel, which is an exhibition and declaration of the scheme of salvation, being called the counsel of God, “Acts 20:27” and the wisdom of God, the hidden wisdom ordained before the world, “#1Co 2:6” for it is no other indeed than a transcript of the council and covenant of grace; the sum and substance of the word and ministry of reconciliation, is that eternal transaction between God and Christ concerning it, which the apostle thus expresses; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses, 2 Cor. 5:19.

2c. It may be reasonably concluded, from the consultation had between the divine Persons, concerning the formation of man, thus expressed, “And God said, Let us make man in our image”; which was said, not to angels, but to the other two divine Persons, the Son and Spirit; and it is not necessary to understand the words as spoken the moment, or immediately before the creation of man, but as spoken in eternity, in council between the divine Persons; for it may be rendered, “God had

said”; and, indeed, God had determined on this in the decree of election; for as in the decree of the end, he chose some of the creatures his power could make, to be happy with him, for his own glory; so in the decree of the means, he resolved on the creation of them; as has been before observed; however, be it, that this consultation was immediately before the creation of man, as all the three Persons were concerned in that, and in his creation; it may be reasonably argued, that if there was a consultation of the divine Persons about the making of man at first, then much more about the redemption and salvation of him. But,

2d. What would put this matter out of all doubt, is the sense of a passage in “Zech 6:13” as given by some learned men, if it can be established; “And the counsel of peace shall be between them both”: some, indeed, interpret it of the Kingly and Priestly offices meeting in Christ, and of the unanimity of them in him; since it is before said, “He shall be a priest upon the throne”; but it seems rather to respect persons and things. Others have thought of Zerubbabel the prince, and Joshua the high priest, who were unanimously agreed in building the second temple: but an edifice of another kind, and of a spiritual nature, the church of God, seems to be intended, the building of which is ascribed to a single Person only. Rather by the “counsel of peace”, may be meant the gospel, called the counsel of God, and the gospel of peace, which was to be, and has been among Jews and Gentiles, preached to them, both as to them that are nigh, so to them afar off, as in “Zech 6:15” and which was a means of making peace between them, and reconciling them together, “Eph. 2:17 6:15” and in this sense of the words I formerly acquiesced {1}: but there is another sense of them embraced by learned men, to whose judgment I pay a great deference; such as Heidegger {2}, De Dieu {3}, Cocceius {4}, Witsius {5}, Dr. Owen {6}, and others, that this respects the council concerning the peace and

reconciliation in eternity, between Jehovah and the Branch, between the Father and the Son, who in time was to become man. My objections to this sense have been that this council in eternity was between the three Persons, and not two only; and that is what is past; whereas this is spoken of as future: but when I consider that Jehovah and the Branch are the only Persons mentioned in the text, and so could only, with propriety, be spoken of, though the council was between the three; and that, in the Hebrew language, tenses are frequently put for one another, the past for the future, and so the future for the past; and things are said to be, when they appear to be, though they are before; the sense may be, that when the Man, the Branch, should grow out of his place, and build the temple, and bear the glory, and sit a priest on his throne, then it should clearly appear, that there had been a council of peace between them both, which was the ground and foundation of all: and in this light, this sense of the passage may be admitted, and so be a proof of the point under consideration. But if this is not the truth of this text; yet,

2e. That there has been such a transaction between the Father and the Son, which, with propriety enough, may be called the “counsel of peace”, we have sufficient warrant from “#2Co 5:19”. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses”; by the “world” is meant the elect of God, he so loved, as to send his Son to be the Saviour of, and for the life of whom Christ gave his flesh, “John 3:16 6:51” and about the peace and reconciliation of those, or in what way to make peace and atonement for them, God was in Christ, or with Christ, consulting, contriving, and planning the scheme of it; which was this, not to impute their sins unto them, but to Christ, now called to be the Saviour of them; and this contains the sum of what we mean by the council of peace. I proceed,

3. Thirdly, To observe, that the three divine Persons,

Father, Son, and Spirit, and they only, were concerned in this council.

3a. Not angels, for they were not then in being, they were not made till the heavens were. But this council was before the heavens and the earth were made; and besides, the angels are the creatures of God, his ministering spirits, and therefore he would never consult with them; they knew nothing of this transaction until it was revealed unto them: and when it was, many of them, as some think, were offended at it, left their habitation, and apostatized from God; not being able to endure it, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be their Head, and so that nature be advanced above theirs, which they perceived by this step would be the case: and as for those that stood and kept their first estate, they were so far from assisting in this council, that they were entirely unacquainted with it, until it was made known unto them; and when it was, though they highly approved of it, their knowledge of it seemed to be imperfect; since they desire to look more and more into it, and “even do” learn of the church the manifold wisdom of God in it, 1Pe 1:12 Eph 3:10.

3b. Nor were men a party in this council; “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?” “Rom 11:34” not any of the sons of men; for these also were not then in being, and when they were, were but creatures, and soon became sinful ones, and destitute of true wisdom and knowledge, and so unfit to be of such a council, had it been in time; and had God summoned all the individuals of human nature together, and proposed it to them, that if they could find out a way how they could be saved, consistent with his divine perfections, he would willingly save them; after ever so long a time allowed them for consultation about it; and even if they had the assistance of all the angels in heaven, they must have returned an “ignoramus”, and owned they knew not any. No, none but the blessed Three in One were of

this council, and fit to be of it; the thing consulted about was “nodus Deo vindice dignus”, worthy only of God.

3b1. Jehovah the Father, the first Person in order of nature, though not of time, may reasonably be supposed to give the lead in this affair, and proposed the thing to be debated and advised about; he who, concerning the creation of man, proposed it to the other two Persons, might, with great propriety, move for a consultation about his salvation: who is the Ancient of days, with whom is wisdom, and who hath counsel and understanding, yea, is wonderful in counsel, as well as excellent in working; and so infinitely fit to conduct an affair of this nature, “Job 12:12,13 Isa 28:29.

3b2. Jehovah the Son, has the same wisdom, counsel, and understanding his Father has; for all that he hath are his; nor does Christ think it any robbery to be equal with him; he is wisdom itself, or “wisdoms”, he is possessed of the most consummate wisdom; in him, even as Mediator, are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and he himself says, “Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom”, “Prov 1:20 8:14 Col 2:3” yea, he is called “the Wonderful, Counsellor”, “Isa 9:6” which not only respects his capacity and ability to give the best counsel and advice to men, as he does, but to assist in the council of God himself; and so the “Septuagint” interpreters understood that passage, rendering it, “the Angel of the great council”; whereby it seems as if those Jews then had a notion of this great transaction, and of the concern of the Messiah in it; to whom the whole verse belongs: to which may be added, that Christ the Son of God, was as one brought up with his divine Father, lay in his bosom, was privy to his designs, and must be in his council, and was on all accounts fit for it.

3b3. The Holy Spirit had a concern in this council, and was fit to be of it; Epiphanius says {7}, as the Son is the Angel of the great council, so is the Holy Spirit; he is not only the Spirit of wisdom to men, and by whom is given to them, to one the

word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge; and therefore must be possessed of the most perfect wisdom and knowledge himself, “Eph 1:17 1Co 12:8” but he is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and of counsel and knowledge, to and resting on Christ as Mediator, Isa 11:2” and therefore must be a very proper Person to be concerned with the Father and the Son, in this great council; for never was such a council held as this, between such Persons, and on such a momentous and interesting affair. Which,

4. Fourthly, Is next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. Now the affair consulted about, was not the salvation of men merely; nor who should be the persons that should be saved with it; for both that was resolved on, and the persons fixed on who were to enjoy it, in the decree of election, which stands firm and sure on the unalterable will of God; but who should be the Saviour, or be the author of this salvation; and a proper person for this work, could never have been devised, found out, and settled upon, by men and angels; this was the business of this great council. By the decree of election the vessels of mercy were prepared for glory, or were ordained to eternal life, God resolved to have mercy on them, and save them; but who should be the saviour, was referred to this council to agree upon; it is true, indeed, that this was, in some respect, involved and included in the Father’s purpose, according to election, who appointed some, not unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, “#1Th 5:9” but then, though this was in the Father’s purpose, it was necessary that the will of the Son should be expressed, and his approbation and consent had; for which this council was called and held.

The case stands thus: it was in Jehovah the Father’s thoughts, to save men by his Son; he in his infinite wisdom saw he was the fittest person for this work, and, in his own mind, chose him to it; and this is meant by laying help on One

that is mighty, exalting one chosen from among the people; finding David his servant, and anointing him with his holy oil, “Psalm 89:19,20”. Now in the eternal council he moved it, and proposed it to his Son, as the most advisable step that could be taken, to bring about the designed salvation; who readily agreed to it, and said, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God”, “Heb 10:7” from “Psalm 40:7,8” and the Holy Spirit expressed his approbation of him, as the fittest person to be the Saviour, by joining with the Father in the mission of him, as before observed; and by forming his human nature in time, and filling it with his gifts and graces without measure. The pleasure and satisfaction the three divine Persons had in this affair, thus advised to, consulted, and approved of, is most clearly to be seen and observed at our Lord’s baptism, “Matthew 3:16,17.

But not only it was in this council consulted, who should be the Author of salvation; but also in what way and manner it should be effected, both for the security of men, and for the display of the glory of the divine perfections. Now it should be observed, that the elect of God, the persons to be saved, were considered in this transaction as fallen creatures, which salvation by Christ supposes; as sinners in Adam, on whom judgment came unto condemnation, as obnoxious to the curses of the righteous law, and to the resentments of divine justice; and therefore satisfaction must be made to the law and justice of God, the law must be fulfilled, and justice satisfied, by an atonement made; this was signified to the Saviour found, who approved of it, as a most fit thing to be done; hence God is gracious, and saith, “Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom”, “Job 33:24” this was found by infinite wisdom in this council; and whereas this ransom, satisfaction, and atonement, must be made by obeying the precepts of the law, and by the suffering of death, the penalty of it; this the law required of the transgressor of it; “Thou shalt

surely die”; and so of the Surety for him; wherefore, since it was necessary that the Captain and Author of salvation, in bringing many sons to glory, should be made perfect through sufferings; it was proper that he should assume a nature in which he would be capable of obeying and suffering, even a nature of the same kind with that which sinned; this was notified in council to the Son of God, and he approved of it as right and fit, and said, “A body hast thou prepared me”, a whole human nature, in purpose; and now in council, signified he was ready to assume it in time. Moreover, it was seen proper and advisable, that the human nature assumed, should be holy and pure from sin, that it might be offered up without spot to God; and be a sacrifice to take away sin, which it could not be, if sinful; now here a difficulty arises, how such a nature could be come at, since human nature would be defiled by the sin of Adam; and who would be able to bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This difficulty infinite wisdom surmounts, by proposing that the Saviour should be born of a virgin; that this individual nature to be assumed, should not descend from Adam by ordinary generation, but be formed in an extraordinary manner by the power of the Holy Ghost; and this was approved in council, by both the Son and Spirit, since the one readily assumed this nature in this way, and the other formed it. Once more, it appeared necessary that this nature should be taken up into personal union with the Son of God; or, that the Saviour should be God and man in one person; that he should be man, that he might have somewhat to offer, and thereby make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and that he should be God, to give virtue to his deeds and sufferings, to make them effectual to the purposes of them, and he be a fit Mediator, a daysman between God and men, and take care of the things belonging to both. In short, the affair debated and consulted between the three divine persons, was the peace and reconciliation of God’s elect by Christ,

and the way and manner of doing it; and therefore, as before observed, this transaction may, with great propriety, be called, the council of peace; and which issued in a covenant of peace, next to be considered; in this council everything relative to it was advised, consulted, and contrived; and in the covenant the whole was adjusted and settled; and therefore I have considered the council as the preparation and introduction to the covenant.

{1} See my Exposition of Zech. vi. 13.

{2} Corpus Theolog. loc. 11. s. 12. p. 376.

{3} In loc.

{4} Summa de Foedere, c. 5. s. 88.

{5} Oeconom. Foederum, l. 2. c. 1. s. 7, 8. {6} In Hebrews, vol. 2. Exercitat. 4. s. 10. p. 54.

{7} In Ancorato, s. 70.

2. Of The Properties Of The Covenant Of Grace.

I shall close the account of the covenant of Grace with the epithets or properties of it; which may serve to lead more fully and clearly into the nature, use, and excellency of it; and which may in some measure be collected from what has been already observed. And,

1. It is an “eternal” covenant; not merely as to duration, being what will continue to eternity, and so is called an everlasting covenant, but as to the original of it; it was made in eternity, and commenced and bears date from eternity. The spring of it is the mercy, grace, and love of God; “I said”, says God, “mercy shall be built up for ever”; there shall be such a display of it, as shall always abide; and in order to this it follows; “I have made a covenant with my chosen”, with Christ, and the elect in him; which is a standing everlasting monument of mercy; and now “the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting”; not only as an attribute of God, but in the display

of it to sinful miserable creatures; and where is there a display of it so early but in the covenant? “Psalm 89:2,3,28 103:17” and which mercy is no other than the love and free favour of God exercising itself in such a manner towards sinful men; and which love, as it was bore to Christ, so to his people in him, before the foundation of the world, “John 17:23,24”. The basis of the covenant, is God’s election of men to eternal life; the foundation of God, which stands sure, and which laid a foundation for the covenant of grace; it is built upon it; the covenant is made with Christ, God’s elect, and with men chosen in him, and who were chosen in him to be holy and happy, before the foundation of the world, “Eph 1:4”. The council of peace, which was introductory to the covenant of grace, was of old, from everlasting; as all the counsels of God are; in this Christ was the everlasting Counsellor; as well as in the covenant the everlasting Father: God was in Christ from eternity, forming the scheme of man’s peace, reconciliation, and salvation; which prepared and furnished sufficient matter for the everlasting covenant: Christ was set up as the Mediator of it “from everlasting”; from the beginning, or ever the earth was; his goings forth in it, in acts of love and grace towards his people, “were of old, from everlasting”; drawing nigh to his divine Father, and becoming their Surety, interposing between him and them as Mediator, engaging to do everything for them law and justice could require; and receiving on their account, all grants and promises made unto them, “Prov 8:23 Mic 5:2”. The blessings of the covenant were put into the hands of Christ so early, and the elect were blessed with them in him, as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and are the “grace” given to them in him, “before the world began”, Eph 1:3,4 2Ti 1:9”. There were also promises made, particularly the grand promise of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world was; and which promise of life is in Christ, as all the promises of

the covenant are, being put into his hands so early; the heirs of them not having an actual being, yet a representative one in him their Head, Tit 1:2 2Ti 1:1.

Now all this, proves the antiquity of the covenant of grace; nor is it any objection to it, that it is sometimes called the “second” and “new” covenant, “Heb 8:7,8,13 9:15 12:24” for it is so called, not with respect to the covenant of works made with Adam, as if it was the second to that, and newer and later than that; for it was made long before that, even in eternity, as has been shown; but the distinctions of “first” and “second”, “old” and “new”, respect the different administrations of the same covenant of grace in time: the first administration of it began immediately after the fall of Adam, and continued under the patriarchs, and under the Mosaical dispensation, unto the coming of Christ; and then a new administration of it took place, which made the first old, and is called the second, with respect to that; and yet both, for substance, are the same covenant, made in eternity, but variously administered in time.

There are several time covenants made with men; as with Adam, Noah, Abraham, the children of Israel, Phinehas, David, &c. But the covenant made with Christ, and the elect in him, was not made in time, but in eternity. It is a notion that commonly obtains, that God makes a covenant of grace with men when they believe, repent, &c. but it is no such thing; the covenant of grace does not then begin to be made, only to be made manifest; it then openly takes place, its blessings are bestowed, its promises applied, its grace is wrought in the hearts of men, when God puts his fear there, gives a new heart, and a new spirit, and puts his own Spirit there, to work faith, repentance, and every other grace; but then the covenant is not new made, but all this is done in virtue and in consequence of the covenant of grace made in eternity, and according to the tenor of that.

2. The covenant of grace is entirely free, it is altogether of

free grace; grace is the moving cause of it; God was not induced to make it from any motive and condition in men. Each of the parties entered freely into it; the Father, of his own grace and good will to men, proposed the terms of the covenant to his Son; and the Son of God, from his great love he bore to the same persons, voluntarily agreed unto them; and the same love in the blessed Spirit, engaged him to undertake what he did in it; hence we read, as of the love of the Father, and of the love of the Son, so of the love of the Spirit, Ro 15:30” which love of the three divine Persons, no where more clearly and fully appears, than in the covenant of grace, and the performance of it. The act of election, which is the basis of the covenant on which it proceeds, and to which it is commensurate, is entirely of grace, and not of works, and therefore called “the election of grace”, “Rom 11:5,6” the matter, sum and substance of the covenant is of grace; the blessings of it are all of grace, they all go by the name of “grace”, given in Christ before the world began, II Ti 1:9”. Adoption is owing to the free favour of God; a justifying righteousness is the gift of his grace; pardon of sin is according to the riches of his grace; and so every other blessing. The promises of it, which are exceeding great and precious, flow from the grace of God: when promises are made, the faithfulness of God is engaged to fulfill them; but it is of his grace and good will that he makes them; he is not obliged to make promise of any thing to his creatures. The grace of God greatly appears in making faith the recipient of all blessings and promises; which itself is not of men, but is the gift of God; and by divine wisdom is put in the place it is, to receive all the blessings and promises of the covenant; “That it might be by grace”; that it might appear that all is of grace; “to the end the promise”, and so every blessing, “might be sure to all the seed”, “ROM 4:16”. The end of making the covenant is, the glory of the grace of God; as God has made all things for himself, for his own

glory, in nature and providence; so all things in grace, and particularly the covenant of grace, is made and stored with all the blessings of it, to the glory of his grace, “Eph 1:3-6” and therefore with great propriety may, on all accounts, be called the covenant of grace.

3. This covenant is absolute and “unconditional”: the covenant of works is conditional: Adam, according to it, was to continue in that happy state in which he was created and put, while he obeyed the voice of God, and abstained from the forbidden fruit; but if he eat of that, he was to be stripped of his happiness, and die; the language of that covenant is, do this and live; if obedient to it, then blessing and life; but if disobedient, then cursing and death. The covenant God made with Abraham and his seed, concerning their having the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, was conditional; if willing and obedient, and so long as they behaved themselves well, according to the laws of God given them, they were to possess it, and enjoy the good things of it, “Isa 1:19” but if otherwise, to be dispossessed of it; and accordingly, when they broke the laws of God, their neighbouring nations were let in upon them, and harassed and distressed them, or they were carried captive by them out of it; as, first by the Assyrians, then by the Chaldeans, and at last by the Romans; in which state they now are. But not such is the covenant of grace, that is without any conditions on the part of men. Some, indeed, make it to be a conditional covenant, and faith and repentance to be the conditions of it. but these are not conditions, but blessings of the covenant, and are as absolutely promised in it, as anything else; the promise of a “new heart”, and of a “new spirit”, includes the gift of faith, and every other grace; and that of taking away the “stony heart”, and giving an “heart of flesh”, is fully expressive of the gift of the grace of repentance, “Eze 36:26”. Besides, if these were conditions of the covenant, to be performed by men in their own strength,

in order to be admitted into it, and receive the benefits of it; they would be as hard, and as difficult to be performed, as the condition of the covenant of works, perfect obedience; since faith requires, to the production of it, almighty power, even such as was put forth in raising Christ from the dead, “Eph 1:19,20”; and though God may give men means, and time, and space of repentance, yet if he does not give them grace to repent, they never will. Christ’s work, and the Spirit’s grace, supersede all conditions in the covenant, respecting men; since they provide for everything that can be thought of, that is required or is wanting: Christ’s work of redemption, atonement, and satisfaction for sin, as has been observed, is the only condition of the covenant; and that lies on the Mediator and Surety of the covenant, and not on the persons for whose sake it is made; “When thou shalt make his soul”, or, “if his soul shall make an offering for sin”, “Isa 53:10” then such and such things are promised in the covenant, both to him and to his seed. Otherwise, the promises to them are absolute and unconditional, and run in this strain, I “will”, and they “shall”, without any “ifs” or conditions; as, I “will” be their God, and they “shall” be my people; I “will” put my law in their hearts; I “will” forgive their iniquities; they “shall” all know me, from the least to the greatest; I “will” put my fear in their hearts, that they “shall” not depart from me; I “will” sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye “shall” be clean; I “will” give you a new heart, and a new spirit, and an heart of flesh; and I “will” take away the stony heart, and I “will” put my Spirit within you, and “cause” you to walk in my statutes, and ye “shall” keep my judgments, and do them, “Jer 31:33,34 32:38,40 Eze 36:25-27”. The blessings of the covenant are not suspended on any conditions to be performed; they do not wait for any, but take place without them. Redemption by Christ, the great article of the covenant, was not deferred on account of any condition to be performed

by men; but Christ, in the fulness of time agreed on in covenant, when men were without strength to do anything, died for the ungodly; while they were yet sinners Christ died for them; and when enemies, they were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; and herein appeared the love of God; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, “Rom 5:6,8,10 1Jo 4:10”. Adoption takes place among men, who were not the people of God; and justification has for its objects the ungodly; and God forgives the iniquities of men, and remembers them no more, though they have done nothing to deserve it, but are guilty of the greatest ingratitude and unkindness; and regeneration finds men dead in trespasses and sins, foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and pleasures, without any previous dispositions or preparations in them for it, “Hosea 1:10 Ro 4:5 Isa 43:25 Eph 2:4, 5”.

4. The covenant of grace is “perfect” and complete, wanting nothing; it is “ordered in all things”; and if in all things, nothing can be wanting in it, “#2Sa 23:5”. It is full of precious promises; promises of all sorts, promises of things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; so that there is nothing that a believer stands in need of, nor any state nor condition he can come into, but there is a promise of what he wants, and which is suitable to him, “#1Ti 4:8 Heb 13:5,6” it is full of rich blessings of grace; of all spiritual blessings, of blessings of goodness, which Christ, as Mediator, is made most blessed with; of goodness inconceivable and inexpressible, laid up in the covenant, and in the hands of Christ, for the covenant ones: it provides all things pertaining to life and godliness; for the implantation of life itself, and of every grace; for the beginning, carrying on, and finishing the work of grace on the heart; for the food, nourishment, support, and maintenance of the spiritual life in it; for the peace, joy, and comfort of believers; for grace, and spiritual strength to exercise grace,

perform duties, bear and suffer all that they are called unto; for their perseverance in faith and holiness to the end; and for their eternal life and happiness; grace and glory are secured in this covenant; even “all salvation”, the whole of it, and all the parts of it, “#2Sa 23:5”. And it is so ordered, as to secure the spiritual and eternal welfare of God’s elect, so to advance the glory of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; the Father is glorified in and by Christ the Mediator of it; and Christ is glorified by the Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to his people; and the Spirit is glorified by being the earnest, pledge, and seal of the heavenly inheritance, “Isa 49:3 Joh 16:14 Eph 1:14”.

5. It is an “holy” covenant; so it is called, “Luke 1:72” where God, by visiting and redeeming his people, and raising up an horn of salvation for them, or by sending Christ to be the Redeemer and Saviour of them, and to be his salvation to them, which is the grand article of the covenant of grace, is said by all this, “to remember his holy covenant”. The contracting parties in this covenant are, the holy Father, and the holy Son, and the holy Spirit, with respect to whom this epithet is thrice expressed in “Isa 6:3 Ps 111:9” the matter of it is holy; the promises of it are holy, “Psalm 105:42” the blessings of it are holy; what are called the mercies of David, “Isa 55:3” are called ~osia~, the “holy” things of David, in “Acts 13:34” and nothing can more strongly engage to a concern for holiness of heart and life, than the promises of the covenant; see “#2Co 6:18 7:1” yea, the covenant provides fully for the sanctification of all the covenant ones; expressed by writing the laws of God in the hearts of them, putting his fear into them, giving them new hearts and new spirits, taking away the stony heart from them, and putting his own Spirit within them, to enable them to walk in his statutes, keep his judgments, and do them, “Jer 31:33 32:39,40 Eze 36:26, 27”.

6. It is a sure covenant, firm and immoveable, more

immoveable than rocks and mountains; they may depart, but this covenant shall never depart, “#2Sa 23:5 Isa 54:10” it is “kept”, or “observed” {1}, as the word rendered “sure”, in the first of those places, signifies; it is kept inviolably by God that made it; hence he is sometimes described as a God “keeping covenant”, “Neh 9:32” his faithfulness, which he will never suffer to fail, is engaged to keep it, and therefore it is he will not break it, and men cannot, “Psalm 89:33,34” it is secured by the oath of God, and the immutability of that; for as the counsel of God is confirmed by his oath, so is the covenant of God; for it follows in the place now referred to, “Psalm 89:35”. “Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David”. And that is another reason why the covenant will not be broken; and why the word or promise that is gone out of his mouth shall not be altered. The covenant is also ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ, the Testator, as has been shown in a former chapter; whence the blood of Christ is called the blood of the covenant, which has sealed and confirmed it. The promises of the covenant are Yea and Amen in Christ; that is, sure and firm; and the blessings of it are the sure mercies of David, and the whole of it is confirmed in Christ, “#2Co 1:20 Isa 54:3 Ga 3:17”.

7. It is frequently called an “everlasting” covenant, “#2Sa 23:5” “Isa 54:3 Heb 13:20”. It is a covenant that will stand fast with Christ for ever, with whom it is made, and is what God has commanded for ever, and will be always fulfilling; the effects of it will be always seen and enjoyed, in time and to all eternity, “Psalm 89:28” “Psalm 111:9”. It is a covenant that will never be antiquated, nor give way to, nor be succeeded by another; the covenant of works is broken, and has been succeeded by an administration of the covenant of grace; and that first administration being not faultless, but deficient with respect to clearness and extensiveness, is waxen old, and vanished away, and has given place to a new

administration of it; which will continue unto the end of the world, until all the covenant ones are gathered in: but though these two administrations differ in some things, as to some external circumstances and ordinances; yet the matter, sum, and substance of them is the same, even Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and for ever: he is the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of Old and New Testament saints, who all partake of the same spiritual benefits and blessings, and of the same promises; and both are saved in the same way, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; even by the grace of the covenant, which is invariable and perpetual.

{1} ^hrmv^ “servatum”, Tigurine Version.

3. Of the Manifestation and Administration of the Covenant of Grace

Having treated of the sin and fall of our first parents, and of the breach of the covenant of works by them, and of the sad effects thereof to themselves, and of the woeful consequences of the same to their posterity; of the imputation of their sin, and of the derivation of a corrupt nature unto them; and of actual sins and transgressions flowing from thence, and of the punishment due unto them: I am now come to the dawn of grace to fallen man, to the breakings forth and application of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it to the spiritual seed of Christ among the posterity of Adam.

I have considered the covenant of grace in a former part of this work, as it was a compact in eternity, between the three divine persons, Father, Son, and Spirit; in which each person agreed to take his part in the economy of man’s salvation: and now I shall consider the administration of that covenant in the various periods of time, from the beginning of the world to the end of it. The covenant of grace is but one and the same in

all ages, of which Christ is the substance; being given for “a covenant of the people”, of all the people of God, both Jews and Gentiles, who is “the same” in the “yesterday” of the Old Testament, and in the “today” of the New Testament, and “for ever”; he is “the way, the truth, and the life”, the only true way to eternal life; and there never was any other way made known to men since the fall of Adam; no other name under heaven has been given, or will be given, by which men can be saved. The patriarchs before the flood and after, before the law of Moses and under it, before the coming of Christ, and all the saints since, are saved in one and the same way, even “by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ”; and that is the grace of the covenant, exhibited at different times, and in divers manners. For though the covenant is but one, there are different administrations of it; particularly two, one before the coming of Christ, and the other after it; which lay the foundation for the distinction of the “first” and “second”, the “old” and the “new” covenant, observed by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, “Heb 8:7,8,13 9:1,15 12:24” for by the first and old covenant, is not meant the covenant of works made with Adam, which had been broke and abrogated long ago; since the apostle is speaking of a covenant waxen old, and ready to vanish away in his time: nor was the covenant of works the first and most ancient covenant; the covenant of grace, as an eternal compact, was before that; but by it is meant the first and most ancient administration of the covenant of grace which reached from the fall of Adam, when the covenant of works was broke, unto the coming of Christ, when it was superseded and vacated by another administration of the same covenant, called therefore the “second” and “new” covenant. The one we commonly call the Old Testament dispensation, and the other the New Testament dispensation; for which there seems to be some foundation in “2Co 3:6,14” “Heb 9:15” these two covenants, or rather the two administrations of the same

covenant, are allegorically represented by two women, Hagar and Sarah, the bondwoman and the free, “Gal 4:22-26” which fitly describe the nature and difference of them. And before I proceed any farther, I shall just point out the agreement and disagreement of those two administrations of the covenant of grace.

1. First, The agreement there is between them.

1a. They agree in the efficient cause, God: the covenant of grace, in its original constitution in eternity, is of God, and therefore it is called his covenant, being made by him; “I have made a covenant--my covenant I will not break”, “Psalm 89:3,34” and whenever any exhibition or manifestation of this covenant was made to any of the patriarchs, as to Abraham, David, &c. it is ascribed to God, “I will make my covenant--he hath made with me an everlasting covenant”, “Gen 17:2 2Sa 23:5” so the new covenant, or new administration of it, runs in this form, “I will make a new covenant”, &c. “Heb 8:8”.

1b. In the moving cause, the sovereign mercy, and free grace of God, which moved God to make the covenant of grace at first, “Psalm 89:2,3”. And every exhibition of it under the former dispensation, is a rich display of it, and therefore it is called, the “mercy promised to the fathers” in his “holy covenant”, “Luke 1:72” and which has so largely appeared in the coming of Christ, which is ascribed to “the tender mercy of our God”, that “grace” and “truth”, in the great abundance of them, are said to come by him; by which names the covenant of grace, under the gospel dispensation, is called, in distinction from that under the Mosaic one, “Luke 1:78 Joh 1:17”.

1c. In the Mediator, who is Christ; there is but one Mediator of the covenant of grace, let it be considered under what dispensation it will; even Christ, who under the former dispensation was revealed as the seed of the woman that

should bruise the serpent's head, and make atonement by his sufferings and death, signified by the expiatory sacrifices, under the law; the Shiloh, the peaceable One, and the Peace Maker, the living Redeemer of Job, and of all believers under the Old Testament. Moses, indeed, was a Mediator, but he was only a typical one. There is but "one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus"; there never was any other, and he is the "Mediator of the new covenant", "1Ti 2:5 Heb 12:24".

1d. In the subjects of these covenants, or administrations of the covenants of grace, the elect of God, to whom the blessings of it are applied. It was with the chosen people of God in Christ, the covenant of grace was originally made; and according to the election of grace are the spiritual blessings of it dispensed to the children of men, "Ps 89:3 Eph 1:3,4" so they were under the former dispensation, from the beginning of the world, to the seed of the woman, in distinction from the seed of the serpent; to the remnant according to the election of grace among the Jews, the children of the promise that were counted for the seed; and election, or elect men, obtain the blessings of the covenant in all ages, and under the present dispensation, more abundantly, and in greater numbers.

1e. In the blessings of it; they are the same under both administrations. Salvation and redemption by Christ is the great blessing held forth and enjoyed under the one as under the other, "2Sa 23:5 Heb 9:15". Justification by the righteousness of Christ, which the Old Testament church had knowledge of, and faith in, as well as the new, "Isa 45:24,25 Ro 3:21-2 3". Forgiveness of sin through faith in Christ, all the prophets bore witness to; and the saints of old, as now, had as comfortable an application of it, "Psalm 32:1,5 Isa 43:25 Mic 7:18 Ac 10:43". Regeneration, spiritual circumcision, and sanctification, were what men were made partakers of under the first, as under the second administration of the

covenant, “Deut 30:6 Php 3:3”. Eternal life was made known in the writings of the Old Testament, as well as in those of the New; and was believed, looked for, and expected by the saints of the former, as of the latter dispensation, “John 5:39 Heb 11:10,16 Job 19:26,27”. In a word, they and we eat the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ, “1Co 10:3,4”.

2. Secondly, In some things there is a disagreement between these two administrations of the covenant of Grace.

2a. Under the first administration saints looked forward to Christ that was to come, and to the good things that were to come by him, and so were waiting, expecting, and longing for the enjoyment of them; but under the second and new administration, believers look backwards to Christ as being come, before whose eyes he is evidently set forth in the word and ordinances, as crucified and slain; and they look to the blessings of the covenant through him as brought in; to peace, pardon, atonement, righteousness, redemption, and salvation, as wrought out and finished.

2b. There is a greater clearness and evidence of things under the one than under the other; the law was only a shadow of good things to come; did not so much as exhibit the image of them, at least but very faintly. The obscurity of the former dispensation, was, signified by the veil over the face of Moses, when he spoke to the children of Israel; so that they could not see to the end of what was to be abolished; whereas, believers under the present dispensation, with open face, with faces unveiled, behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord clearly and plainly, “Heb 10:1” “2Co 3:13,18” then, comparatively, it was night, now broad day; the day has broke, and the shadows are fled and gone.

2c. There is more of a spirit of liberty, and less of bondage, under the one, than under the other; saints under

the one differed little from servants, being in bondage under the elements of the world; but under the other are Christ's freemen, and receive not the spirit of bondage again, to fear; but the spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father; which is a free spirit, and brings liberty with it; and for this reason the two different administrations of the covenant, are signified, the one by Hagar, the bondwoman, because it gendered to bondage, and those under it were in such a state; and the other by Sarah, the freewoman, an emblem of Jerusalem, which is free, and the mother of us all, "Gal 4:1-3,24-26 Ro 8:15".

2d. There is a larger and more plentiful effusion of the Spirit, and of his gifts and graces, under the one than under the other; greater measures of grace, and of spiritual light and knowledge were promised, as what would be communicated under the new and second administration of the covenant; and accordingly grace, in all its fulness and "truth", in all its clearness and evidence, are "come by Jesus Christ", "John 1:17" see "Jer 31:31-34".

2e. The latter administration of the covenant extends to more persons than the former. The Gentiles were strangers to the covenants of promise, had no knowledge nor application of the promises and blessings of the covenant of grace, except now and then, and here and there one; but now the blessing of Abraham is come upon the Gentiles, and they are fellow heirs of the same grace and privileges, and partakers of the promises in Christ by the gospel, "Eph 2:12 3:6 Ga 3:14".

2f. The present administration of the covenant of grace, will continue to the end of the world; it will never give way to, nor be succeeded by another; it is that which remains, in distinction from that which is done away, and so exceeds in glory: the ceremonial law, under which the former covenant was administered, was "until the time of reformation", until Christ came and his forerunner; "The law and the prophets were until John", the harbinger of Christ, the fulfilling end of

them; see “2Co 3:11” “Heb 9:10 Lu 16:16”.

2g. The ordinances of them are different. The first covenant had ordinances of divine service; but those, comparatively, were carnal and worldly, at best but typical and shadowy, and faint representations of divine and spiritual things; and were to continue but for a while, and then to be shaken and removed, and other ordinances take place, which shall not be shaken, but remain to the second coming of Christ; and in which he is more clearly and evidently set forth, and the blessings of his grace, “Hebrews 9:1,10 12:27”.

2h. Though the promises and blessings of grace under both administrations are the same, yet differently exhibited; under the former dispensation, not only more darkly and obscurely, but by earthly things, as by the land of Canaan, and the outward mercies of it; but under the latter, as more clearly and plainly, so more spiritually and nakedly, as they are in themselves spiritual, heavenly, and divine; and delivered out more free, and unclogged of all conditions, and so called “better promises”, and the administration of the covenant, in which they are, a “better testament”; God having “provided” for New Testament saints some “better thing”, at least held forth in a better manner; that Old Testament saints might not be “made perfect” without them, “Hebrews 8:6 7:22 11:40”.

Of the Gospel

There was Gospel in the former dispensation, though called the legal dispensation; it was preached to Adam, to Abraham, and by Isaiah, and other prophets, as has been observed. Yet there is a clearer revelation and ministration of it under the present dispensation; as the law was by the ministration of Moses; “Grace and truth”, the word of grace and truth, the gospel, “came by Jesus Christ”, in a clearer and fuller manner than it had been made known before, “John 1:17”. Concerning which the following things may be noted.

1. First, The name and signification of it. The Greek word

~euaggelion~, used for it throughout the New Testament, signifies, a good message, good news, glad tidings; such the gospel is; a message of good news from God, from heaven, the far country, to sinners here on earth: such was the gospel Christ was anointed to preach, and did preach, even good tidings, “Luke 4:18” compared with “Isa 61:1” and which his ministers bring, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, “Isa 52:7 Ac 13:32,33”. The Hebrew word used for the gospel, and the preaching of it, signifies good tidings also; and it is observed by some, to have the signification of “flesh” in it, which has led them to think of the incarnation of Christ; which is, undoubtedly, good news to the children of men; and a considerable branch of the gospel of Christ; what has given Isaiah the character of an evangelic prophet is, because he so clearly spoke of the incarnation of Christ, as well as of his sufferings and death, as if then present in his time: “To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given”, “Isa 9:6 7:14”. And when the angel proclaimed the birth of Christ to the shepherds, he is said, “to bring good tidings of great joy to all people”, “luke 2:10,11”. And this is one principal part of the gospel, the great mystery of godliness; “God manifest in the flesh”, “#1Ti 3:16”. Our English word “gospel”, is of Saxon derivation; in which language “spel” signifies speech; and so gospel is either “good speech”, which carries in it the same idea with the Greek and Hebrew words; or God’s speech, which he has spoken by his Son, by his prophets, and by his ministers; and is the voice of God the Son, the voice of Christ speaking in his ministers, and the voice of the Holy Ghost also.

Now this word is variously used; sometimes it is put for the history of Christ’s birth, life, and actions; such are the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Mark begins his history thus; “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God”, “Mark 1:1”. And Luke calls his Gospel; “The former treatise” he had made, “of all that

Jesus began, both to do and teach”, “Acts 1:1”. And hence these four writers are commonly called evangelists; though this title is sometimes given to others, as distinct from apostles, “Eph 4:11” and even to ordinary ministers of the word, when they do the work of an evangelist, or preach the gospel faithfully, and make full proof of their ministry, “#2Ti 4:5”. Sometimes the gospel is to be taken in a large sense, as including the word and ordinances, “Matt 28:19,20 Mr 16:15,16”. And sometimes strictly, for the doctrine of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ; hence gospel ministers, who bring good tidings of good, are said to publish peace, and to publish salvation, “Isa 52:7” the sum of which is expressed by the apostle, when he says, “This is a faithful saying”, &c. “#1Ti 1:15”. Hence,

1a. The gospel is called, the gospel of salvation, the word of salvation, and salvation itself, “Eph 1:13 Ac 13:26 28:28” because it gives an account of Christ, the author of salvation; of his appointment to it; of his mission, and coming into the world, to effect it; and of his actual performance of it; of his being the able, willing, and only Saviour; and of the salvation itself, as great and glorious, perfect and complete, spiritual and everlasting; and because it describes also the persons that share in it, sinners, sensible sinners, and who believe in Christ; and who, according to the declaration of it, shall certainly be saved, “Mark 16:16 Ac 16:30,31” and because it is, not only the means of revealing, but of applying salvation; for it is to them that believe “the power of God unto salvation”, “Rom 1:16”.

1b. It is called, “The gospel of the grace of God”, “Acts 20:24” because the various doctrines of it are doctrines of grace, or which exhibit blessings as flowing from the grace of God; as election, redemption, pardon, justification, adoption, and eternal life; and particularly, that salvation, from first to last, is all of grace, and not of works, “epH 2:8”.

1c. It is called, “The gospel of peace”, the word of reconciliation, the word preaching peace by Christ, “Eph 6:15 2Co 5:19” “Acts 10:36” because it relates the steps taken in, council and covenant; to form the scheme of man’s peace with God; to lay the foundation of it; and to bring it about; hence called the council of peace, and the covenant of peace, “Zech 6:13 Isa 54:10”. And also relates the actual making of it; by whom, and by what means; by Christ, who is our peace; by the chastisement of our peace being laid on him; by the shedding of his blood on the cross; and by his suffering of death, “Eph 2:14 Isa 53:5 Col 1:20 Ro 5:10”.

1d. It is called, “The gospel of the kingdom”, “Matt 4:23” because it treats both of the kingdom of grace here, showing wherein it lies; and of the kingdom of glory hereafter, pointing out the proper meetness for it, regeneration by the Spirit of God; and the right and title to it, the righteousness of the Son of God; and that itself, as the Father’s free gift to his people, flowing from his good will and pleasure, “#Joh 3:5 Mt 5:20 Lu 12:32”.

2. Secondly, The author and origin of the gospel.---

2a. It is not of man, a device and invention of men; a system of things schemed and formed by the art and wit of men; says the apostle, “I neither received it of men, nor was I taught it”; that is, by men, as human arts and sciences are, “Gal 1:11,12”. It is not discoverable by the light of nature and reason; the law, and the things of it, may be known thereby, as what is morally good and evil, as were by the Gentiles, “Rom 2:14,15” but not the things of the gospel; they are what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of; as for instance, that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, believed and confessed by Peter, was declared by our Lord to be what “flesh and blood had not revealed” to him, but his “Father in heaven”, “Matt 16:16,17”. Hence the gospel is

frequently called, a mystery; the wisdom of God in a mystery; the hidden wisdom; and the doctrines of it, the mysteries of the kingdom; which are only known by those to whom it is given by the Spirit and grace of God to know them, “Matt 13:11” and when they are externally revealed, and men have got some little notion and idea of them, they are disapproved of by them; for natural men receive not with approbation, and a good liking, the things of the Spirit of God, the doctrines of the gospel, which he searches and reveals; for they are foolishness, insipid things to them; for which they have no taste; as the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and salvation alone by him, 1Co 2:14 1:18,23”.

2b. The gospel is from heaven; it is good news from a far country, which far country is heaven: the gospel is, with the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven; and Christ that spoke it, is He that speaketh from heaven: the question put concerning the baptism of John; “Whence was it? from heaven, or of men?” may be put concerning the gospel, and answered as that; that it is from heaven, and not of men, “#1Pe 1:12 Heb 12:25 Mt 21:25”. It comes from God, Father, Son, and Spirit; from God the Father, and is therefore called the gospel of God; that is, the Father, concerning his Son Jesus Christ, “Rom 1:1,3” which he ordained before the world was; and in time committed into the hands of men to preach, whom he made, and makes, able ministers of it, and which he blesses and succeeds. It comes also from Christ, the Son of God; and is called, the gospel of his Son, the gospel of Christ, the word of Christ, and the testimony of our Lord, “Rom 1:9,16 Col 3:16 2Ti 1:8” of which Christ is the subject, sum, and substance, as well as the author; even his person, offices, and grace; and of which he was the preacher when here on earth; for which he was qualified by the Spirit without measure, and spake and preached it as never man did; and by whom it was revealed and brought to light in the clearest manner; hence the

apostle says, he received it “by the revelation of Jesus Christ”, “Gal 1:12”. It may be said likewise, to come from the Holy Spirit of God, the inciter of the scriptures, wherein it lies; who searches the deep things of it, and reveals them to men; who leads the ministers of it into all the truths thereof and makes their ministrations of it powerful and successful; and whereby he and his grace, comparable to the golden oil, are conveyed and received into the hearts of men. The instruments of declaring, publishing, and proclaiming the gospel, and its truths, to the children of men, are the prophets of the Old Testament, who made a report of it, though believed but by few; the angels, who descended at the birth of Christ, and brought the good news of it; John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who pointed him out as the Son of God, and as the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world; the apostles of Christ, who had a commission from him to preach the gospel to every creature; and all ordinary ministers of the word, whose business it is to publish good tidings of good things.

3. Thirdly, The effects of the gospel when attended with the power and Spirit of God.

3a. The regeneration of men, who are said to be born again by the word of God, and to be begotten again with the word of truth, “#1Pe 1:23 Jas 1:18” hence ministers of the gospel are represented as spiritual fathers, “#1Co 4:15”.

3b. As in regeneration souls are quickened by the Spirit and grace of God, this is ascribed to the gospel as an instrument, hence it is called the Spirit which giveth life, and said to be the saviour of life unto life, “#2Co 2:16 3:6”.

3c. The gospel is frequently spoken of as a light, a great light, a glorious light; and so is in the hands of the Spirit a means of enlightening the dark minds of men into the mysteries of grace, and the method of salvation; “the entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the

simple”, “Psalm 119:130”. The Spirit of God gives the gospel an entrance into the heart, being opened by him to attend unto it; and when it has an entrance, it gives light into a man’s self, his state and condition, and into the way of life by Christ; it is a glass in which the glory of Christ, and of the riches of his grace, may be seen.

3d. By it faith in Christ comes, and is ingenerated in the heart by the Spirit of God attending it; hence among other reasons, it is called “the word of faith”; and ministers, by preaching it, are instruments of confirming and increasing faith, and of perfecting what is lacking in it, “Rom 10:8,17 1Th 3:10”.

3e. When faith is wrought in the soul, the righteousness of Christ is revealed unto it in the gospel; and not at first believing only but at after times; for it is revealed therein “from faith to faith”, from one degree of it to another, giving thereby clearer views of it, and of interest in it, Ro 1:17” hence it is called the word of righteousness, and the ministration of righteousness, Heb 5:13 2Co 3:9”.

3f. It affords spiritual food, and is the means of feeding and nourishing souls unto everlasting life; it contains words of faith and good doctrine, even the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus; it has in it milk for babes, and meat for strong men; and when it is found by faith, it is eaten by it with pleasure, and fills with spiritual joy, “#1Ti 4:6 6:3 Heb 5:13. 14 Jer 15:16” which---

3g. Is another effect of it in gracious souls, it yields much spiritual peace, joy, and comfort; the doctrines of it are calculated for such a purpose; it is good news and glad tidings of good things; as of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation by Christ, which, when applied, cannot fail of producing spiritual joy in sensible sinners; when Philip preached Christ and his gospel in Samaria, there was great joy in that city, “#Ac 8:5,8” all this must be understood of

the gospel, not as producing these effects of itself, but as it comes, not in word only, but with the power and in the demonstration of the Spirit; when it is sent forth out of Zion as the rod of God's strength, and it becomes the power of God unto salvation, "#1Th 1:5,8" Ps 110:2 Ro 1:16".

4. Fourthly, The properties of the gospel.

4a. It is but one, there is not another, as the apostle says, "Gal 1:6,7" the same gospel which was in the beginning, and will be to the end of the world, the same under the Old Testament as under the New; the subject of it, Christ and salvation by him; the doctrines of it, of justification, remission of sins, &c. the same, only now more clearly revealed; then it was in types and figures, now more plainly set forth, and more clearly and fully expressed; the same was preached by Christ and his apostles, and by all faithful ministers since, and will be to the end of time; for it is true of the gospel what is said of Christ, it is "the same yesterday, today, and for ever", "Heb 13:8".

4b. It is called, from the objects of it, the gospel of the circumcision, and the gospel of the uncircumcision, "Gal 2:7" not that the gospel of the one is different from that of the other; it is the same gospel, only dispensed to different persons, the circumcised Jews and the uncircumcised Gentiles; it was first ordered to be preached to the Jews, and to them only, in Christ's lifetime; after his death and resurrection he enlarged the commission of his disciples, and sent them forth to preach the gospel to every creature, both Jews and Gentiles; yet the special revelation and application of it are made only to some; to some it is the savour of life unto life, to others the savour of death unto death; there are some to whom God would make it known; it was his determinate pleasure to make known the riches of the glory of the mystery of it; to others it is hid, even to the wise and prudent, while it is revealed unto babes; of which no other reason can be given, but the sovereign will

and pleasure of God, “#2Co 2:16 4:3 Col 1:27 Mt 11:25,26”.

4c. It is a glorious gospel: so it is called, “#2Co 4:4 1Ti 1:11” it has a glory in it exceeding that of the law, and the dispensation of it, “#2Co 3:11” for the clearness, fulness, and suitableness of its doctrines to the state and condition of men; and in which the glory of the person of Christ as the Son of God, and of his officers as mediator, and of the blessings of grace that come by him, is held forth in great splendour and brightness.

4d. It is an everlasting gospel, which is the epithet given it, “Rev 14:6” it was ordained in the council and covenant of God before the world was, of which it is a transcript, and so was from everlasting, “#1Co 2:7” and “the word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached”, “#1Pe 1:25” and which will continue until all the elect of God are gathered in, maugre all the craft and cunning, force and power of earth and hell.

5. Fifthly, I shall close this chapter with a brief answer to some queries relating to faith, repentance, and good works; as, to what they belong, whether to law or gospel.

5a. Whether faith is a duty of the moral law, or is to be referred to the gospel? to which it may be answered, that as the law is not of faith, so faith is not of the law. There is a faith indeed which the law requires and obliges to, namely, faith and trust in God, as the God of nature and providence; for as both the law of nature, and the law of Moses, show there is a God, and who is to be worshipped; they both require a belief of him, and trust and confidence in him; which is one part of the worship of him enjoined therein: moreover the law obliges men to give credit to any revelation of the mind and will of God he has made, or should think fit to make unto them at any time; but as for special faith in Christ as a Saviour, or believing in him to the saving of the soul; this the law knows nothing of, nor does it make it known; this kind

of faith neither comes by the ministration of it, nor does it direct to Christ the object of it, nor give any encouragement to believe in him on the above account; but it is a blessing of the covenant of grace, which flows from electing love, is a gift of God's free grace, the operation of the Spirit of God, comes by the hearing of faith, or the word of faith, as a means, that is, the gospel; for which reason, among others, the gospel is so called; and it is that which points out Christ, the object of faith; and directs and encourages sensible sinners under a divine influence to exercise it on him; its language is, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved", Ac 16:31".

5b. Whether repentance is a doctrine of the law or of the gospel? the answer to which is, that such who sin ought to repent of sin; this God has commanded, the law of nature teaches; and so far as this is to be considered as a duty incumbent on men, it belongs to the law, as all duty does; but then the law makes no account of repentance for sin; nor does it admit of it as a satisfaction for it; nor gives any encouragement to expect that God will receive repenting sinners into his grace and favour upon it; this is what the gospel does, and not the law; the law says not, repent and live, but do and live. Moreover, there is what may be called a legal repentance and contrition; for by the law is the knowledge of sin, without which there can be no repentance; and it works a sense of wrath in the sinners conscience, and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation from an incensed God; but if it stop here, it will prove no other than a worldly sorrow, which worketh death. The Spirit of God may make use of this, and go on and produce spiritual repentance, such a repentance as is unto life, even life eternal; and unto salvation, which needeth not to be repented of: but such a repentance is not the work of the law; for life and salvation come not by any work of the law; but true repentance, which has salvation annexed to it, is, as faith, a blessing of the covenant of grace; a grant from God,

a gift of Christ as a Saviour, and with it remission of sins; a grace produced in the soul by the Spirit of Christ, by means of the gospel, which only encourages to the exercise of it; see “Acts 5:31 11:18 2Co 7:10 Ga 3:2”. And so is a doctrine of the gospel, and not of the law, as appears from the ministry of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who exhorted and encouraged to repentance from gospel motives; and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, “Matt 3:2 Mr 1:4”. But what has the law to do either with baptism or the remission of sins? His ministry was evangelical, and ran in the same strain with the apostles, as appears from their answer to a question put to them; “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” A serious question, put upon thought and reflection by persons upon the bottom of a covenant of works {1}, as the Jews rally were; and especially under a sense of guilt, as those were, desirous to know what must be done by them, that they “might be saved”; as it may be supplied from the jailor’s words, when in the same case; or whereby they might make atonement for, and obtain the pardon of so great a sin, of which they were guilty {2}: to which a proper answer is returned, putting them off of legal works for such purposes, and directing them to evangelical ones; “Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, for the remission of sins”, “Acts 2:37,38”. And this is also clear from the story of Christ himself; who came, not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; which was not a legal, but evangelical repentance. He began his ministry thus; “Repent, and believe the gospel”, see “Matt 9:13 Mr 1:15”. With which agrees the ministry of the apostles in general; who, by the direction of Christ, preached repentance and remission of sins in his name; which most certainly was the gospel; the one, as well as the other, a doctrine of the gospel, “Luke 24:47”. And the apostle Paul, who was a most evangelical preacher, divides his whole ministry into these two parts; “Repentance towards God, and

faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ”, “Acts 20:21”.

5c. Whether good works belong to the gospel, or to the law? or rather, whether there are any works that belong to the gospel distinct from the law? to which it may be replied, That the gospel, taken in a large sense, as has been observed in the beginning of this chapter, includes both the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel; and the one, as well as the other, are taught, and directed to be observed; yea, all good works, which the law requires, are moved and urged unto in the ministry of the gospel, upon gospel principles and motives: the gospel of the grace of God, which brings the good tidings of salvation, instructs and urges men to do good works, and to avoid sin, “Titus 2:11,12 3:8”. But the gospel, strictly taken, is a pure declaration of grace, a mere promise of salvation by Christ. All duty and good works belong to the law; promise and grace belong to the gospel; the works of the law, and the grace of the gospel, are always opposed to each other, “Rom 3:20,24,28 Eph 2:8”. And if there were any works distinct from the law, and not required by it, which, if not performed, would be sin; then the apostle’s definition of sin, as a transgression of the law, would not be a full and proper one, “#1Jo 3:4” since then there would be sins which were not transgressions of the law; wherefore, as all evil works are transgressions of the law, all good works are required and enjoined by it.

{1} Surely no man can take this to be the same as an Anglicism, or as an unmeaning phrase used among us sometimes by persons in distress, “What shall we do? what shall we do? what shall we do? &c.”

{2} So Piscator, Pricaeus, et alii in loc.

4. Of The Everlasting Covenant Of Grace

Between The Father, And The Son, And The Holy Spirit.

The council before treated of, is the basis and foundation of the Covenant of grace, and both relate to the same thing,

and in which the same persons are concerned. In the former, things were contrived, planned, and advised; in the latter, fixed and settled. The covenant of grace is a compact or agreement made from all eternity among the divine Persons, more especially between the Father and the Son, concerning the salvation of the elect. For the better understanding these federal transactions between them, before the world was, when there were no creatures, neither angels nor men in being; and which lay the foundation of all the grace and glory, comfort and happiness, of the saints in time and to eternity; it may be proper to consider,

1. The etymology and signification of the words used for “covenant”, in the writings of the Old and New Testament, by which it will appear with what propriety these transactions may be called a “covenant”. The books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew, and the Hebrew word for “covenant”, throughout those writings is “Berith”; which, by different persons, is derived from different roots. There are a set of men {1} lately risen up, who derive the word from “Barar”, which signifies, to “purify”; and because the word we translate “make”, which usually goes along with “covenant”, signifies, to “cut off”, they warmly contend, that wherever we meet with this phrase, it should be rendered, “cut off the Purifier” by whom they understand the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, though it will be allowed, that Christ is sometimes called a Refiner and Purifier, Mal 3:3 yet not by any word or name derived from this root; nor is it likely, that a “Purifier”, or “he that purifies”, should be expressed by a noun feminine, as “Berith” is; and not by a noun masculine, or a participle belonging to this root; and though such a version of the phrase may happen to suit tolerably well with a passage or two; yet there are many places in which, were it so rendered, no sense could be made of them. If the word has the signification of purity, as a word of the same letters, though differently pointed has, being twice

translated “soap”, (Jer 2:22; Mal 3:2) which is of a detersive, cleansing, and purifying nature. Rather as this is used for covenant, it may denote the purity of intention, and sincerity of heart, that ought to be in all persons that enter into covenant with each other; and which is most eminently true of the pure and holy divine persons, in their covenant engagements. But the word “Berith, covenant”, may rather be derived, as it more commonly is, either from “Bara”; which, in the first sense of the word, signifies to “create”; a covenant being made with man, as soon almost as he was created, which covenant he transgressed, (Hosea 6:7) but the covenant of grace was made before the creation of man; though it was first made manifest quickly after his fall, which was not long after his creation; the sum and substance of which lies in those words, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head”, (Gen 3:15). The word, in a secondary sense, may signify, to order or dispose of things; as in creation things were disposed and put in an orderly manner, and with this may agree, the words ~diatiqemai~, and ~diaqkh~, used of a covenant in the New Testament, which signify, a disposing of things in a covenant or testamentary way. It is further observed by some, that the same Hebrew word, in another conjugation, signifies to “cut” in pieces and divide, and think that a covenant has its name from hence, because it was usual at making covenants, to slay creatures for sacrifice, and cut them in pieces, and lay them by each other, and the covenanters to pass between them; of which rite see Gen 15:9,10,17 Jer 34:18 to which way of making a covenant by sacrifice, the allusion may be in Ps 50:5. Or else the word may be derived from “Barah”; which, among other things, signifies to “eat” food; it being usual, when covenants were made and confirmed, for the parties covenanting, to eat and feast together; as did Abimelech and Isaac, Laban and Jacob, (Gen 26:30 31:46) and it may be observed, that the Lord’s Supper, which is a feast, is a

commemoration of the ratification of the covenant of grace, by the blood of Christ, and wherein and whereby the faith of God's people is strengthened and confirmed, as to their interest in it. But after all, it may be best to derive the word from this root, as it signifies to select and choose, and the rather, since all those roots, have this signification; and which well agrees with a covenant, into which persons, of their own will and choice, enter; choose the persons to be concerned with them, the terms and conditions on which they covenant with each other, and the things and persons they covenant about; all which entirely agrees with this federal transaction, or covenant of grace we are about to treat of.

The word used in the New Testament for "covenant", is ~diaqhkh~, by which word the Septuagint interpreters almost always translate the Hebrew word "berith" in the Old, and comes from a word which signifies to "dispose", and that in a covenant way, as in Luke 22:29 where the Father is said to appoint, or dispose, by covenant, a kingdom to his Son, as he also is said to appoint, or dispose by covenant, a kingdom to his people; and the word from it, is used for a covenant in Acts 3:25 and in other places; and sometimes for a testament, or a man's last will, (Heb 9:16,17) and we shall see the use of the word in this sense hereafter, as it may be applicable to the covenant of grace; the word signifies both covenant and testament, and some have called it a covenant testament, or a testamentary covenant; hence the different administrations of the covenant of grace in time, are called the first and second, the Old and New Testament; and even the books of scripture, written under those different dispensations, are so distinguished; see Heb 8:1-13 2Co 3:6,14. In the next place it may not be improper to observe,

2. In what sense the word "covenant" is used in scripture, which may serve to lead into the nature of it. And,

2a. It is sometimes used for an ordinance, precept, and

command; so the order for giving the heave offerings to the sons of Aaron, is called a covenant of salt, a perpetual ordinance, (Num. 18:19) the law for releasing servants after six years service, has the name of a covenant, (Jer. 34:13,14) and this may account for the Decalogue, or Ten Commands, being called a covenant, (De 4:13) for whatsoever God enjoins men, they are under an obligation to observe, nor have they a right to refuse obedience to it; and, indeed, the covenant of works made with Adam, was much of the same nature, only he had a will, consenting to obey, the bias of it being to the will of God, as well as power to perform.

2b. A covenant, when ascribed to God, is often nothing more than a mere promise; “This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my Spirit that is upon thee”, &c. (Isa 59:21) hence we read of “covenants of promise”, or promissory covenants, (Eph 2:12) and, indeed, the covenant of grace, with respect to the elect, is nothing else but a free promise of eternal life and salvation by Jesus Christ, which includes all other promises of blessings of grace in it; “This is the promise that he hath promised us”, the grand comprehensive promise, “even eternal life”, (1Jo 2:25) and which is absolute and unconditional, with respect to them; whatever condition is in that covenant, lay only on Christ to perform; he and his work are the only condition of it. And so,

2c. We often read of covenants of God only on one side; of this kind is his covenant of the day and of the night, (Jer 33:20) which is no other than a promise that these should always continue, without requiring any condition on the part of the creature, (Gen 8:22) and the covenant he made with Noah and his posterity, and with every living creature, with which latter especially, there could be no restipulation, (Gen 9:9-17) and so the covenant he promised to make for his people, with the beasts of the field, could be no other than a mere promise of security from harm by them (Ho 2:18). But,

2d. A covenant properly made between man and man, is by stipulation and restipulation, in which they make mutual promises, or conditions, to be performed by them; whether to maintain friendship among themselves, and to strengthen themselves against their common enemies, or to do mutual service to each other, and to their respective posterities; such was the confederacy between Abraham, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; and the covenant between Abimelech and Isaac, and between David and Jonathan (Gen 14:13 26:28; 1Sa 20:15,16,42; 23:18). Now,

2e. Such a covenant, properly speaking, cannot be made between God and man; for what can man restipulate with God, which is in his power to do or give to him, and which God has not a prior right unto? God may, indeed, condescend to promise that to man, which otherwise he is not bound to give; and he may require of man, that which he has no right to refuse, and God has a right unto, without making any such promise; and therefore, properly speaking, all this cannot formally constitute a covenant, which is to be entered into of free choice on both sides; and especially such a covenant cannot take place in fallen man, who has neither inclination of will to yield the obedience required, nor power to perform it. But,

2f. The covenant of grace made between God and Christ, and with the elect in him, as their Head and Representative, is a proper covenant, consisting of stipulation and restipulation; God the Father in it stipulates with his Son, that he shall do such and such work and service, on condition of which he promises to confer such and such honours and benefits on him, and on the elect in him; and Christ the Son of God restipulates and agrees to do all that is proposed and prescribed, and, upon performance, expects and claims the fulfillment of the promises: in this compact there are mutual engagements each party enters into, stipulate and restipulate about, which make

a proper formal covenant; see Isa 49:1-6 53:10-12 Ps 40:6-8 Joh 17:4,5. Which passages of scripture will be produced, and more fully opened hereafter.

3. The names and epithets given to this federal transaction, or covenant of grace, between the Father and Son, both in the scriptures and among men, may deserve some notice, since they may help to give a better and clearer idea of this transaction. 3a. It is called, “a covenant of life”, (Mal 2:5) for though it is said of Levi, yet of him as a type of Christ; and if the covenant with Levi might be so called, much more that with Christ. Some divines call the covenant of works, made with Adam, a covenant of life, and so it may be; but then only as it respected that natural happy life Adam then lived, and as it contained a promise of continuance of it, and confirmation in it, should he stand the trial of his obedience; but not a promise of eternal life and happiness, such as the saints enjoy in heaven; for such a life was never designed to be given by, nor could come through a covenant of works; see Gal 3:21. But the covenant of grace contains such a promise, a promise that was made by God, that cannot lie, before the world was; that is, a promise made to Christ, in the covenant of grace, from eternity, who then existed as the federal Head of his people, to whom it was made, and in whose hands it is put for them; he asked life of his Father for them in this covenant, and he gave it to him, even length of days for ever and ever; and therefore with great propriety may this covenant be called, a covenant of life; see Tit 1:2 2Ti 1:1 Ps 21:4.

3b. It is called “a covenant of peace”, (Mal 2:5; Isa 54:10). As the transaction between the eternal Three, in which the plan and method of the peace and reconciliation of God’s elect was consulted, may be called “the council of peace”; because that was a principal article considered in it; so, for the same reason, the covenant may be called the covenant of peace; for what was concerted in the council of peace concerning it, was

fixed and settled in the covenant: as, that the Son of God, in human nature, should be the Peace Maker, and should make peace by the shedding of his blood; and hence, in the fulness of time, he was sent to be the Man, the Peace, according to promise and prophecy, founded upon this covenant, (Micah 5:2,5) and had the chastisement of peace” laid upon him; that is, the punishment for the sins of the elect inflicted on him, whereby their peace and reconciliation was made, (Isa 53:6) all which was by his own consent, and in consequence of the covenant made between him and his Father, and which, therefore, is rightly called “the covenant of peace”.

3c. It is commonly called by men, “the covenant of grace”; and properly enough, since it entirely flows from, and has its foundation in the grace of God: it is owing to the everlasting love and free favour of God the Father, that he proposed a covenant of this kind to his Son; and it is owing to the grace of the Son, that he so freely and voluntarily entered into engagements with his Father; the matter, sum, and substance of it is grace; it consists of grants and blessings of grace to the elect in Christ; and the ultimate end and design of it is the glory of the grace of God.

3d. It is by some divines called, “the covenant of redemption”; and very truly, because the redemption of God’s elect is a principal article in it: the Father proposed to the Son, that he should raise up, restore, redeem Israel, his chosen ones; the Son agreed to it, and hence he was declared and promised, and expected as the Redeemer, long before he came into this world to do this service; Job knew him as his living Redeemer, and all the Old Testament saints waited for him as such, having had a promise of it, which was founded on this covenant agreement; for as it was proposed to him, and he agreed to it, to be the Redeemer, so it was promised him, that upon the condition of giving himself, the redemption and ransom price for the elect, they should be delivered from all

their sins, and the effects of them, and out of the hands of all their enemies; see Isa 49:5 59:20 Job 33:24. But then,

3e. This covenant is the same with the covenant of grace; some divines, indeed, make them distinct covenants; the covenant of redemption, they say, was made with Christ in eternity; the covenant of grace with the elect, or with believers, in time: but this is very wrongly said; there is but one covenant of grace, and not two, in which the Head and Members, the Redeemer and the persons to be redeemed, Christ and the elect, are concerned; in which he is the Head and Representative of them, acts for them, and on their behalf. What is called a covenant of redemption, is a covenant of grace, arising from the grace of the Father, who proposed to his Son to be the Redeemer, and from the grace of the Son, who agreed to be so; and even the honours proposed to the Son in this covenant, redounded to the advantage of the elect; and the sum and substance of the everlasting covenant made with Christ, is the salvation and eternal happiness of the chosen ones; all the blessings and grants of grace to them, are secured in that eternal compact; for they were blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, and had grace given them in him before the world was; wherefore there can be no foundation for such a distinction between a covenant of redemption in eternity, and a covenant of grace in time.

4. The contracting parties concerned in this covenant, are next to be considered more particularly and distinctly. This covenant is commonly represented as if it was only between the Father and the Son; but I see not why the Holy Spirit should be excluded, since he is certainly promised in it both to Head and members; and in consequence of it, is sent down into the hearts of God's covenant ones, to make application of the blessings, promises, and grace of the covenant to them, and to work a work of grace in them; all which must be by agreement, and with his consent; and I think there are

some traces, and some footsteps of all the three Persons, as concerned in it, in the dispensation and manifestation of this covenant to the people of Israel, (Haggai 2:4,5). However, as in all covenants the contracting parties are,

4a. Distinct from each other, so in this; a covenant is not of one, but of more than one; no man covenants with himself; at least such a covenant is not properly one; Job is, indeed, said to make a covenant with his eyes, (Job 31:1) but that was no other than a resolution within himself to lay restraint upon his eyes, not to make use of them in such a manner as might tend to sin. The divine Persons of the sacred Trinity are distinct Persons, as has been proved in the article on that subject. And so they appear to be in their federal transactions with each other. He that called his Son to service, and directed him, or proposed the work he should do, “to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and restore the preserved of Israel”, &c. (Isa 49:3,5,6) must be distinct from him to whom he proposed all this; and he who in compliance with it said, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!” (Psalm 40:7,8 Heb 10:7) must be distinct from him whose will he was so ready to do, and whom he calls his Lord and God, as he was, by virtue of his covenant relation to him: and the Spirit, who was sent by them both, in consequence of a covenant agreement, to be the Comforter of the covenant ones, must be distinct from either.

4b. As they are distinct Persons, so they have distinct acts of will; for though their nature and essence is but one, which is common to them all, and so their will but one; yet there are distinct acts of this will, put forth by and peculiar to each distinct Person: thus their nature being the same, their understanding must be the same; and yet there are distinct acts of the divine, understanding, peculiar to each Person; the Father knows the Son, and the Son knows the Father, and they have a distinct knowledge and understanding of one another, and the Spirit knows them both, and they know him. And as

their nature and essence, so their affections are the same; and yet there are distinct acts of them, peculiar to each Person; the Father loves the Son, and has put all things into his hands; the Son loves the Father, and is in all things obedient to him; the Spirit loves the Father and the Son, and they both love him: so their will, though the same, there are distinct acts of it, peculiar to each Person; and which appear in their covenanting with each other, and are necessary to it: there is the Father's distinct act of will notified in the covenant, that it is his will and pleasure his Son should be the Saviour of the chosen ones; and there is the Son's distinct act of will notified in the same covenant, he presenting himself, and declaring himself willing, and engaging himself to be the Saviour of them; which distinct acts of the divine will thus notified, formally constituted a covenant between them; and as the holy Spirit dispenses his gifts and grace, the blessings of this covenant, "severally as he will", (1Co 12:11) this is pursuant to an agreement, to a notification of his will in covenant also.

4c. These contracting Parties entered into covenant freely and voluntarily, of their own choice, as all covenantors do, or should; hence the Hebrew word for covenant, as has been observed, comes from a root, which signifies to choose; because men choose their own terms and conditions, on which they agree to enter into covenant with each other, not being compelled and forced thereunto. So it is in this everlasting covenant, the Parties were at entire liberty to enter or not into it: the Father was under no necessity, nor under any obligation to save men; he could, in consistence with his justice, and the other perfections of his nature, have destroyed the whole world of men, as he destroyed all the angels that sinned; he was not obliged to make a covenant with his Son to save them; it was of his own choice he did it; who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy: nor was the Son compelled to enter into this covenant; but knowing his Father's will, and

agreeing to it, voluntarily engaged in it, and said, “Lo, I come to do thy will”: and as the Spirit freely bestows his grace, and the gifts of it in time, so he freely engaged to do it in the covenant in eternity.

4d. What they agreed in covenant, was what was in their power to perform; if one man enters into a covenant with another, and agrees to do what is not in his power, and which he knows it is not, when he enters into covenant, this is a fraud and an imposition on him, with whom he covenants; and in course the covenant is null and void. But the contracting parties in the covenant of grace, are able to perform whatever they covenanted about: the Father is able to make good all that he has promised in it, either to his Son or to the elect in him; and the Son is able to do the work he engaged to do; he had power to assume human nature into union with his divine Person, and to lay down his life in that nature, having such a power over his own life, and to dispose of it at pleasure, as no mere man ever had; and so being God, as well as man, was able to work out the salvation of his people, which he undertook; the Father knew he was able to save them, and therefore laid help on him, and called him to this work; and he knew himself to be equal to it, and therefore engaged in it: and the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of power and might, and so able to perform the part he took in this covenant.

4e. As in all covenants, however, the persons covenanting may be equal in other respects, yet in covenanting there is an inequality and subordination; especially in covenants, in which there is service and work to be done on one side, and a reward to be given in consideration of it on the other; of which nature is the covenant of grace and redemption; and though the contracting parties in it are equal in nature, perfections, and glory, yet in this covenant relation they voluntarily entered into, there is by agreement and consent a subordination; hence the Father, the first Person and Party contracting is called by

his Son, his Lord and his God, a phrase always expressive of covenant relation; see Ps 16:2 22:1 40:8 45:7 Joh 20:17” and the Son, the second Person and Party contracting, is called by the Father his Servant; “Thou art my Servant”, &c. “Isa 49:3” hence the Father is said to be “greater than he”, “John 14:28” not merely on account of his human nature, about which there could be no difficulty in admitting it; but with respect to his covenant relation to him, and the office capacity he has taken and sustains in it: and the Spirit, the third Person and contracting Party, he is said to be sent both by the Father and the Son, to perform that part which he undertook in it: and this economy and dispensation of the covenant, thus settled in subordination among themselves by agreement and consent, is done with great propriety, beauty, and decency, suitable to their natural relations they bear to each other, as equal divine Persons for who so proper to be the proposer of terms in the covenant, to direct and prescribe them, and to exercise a kind of authority, as he who is the first Person in order of nature, and that stands in the relation of a Father to the second Person; and since here was work and service to be done, the salvation of the elect, and that in an inferior nature, in human nature, who so proper to engage in this service, and to assume this nature, and in it yield obedience to the will of God, than the second Person, who stood in the relation of a Son to the First? and with what congruity is the third Person, the Holy Spirit, sent by both, to make application of the grace of both; who is said to be their Breath, and to proceed from both.

4f. As in all covenants some advantages are proposed unto, and expected by all parties concerned, so in this; as God’s end in all things, in nature, providence, and grace, is his own glory, so it is in this covenant, even the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit; which must be understood not of any addition unto, or increase of their essential glory, but of the manifestation of it; otherwise, as Christ is represented saying

to his Father, “My goodness extendeth not to thee”; thou art not the better for my suretyship engagements in covenant, and the performance of them; thou hast no real profit and advantage thereby; no new accession of glory and happiness accrues to thee by it; but the real profit and advantage resulting from hence is, “to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight”, Ps 16:2,3”. As for the glory promised to Christ, and which he expected and pleaded on his finishing his work, “John 17:4,5” this was either the manifestation of the glory of his divine Person, hid in his state of humiliation; or his glory as Mediator, his kingdom and glory, as such appointed to him, and promised him, upon the performance of his engagements, “Luke 22:29 1Pe 1:21 Heb 2:9” of which more hereafter; and yet, even the benefit of this redounds to the advantage of God’s elect, “John 17:22,24” it is their salvation and happiness that is the grand thing in view in these covenant transactions; this is “all my salvation”, 2Sa 23:5”. As the sum of the gospel, which is no other than a transcript of the covenant of grace, is the salvation of lost sinners by Christ; so the covenant, of which that is a copy, chiefly respects that, and that is the result of it: hence Christ, the Covenant, has the name of Jesus, because he undertook to save, and came to save, and has saved his people from their sins, in consequence of his covenant engagements.

{1} Called Hutchinsonians.

5. Of The Part Which The Father Takes In The Covenant.

The various parts which each contracting Party take in this covenant, are next to be considered.

The Father, the first person in the Trinity, takes the first place, and gives the lead in this covenant. “All things are of God”, that is, of God the Father; they are of him originally, they begin with him; all things in creation; he has made the world, and created all things by his Son; and so all things in

the salvation of men, “who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ”; he set on foot the council of peace, and so the covenant of peace, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself”; that is, God the Father; he planned the reconciliation of men in council, and proposed it in covenant, and settled it with the other two persons; and he is not only the proposer, but the prescriber and enjoiner of things in the covenant; he both proposed the work to be done, and took upon him the authority, by agreement, to prescribe and enjoin it: hence we read of the injunctions and commands laid on Christ with respect to his discharge of his office, as the mediator of this covenant, “John 10:18 12:49 14:31” it was the Father that called Christ from the womb of eternity to be his servant, and directed and enjoined his work and service, as appears from “Isa 49:1-6” and promised a reward to him on condition of his performing the service, and to bestow benefits on the elect in him, and for his sake. And let us,

1. First, Consider the work he proposed to Christ, which is the great and only condition of the covenant, and which he prescribed and enjoined him to do; which was,

1a. To take the care and charge of the chosen ones; these, as he chose them in him, he put them into his hands, not only as his property, but for their safety; and here they are safe, for none can pluck them out of his hands; hence they are called “the sheep of his hand”, not only because they are guided by his hand as a flock, but because they are under his care and custody; they were not only given him as his portion and inheritance, but to be kept and saved by him; when they were committed to him, he had this charge given to him by his Father, that “of all” that he had “given” him he “should lose nothing”, not anyone of them; they were told into his hands, and the full tale of them was expected to be returned: and which respects the whole of them, as their souls which he has redeemed, and does preserve, so their bodies likewise;

for the injunction was that he “should lose nothing”, no part of them, not even their dust in their graves, “but should raise it up again at the last day”, “John 6:39” as he will. God not only made a reserve of them in Christ for himself, but they were preserved in him, and therefore are called the “preserved of Israel”, “Jude 1:1 Isa 49:6” and that Christ, in a covenant way, by his own consent, was laid under such an obligation to keep and preserve the elect safe to glory, appears from his own account, both from what he says in his intercessory prayer; “those that thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost”, “John 17:12” and from what he will say at the last day, when they are all brought in; “Behold, I, and the children which God hath given me”, “Heb 2:13” all kept safe, and presented faultless; the kingdom of priests, the whole number of the chosen vessels of salvation, will be delivered up complete and perfect, agreeable to the charge committed to him, and his own voluntary undertakings.

1b. Whereas these same Persons made his care and charge, would fall in Adam, with the rest of mankind, and that into a state of sin and misery, and under the curse and condemnation of the law, he proposed it to him, and enjoined it as his will, that he should redeem them from all this; and hence agreeing to it, he was sent to do it, and has done it; this work, as proposed and prescribed in the covenant of grace, is expressed by various phrases, in “Isa 49:5,6” as by “bringing Jacob again to him”; by Jacob is meant the elect of God, especially among the Jews, the remnant according to the election of grace: and “bringing” them “again”, supposes they were gone aside, apostatized from God, and turned their backs on him, and were gone out of the right way, gone astray, and become lost sheep: and the work of Christ, as enjoined him in covenant, and he undertook, was to bring them unto God, and set them before him, to use Judah’s words, when he offered to be surety for Benjamin, Gen 43:9” to bring them

nigh to God; which he has done, by his obedience, sufferings, and death, Eph 2:13 1Pe 3:18” and also this work of Christ is expressed by “raising up the tribes of Jacob”; meaning the same persons sunk into a low estate through the fall, into an horrible pit, into the mire and clay, into a pit wherein is no water: out of this low estate Christ was to raise them, as he did, by the blood of the covenant, and made them kings and priests unto God; and likewise by “restoring the preserved of Israel”, even the same chosen ones, among the people of Israel; who, by the fall, lost their righteousness, and forfeited their happy life in innocence; these Christ was to recover from their fallen sinful estate, and restore them, as he has done, to a better righteousness, and to a life more abundant than what they lost, to an higher state of grace, glory, and happiness: and if this should be thought by Christ to be too “light” and too “low” a thing for him to be the Saviour of the elect among the Jews; it is farther proposed, that he should be “the light of the Gentiles”, and “the salvation” of God “unto the end of the earth”, be the Saviour of all God’s elect, both among Jews and Gentiles; not only to die for his people among the Jews, but to bring again, raise up, restore, and gather together the children of God, scattered abroad throughout the whole world; and be the propitiation, not for the sins of the chosen among the Jews only, but of those in the whole world of the Gentiles; so that this takes in the whole work of redemption and salvation, the work which Christ’s Father gave him to do, and which he undertook, and has finished, “John 17:4” and with respect to the Gentiles, as well as Jews, our Lord says, “Other sheep I have” to take care of, to lay down his life for, besides those among the Jews, “which are not of this fold”, of the Jewish church state, but out of it; the Gentiles, them also I must bring, bring them again, raise up, and restore, and set before his Father; bring them into his church, and among his people, into an open state of grace, and to eternal glory; and

this he says he must do, because his Father enjoined it, and he agreed to do it.

1c. In order to this, the Father proposed to the Son to assume human nature in the fulness of time, which was necessary to the work of redeeming the chosen people; as this was advised to in council, it was fixed in the covenant; “A body hast thou prepared me”, Heb 10:5” not only in the purposes and decrees of God, in the book of which “all the members of it were written, which, in continuance, were fashioned, when, as yet, there was none of them”, before they were in actual being, “Psalm 139:16” nor only in the prophecies of the Old Testament, in which it was foretold and promised, that the Messiah should become man, be the child born, and born of a virgin, and that the Man, the Branch, should grow up out of his place; but this was provided in covenant, not an human body only, nor an human soul only, but the whole human nature; which, though it had not a real and actual, yet had a covenant subsistence, as it may be called; that is to say, the Father proposing it, and the Son assenting, as he did, by the above words; there was an agreement, a Compact between them, that he should take into union with himself, a true body, and a reasonable soul; both which were necessary, to suffer the whole curse of the law; a true body, in which he might get his bread by the sweat of his brow, and suffer pains, sorrows, and death; bear the sins of many in it, and be offered up for them; and a reasonable soul, that he might endure the punishment of loss and sense; of loss, in being deprived for a while of the gracious presence of God, as when on the cross; of sense, in feeling the wrath poured into his soul, which made it exceeding sorrowful, as in the garden. And this nature proposed to be assumed, and was assumed, is of the same kind with that which sinned, and to which death was threatened, as it seems proper it should; the same flesh and blood with the children, and in which he was made like unto his brethren,

excepting sin; and to assume such a nature was necessary, that Christ might have somewhat to offer, that would be acceptable to God, and satisfactory to his justice; this was part of the will of God enjoined in covenant, and which Christ agreed to do; that whereas ceremonial sacrifices would be disapproved of by him, as insufficient to take away sin, he would assume the body, or human nature, prepared and provided in covenant for him, and offer it up, that sin might be condemned, and the righteousness of the law be fulfilled; for it is “by this will”, or the doing of it, that “we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”, “Heb 10:5-10 and this being the will of the Father, what he proposed and prescribed to be done; hence he is always represented as concerned in this affair: he promised to bring forth his Servant the Branch, the Man the Branch, that should grow out of its place; and he sent his Son, in the fulness of time, made of a woman, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, Zec 3:8 6:12 Rom 8:3 Gal 4:4.

1d. Another branch of the work assigned to Christ, in the covenant, by his Father, and to which he agreed, was to obey the law in the room and stead of his people; to which Christ has respect when he says, “thy law is within my heart”, or I am heartily willing and ready to obey and fulfill it; and which designs not only the law of mediation, or the command enjoined Christ as Mediator, with respect to the performance of his several offices as such: so with respect to his prophetic office Christ says, “The Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak--whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak”, “John 12:49,50”. And with respect to his priestly office, his laying down his life for his people; “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again; this commandment have I received of my Father”, Joh 10:18 14:31”. And with respect to his Kingly office; “I will declare

the decree”; that is, of his Father, the ordinance, statute, law, and rule of governing his people; for this refers not to what follows concerning the generation of Christ, but to what goes before, concerning his Kingly office: but also the moral law, which he agreed to be made under, and was willing to fulfill, and for which he came into the world, and did become the fulfilling end of it, whereby he magnified it, and made it honourable; as it became him to do, as the Surety of his people, and which was necessary to their justification; for “by the obedience of One, many are made righteous”, Rom 5:19.

1e. Another part of the work proposed to him, and enjoined him by his Father, was to suffer the penalty of the law, death; which must be endured, either by the sinner himself, the transgressor of the law, or by his Surety, “Gen 2:17” wherefore it became the wise, holy, and righteous Being, “for whom, and by whom, are all things--to make the Captain of salvation”, his Son, whom he appointed to be the Saviour of men, perfect through sufferings, for the satisfaction of law and justice; and therefore he enjoined him to bear them, “Heb 2:10” hence Christ says, speaking of laying down his life for the sheep, “This commandment have I received of my Father”, “John 10:18” and hence his sufferings are called, “the cup” which his Father had given him; not just then put into his hands, for he spake of it long before, as what he was to drink of; but was what was ordered him in the everlasting covenant, Joh 18:11 Matt 20:22” and hence also they are spoken of by all the prophets from the beginning of the world: and this being the Father’s will in covenant, hence likewise it is that the Father had so great an hand in them, to bruise him and put him to grief, to awake the sword of justice against him, and smite him; not to spare him, but deliver him up by his determinate counsel, into the hands of wicked men, and to death itself; and the covenant having somewhat of the nature of a testament, or of a man’s last will, there was a necessity of the death of the

testator to ratify and confirm it; which was to be done by the blood of Christ, called therefore, the blood of the everlasting covenant, Heb 9:15-17 13:20.

1f. When the Father signified in covenant, his dislike of the continuance of legal sacrifices, as insufficient to take away sin; he strongly suggested it was his will that his Son should become a sacrifice for it, and therefore prepared him a body, or human nature, in the covenant, capable of being offered up; and it was by his will expressed therein, that his covenant people are sanctified through the offering up of the body of Christ, Heb 10:5-10". This is the great condition of the covenant, and on which all the blessings of it depend: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin", or rather, "When his soul shall make an offering for sin"; that is, when he shall heartily and willingly offer up himself, soul and body, a sacrifice for sin, then the benefits following should be conferred both on Christ, and on his spiritual seed, Isa 53:10-12. And,

1g. Farther, it was the will of the Father, in the covenant, that Christ should hereby make atonement for the sins of the chosen ones; this was the work which was assigned him in covenant, and is marked out in prophecy for him to do; namely, "To finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity", "Dan 9:24" and as he agreed to do it, for this purpose he became man, and by his bloodshed, sufferings, and death, has made it; which lays a foundation of solid joy in his people, Heb 2:17 9:26 10:14 Rom 5:10, 11".

1h. In close connection with the former, his work assigned him in covenant was, to bring in everlasting righteousness, for the justification of the elect. God the Father in covenant, "called him in righteousness", or "to righteousness", to work out a righteousness for his people, commensurate to the demands of law and justice; and this call and proposal he

answered and agreed to; hence the church of old could say, “Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength”; and by virtue of the suretyship righteousness of Christ, and his engagements in covenant, all the Old Testament saints were justified, Isa 42:6 45:24,25”.

1i. Lastly, The work which the Father proposed to, and prescribed to the Son was, “to feed the flock of slaughter”; to which he replied, “I will feed the flock of slaughter”; even all the elect of God, “Zech 11:4,7” and this feeding the flock committed to his charge, takes in his whole work as a shepherd; taking care of his sheep, laying down his life for them, gathering the lambs in his arms, carrying them in his bosom, gently leading those with young, protecting them from all harms and enemies, bringing them into his fold here and above, setting them at his right hand, and introducing them into his kingdom and glory. This is the work that was before him; and his reward was with him, next to be observed, “Isa 40:10,11”.

2. Secondly, On condition of Christ’s engaging to do the above work proposed and prescribed to him, the Father promised in the covenant many things; some to him personally, and others to the elect, whom he represented and represented in it.

2a. Some things to himself, respecting his work, assistance in it, &c. a glory on the nature in which he should do it, the honourable offices he should be invested with in it, and the numerous offspring he should have.

2a1. As the work assigned him was to be done in human nature, which needed qualifications for it, strength to do it, help and assistance in it, support under it, preservation from enemies, and encouragement of success: all this was promised him, that as his human nature should be formed by the Holy Ghost without sin, so it should be filled with his gifts and graces; that the Spirit should be put upon him, and rest on

him, as a Spirit of wisdom, counsel, might, knowledge, and of the fear of God, whereby he would be qualified to execute his offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, Isa 11:1,2 Isa 42:1 61:1 and which was bestowed upon him without measure, Ps 45:7 Joh 3:34 and that whereas the human nature, in which this work was to be done, would be attended with weakness, with all the sinless infirmities of human nature, as it was at last crucified through weakness; God promised to strengthen him, and he believed he would be his strength, and, accordingly, he was the Man of his right hand, whom he made strong for himself, Ps 89:21 Isa 49:5 Ps 80:17 and that, as he would need help and assistance in that nature, it was promised him, and he expected it, asked for it, and had it, Ps 22:1,19 Isa 50:7,8 49:8 and as it would want support, under the mighty load of sin, and sense of wrath, that it might not sink under it, this was promised and granted; so that he failed not, nor was he discouraged or broken, Isa 42:1,4 and as it would have many enemies, who would seek to take its life away before its time; God promised that he would keep and preserve him, and hide him in the shadow of his hand, and in his quiver, and so secure him, as he did from Herod, and the wicked Jews, Isa 42:6 Isa 49:2,6 and since he would be treated with great contempt in that nature, be despised by men, abhorred by the nation of the Jews, and be a servant of rulers; he was told, for his encouragement, that the Lord would choose him, and express delight and pleasure in him as his elect: and though disallowed of men, would be chosen of God, and precious, Isa 42:1 49:7 and accordingly, delight and well pleased-ness in him were expressed by his Father, when both obeying and suffering, Mt 3:17 Joh 10:17 yea, success in his work was promised him, that “the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand”; that is, the work of the Lord be succeeded, which it was his will and pleasure to put into his hand. Now all was promised him in covenant, as an encouragement to engage in

this work.

2a2. As he was to do and suffer much in his human nature, so it was promised him, that he should have a very great glory conferred on him in that nature; not only that the glory of his Deity should be manifested and displayed, which was hid, especially from many, during his state of humiliation; for which, when he had done his work, he may be thought to pray, pleading a promise made to him, “John 17:4,5”. But there was a glory to be put on his human nature, which was promised in the everlasting covenant, and which he had with his Father, in promise, before the world was; hence the prophesies of the Old Testament, which are founded on covenant engagements, speak, as of the sufferings of Christ, so of the glory that should follow, and of Christ’s entering through sorrows and sufferings, into his kingdom and glory; and Christ believed and expected that he should be “glorious”, notwithstanding all his meanness in a state of humiliation, “Isa 49:5 Lu 24:26” particularly it was promised him, that though he should die and be laid in the grave, yet that he should not lie so long as to see corruption, but be raised again the third day, as he was, and so had the glory given him, and which he had faith and hope of, Ps 16:9-11 1Pe 1:21” as also, that he should ascend to heaven, and receive gifts for men, or in man, in human nature; and accordingly he did ascend above all heavens, to fill all things, and gave the gifts to men he received, and that in a very extraordinary manner; whereby it appeared he was glorified, as was promised him, because the Spirit was not given in such a plentiful manner till Jesus was glorified, exalted at the right hand of God, and made and declared Lord and Christ, Ps 68:18 Eph 4:8-10 Joh 7:39 Ac 2:32,36”. Moreover, it was promised him, that in human nature he should sit at the right hand of God; a glory and honour which none of the angels was ever admitted to; but, in consideration of his obedience, sufferings, and death, he was highly exalted,

as it was promised he should, and a name given him above every name; being placed on the right hand of God, angels, authorities, and powers being made subject unto him! Ps 110:1 Heb 1:13 Php 2:7-9 1Pe 3:22 and now he is seen crowned with glory and honour, and will come a second time in his own glory, and in his Father's glory, and in the glory of the holy angels, all according to the covenant agreement. In a word, it was promised him in covenant: on condition of making his soul an offering for sin, among other things, that God would "divide him a portion with the great"; give him as large and ample a portion, yea, a larger one, than any of the great men of the earth: that he would make him his firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth: and that he should "divide the spoil with the strong", or take the prey out of the hands of the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive; which spoil and prey being taken out of the hands of the strong, should be his portion and inheritance; and that because he poured out his soul unto death, was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sins of many, "Isa 53:12".

2a3. As an encouragement to Christ to engage in the above work proposed to him in covenant, it was promised him, that he should be invested with, and sustain several honourable offices, which he should execute in human nature; as, that he should be the great Prophet of the church; not only "the minister of the circumcision for the truth of God" to the Jews, but be "for a light of the Gentiles"; which is twice promised, where plain traces of this everlasting covenant are to be seen, Isa 42:6 49:6 and he accordingly was expected to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of the people of Israel, "Luke 2:32" and he was so, by the ministry of his apostles, in the Gentile world, and still is, by the preaching of his ministers in it; whereby men are turned from darkness to light, and to show forth the praises of him who has called them out of the one to the other, 1Pe 2:9 Eph

2:17 Ac 26:18. It was also promised, and swore to by an oath in covenant, that he should be a Priest; an honour which no man takes to himself, but he that is called to it, as was Aaron; even Christ glorified not himself, to be called an High Priest; but his Father, who invested him with this office, by an oath, to show the immutability of it; and that he should continue in it, and be a priest on his throne, Ps 110:4 Heb 5:4,5 7:21 Zec 6:13. Likewise, that he should be King of Zion, of saints, over his church and people, and have a kingdom very large, from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth; of which government, and the increase of it, there should be no end; a dispensatory kingdom, besides that of nature and providence, which he had a right to, as a divine Person; but this is a kingdom disposed of to him in covenant and by promise; “I appoint unto you a kingdom”, says Christ, “as my Father hath appointed me”, ~dieqeto~, has disposed of or appointed in covenant to me, “Luke 22:29”. Once more, God has appointed him in covenant to be the judge of quick and dead; and has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he has ordained; and accordingly, he has committed all judgment to him, that all men should honour him as they honour the Father, Ac 10:42 17:31 Joh 5:22,23”.

2a4. In consequence of fulfilling the condition of the covenant, engaging to do, and doing the above work proposed in it; it was promised to Christ, that he should “see his seed, and prolong his days”, “Isa 53:10” that is, that he should have a spiritual offspring, a seed that should serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation; that he should be an everlasting Father to them, and they be his everlasting children; that as the first Adam was the common parent, and federal head of all his posterity, who sinning, conveyed sin and death to them; so the second Adam becomes the Father and federal Head of a spiritual offspring, and conveys grace,

righteousness, and life unto them: it was promised him, that this seed of his should be numerous, and continue long; yea, that these children should endure for ever, and his throne be as the days of heaven; and that these should be his portion, and his inheritance; not only the elect among the Jews, but those among the Gentiles also; and therefore he was bid to ask of his Father in covenant, and he would “give” him “the heathen for his inheritance”, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession; which accordingly he asked, and has, and is well pleased with his portion, and says, the lines are fallen to him in pleasant places, and he has a goodly heritage, Isa 9:6 Ps 22:30 Ps 89:29,36 2:8 16:6” yea, it was promised him, that all persons and things should be put into his hands, to subserve his mediatorial interest, and the good of his spiritual seed, his covenant people; even all the wicked of the earth, whom he disposes of as he pleases, and rules with a rod of iron: he is given to be an Head over all things to the church; for its preservation and security; and has power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; and accordingly all things are put into his hand, and all creatures are at his dispose; all power in heaven and in earth is given unto him, so that he can order and appoint whatsoever he pleases for the good of his people, “Psalm 2:9 Eph 1:22 Joh 17:2 3:35 Mt 28:18”.

2b. There are other things which God the Father promised in covenant, respecting the elect, the persons for whom Christ was a covenantee, and whom he represented in the covenant, and for whose sake he was to do all the work proposed to him, and which he undertook. And,

2b1. It was promised, that upon Christ’s engaging in, and performing the work of redemption, they should be delivered out of that state of misery sin brought them into, even out of the pit wherein is no water, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, “Zech 9:11” that they should be redeemed from

all their iniquities, original and actual, which should be cast behind God's back, and into the depths of the sea, never to be seen and remembered more to their condemnation, "Psalm 130:8" that they should be ransomed from the hand of Satan, stronger than they, and the prey be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered, Jer 31:11 Isa 49:24,25" that they should be freed from the law, its curse and condemnation, Christ being made a curse for them, and sin condemned in his flesh, "Rom 8:1,3,33 Gal 3:13 and that they should be secured from hell, wrath, ruin, and everlasting destruction their sins deserved, "Job 33:24".

2b2. That upon the faithful discharge of his office, as a Servant, particularly in bearing the sins of his people, they should be openly justified and acquitted; that his righteousness he would bring in, should be made known unto them, and received by faith; and so they should be manifestatively, and in their own consciences, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, Isa 53:11 1Co 6:11 Eze 36:25.

2b3. That all their iniquities should be forgiven them, for Christ's sake, and their sins and transgressions be remembered no more. This is a special and particular article in the covenant, to which all the prophets bear witness, Jer 31:34 Ac 10:43.

2b4. That they should be openly adopted, and declared the children of God, and be dealt with as such; that God should be their God, their Father, their Portion, and Inheritance; and they should be his people, his children, and heirs of him, and be treated as such by him; as they would be when chastised for their sins, the rod being provided for them in covenant, as well as their inheritance, Jer 32:38 2Co 6:18 Ps 89:30,34 Heb 12:7".

2b5. That they should be regenerated, their hearts spiritually circumcised to love the Lord, and his fear put into them, and be made willing in the day of his power upon them,

to be saved by him, and to serve him, “Deut 30:6 Jer 32:39 Ps 110:3 that they should be made new creatures, have new hearts and new spirits put within them, in which are new principles of light, life, and love, grace and holiness, joy, peace, and comfort; that the stony heart should be taken out of them, the hardness and impenitence of it removed, and an heart of flesh given them, soft, penitent, and contrite; or, in other words, that true, spiritual, evangelical repentance for sin should be granted to them, “Eze 36:26.

2b6. That they should have knowledge of God, as their covenant God and Father; even the least, as well as the greatest, be all taught of God, as his children, and so believe in Christ; for those that hear and learn of the Father, come to Christ; that is, believe in him, Jer 31:34 Isa 54:13 Joh 6:45”. So that repentance and faith are not terms and conditions of the covenant, but are free grace gifts granted, and blessings of grace promised in the covenant, and are as sure to the covenant people, as any other blessings whatever, “Acts 11:18 5:31 Eph 2:8”.

2b7. It is another promise in this covenant, that the law of God should be put into their inward parts, and written on their hearts; that they should have a spiritual knowledge of it, and a cordial respect unto it, a real delight in it, and serve it with their minds and spirits, and yield a constant, ready, and cheerful obedience to it, Jer 31:33 Rom 7:22,25 as well as by the epistles of Christ, and have the law of faith, or doctrine of the gospel, take place in their hearts, and dwell richly in them, and they yield a professed subjection to it.

2b8. It is further promised by the Lord, in this covenant, that whereas they are weak and strengthless, and unable to do any thing spiritually good of themselves, that he will put his Spirit within them, who should work in them both to will and to do; and strengthen them with strength in the inward man, and enable them to walk in his statutes, and to keep his

judgments, and do them, “Eze 36:27” so that likewise new spiritual and evangelical obedience, both to law and gospel, is no term and condition of the covenant, but a blessing secured in it, which absolutely provides with grace and strength to perform it.

2b9. Another article in this covenant, respecting the chosen and covenant people, is, that they shall persevere in grace, in faith, and holiness, to the end; this is absolutely promised in it, and the faithfulness of God is engaged to perform it; “I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me”, “Jer 31:40 1Th 5:23, 24.

2b10. Glory, as well as grace, is promised in this covenant; and to whom God gives the one, he gives the other; eternal life was promised before the world began; and the promise of it was made unto Christ in the everlasting covenant, and put into his hands for his people; and it is represented as if it was the only promise in it, being the grand, principal, and comprehensive one; “This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life”, “Titus 1:2 2Ti 1:1 1Jo 2:25 hence our Lord, in an authoritative way, as it were, demands the glorification of ALL the Father has given him, and he undertook for in covenant, “John 17:24”.

6. Of The Part The Son Of God, The Second Person, Plays In The Covenant.

The part which the Son of God takes, and the place and office he has in the covenant of grace, are next to be considered. Christ has so great a concern in the covenant, that he is said to be the Covenant itself; “I will give thee for a Covenant of the people”, Isa 42:6 49:8 his work, that which was proposed to him, and he agreed to do, is, as has been observed, the grand condition of the covenant, and he himself is the great blessing of it; he is the Alpha and the Omega, as of the scriptures, so of the covenant of grace; he is the first

and the last in it, the sum and substance of it; he is everything, ALL in ALL in it; all the blessings of it are the sure mercies of him, who is David, and David's Son; he is prevented with all the blessings of goodness, and the covenant people are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, as their covenant head; all the promises are made to him, and are all yea and amen in him; he sustains various characters and offices in the covenant. He is the representative Head of his people in it; he is the Mediator, Surety, Testator, and Messenger of it; of all which, more particularly and distinctly hereafter. At present I shall only observe Christ's assent to his Father's proposals, his acceptance of them, and open declaration of his readiness and willingness to act according to them, which formally constitute the covenant and compact between them; his consent thereunto is fully expressed in "Psalm 40:6-8". "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering, and sin offering, hast thou not required. Then said I Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God! yea, thy law is within my heart". Which words, though spoken and written by David, yet as representing the Messiah, as is certain from the application of them to him by the apostle, in Heb 10:5-10" according to whom, the time when these words were spoken, was when "he cometh into the world", that is, at his incarnation, when he came from heaven to earth, by the assumption of human nature, to do the will and work of his Father, which he proposed unto him; then he said all the above in fact, what he had before said in word, in promise; "Lo, I come to do thy will"; for that this was said before is plain, since it was known to David, in his time, and written by him, as the penman of the Holy Ghost, and as representing Christ, and was repeated and confirmed by Christ at his coming into the world: and when could it be said before, but in the covenant of grace? Likewise it appears, that this was

said on the account of the insufficiency of legal sacrifices to atone for sin; in proof of which the apostle quotes the words, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin"; wherefore---he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not", &c. that is, though they were the institutions and appointment of God, yet he would not have them continued any longer than the coming of Christ, because of the weakness and unprofitableness of them to take away sin, and because they were to have, and had, their accomplishment in him; in the foreviews of which this was said in David's time, and earlier by Christ, in the covenant of grace; in which, knowing his Father's will concerning sacrifices, and their continuance, as well as the insufficiency of them, freely declared that he was ready to come, in the fulness of time, and give himself an offering for sin; as his Father had proposed to him he should, "Isa 53:10". This assent and consent of his is first more obscurely and figuratively expressed; "Mine ears hast thou opened", digged or bored; expressive of his great attention, hearkening and listening with great diligence, to what his Father proposed to him; see "Isa 50:4,5" and of his ready and cheerful obedience to his Father's will, signified thereby: the phrase seems to be used in allusion to the boring the servant's ear, who cared not to quit his master's house, but was willing to serve him for ever, "Ex 21:5,6" the Septuagint, and so the apostle render the words, "A body hast thou prepared me"; a part being put for the whole; and which is supposed; for the ear could not be opened, unless a body was prepared; by which is meant, not a part, but the whole of the human nature, soul and body; prepared, not only in the purposes and decrees of God, but in the covenant of grace, where it had a covenant subsistence, by the joint agreement of the divine Persons; for as the Father proposed it to the Son, that he should have such a nature, he agreed to assume it, and therefore takes up these words, to show his ready assent to it; "A body hast thou

prepared me”; as it is thy pleasure I should have one, I am ready to take it, at a proper time; that I might have something to offer, an offering of more avail, and more acceptable, than the legal ones. This acceptance of his Father’s proposals is more clearly and fully expressed; “Lo, I come to do thy will”; that is, to assume human nature, to lay down his life in it, to suffer death, make atonement for the sins of his people, and obtain their redemption and salvation: his willingness to do all this freely, and without compulsion; he himself, and not another, and immediately, as soon as ever it should be necessary; he declares, with a note of admiration, attention, and asseveration; and his heartiness in it is still more fully signified, by saying, “I delight to do thy will”; it was with the utmost pleasure and complacency that he complied with it, and it would be his meat and drink, as it was, to do it: and it is added; “Yea, thy law is within my heart”; it is in my heart to fulfill it; I am ready to yield a cordial and cheerful obedience to it. Now all this was “written” concerning him “in the volume of the book”; not of the scriptures in general only, nor of the Pentateuch in particular, the only volume extant in David’s time, at the head and beginning of which is a declaration of the grace, will, and work of Christ, Ge 3:15 nor only of the book of God’s purposes, Ps 139:16 but of the covenant; alluding to the writing, signing, and sealing of covenants; the covenant at Sinai is called, the book of the covenant, Ex 24:8. Now in this volume, or book, as the Father’s proposal is there written and contained, so is the Son’s assent unto it, and acceptance of it. Add to all this, that the Character in which Christ here addresses his divine Father, “My God”, is a phrase expressive of covenant relation, and is frequently so used both with regard to Christ and his people. But, to observe no more, nothing more fully proves Christ’s free and full assent and consent to do the will of his Father, proposed in covenant, than his actual performance of it. Was it his will that he should take the care

and charge of all his elect, and lose none? he has done it, Joh 17:12. Was it his will that he should assume human nature? the Word has been made flesh, and dwelt among men, Joh 1:14. Was it his will that he should obey the law? he is become the end of the law for righteousness, Ro 10:4. Was it his will that he should suffer death, the penalty of it? he has suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God, 1Pe 3:18. Was it his will that he should make himself an offering for sin? he has given himself to God, an Offering and a Sacrifice, of a sweet smelling savour, Eph 5:2. In a word, Was it his will that he should redeem his people from all their iniquities? Yes, he has obtained an eternal redemption of them, Heb 9:12.

7. Of Christ, The Mediator Of The Covenant.

Another relation, or office, which Christ bears in the covenant, is that of Mediator; three times in the epistle to the Hebrews is he called the Mediator of the new, or better covenant or testament, “Heb 8:6 9:15 12:24” the same with the everlasting covenant, only so called in reference to a former administration of it. The apostle Paul asserts, that there is “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”, “#1Ti 2:5”. Both Jews and Gentiles have a notion of a Mediator; the Jews {1} call the Messiah ^{^aeuma^}, the Mediator, or middle one; and so Philo the Jew {2}, speaks of the most ancient Word of God, as ^{~mesoV~}, a middle Person between God and men, not unbegotten as God, nor begotten as man, but the middle of the extremes, one between both. The Persians {3} call their God Mithras, ^{~mesithV~}, a Mediator; and the Demons, with the heathens, seem to be, according to them, mediators between the superior gods and men; but we have a more sure word of prophecy to direct us in this matter; Christ is the one and only Mediator. It will be proper to enquire,

1. First, In what sense Christ is the mediator of the covenant; not as Moses, who stood between God and the

people of Israel, “to show” them “the word of the Lord”, “Deut 5:5” to receive the law, the lively oracles, and deliver them to them, said to be ordained, or disposed by angels, in the hand of a mediator, supposed to be Moses, “Gal 3:19”. Christ indeed is the revealer and declarer of his Father’s mind and will, and the dispenser of the covenant of grace in the different administrations of it, in each of the periods of time; but this more properly belongs to him as the “angel” or “messenger of the covenant”, as he is called, “#Malachi 3:1” than the mediator of it. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation; such an one as interposes between two parties at variance, in order to bring them together, and in some way or other reconcile them to each other. “A mediator is not of one”, of one party; for where there is but one party there can be no difference, and so no need of a mediator; but “God is one”, he is one party, the offended party, and man is the other, the offending party; and Christ is the mediator between them both to bring them together, who are through sin at as great distance as earth and heaven; and he is the antitype of Jacob’s ladder, that reaches both and joins them together; the daysman between them, who lays his hand on them both, and makes peace between them; and so a learned Grecian {4} interprets the word for “mediator”, “a peacemaker”; and this work he performs not merely by way of intreaty, as one man may intreat another to lay aside his resentment against an offender, and not pursue him to his destruction, which lies in his power; or as Moses intreated God with great vehemence and importunity to forgive the Israelites, or blot him out of his book; for however commendable this may be for one man to intercede with another, or with God for an offender, in such a manner; yet it seems too low and mean an office for Christ the Son of God, barely to intreat his Father to lay aside the marks of his displeasure against a sinner, and not so honourable for God to grant it, without satisfaction; wherefore Christ acts

the part of a mediator, by proposing to his Father to make satisfaction for the offence committed, and so appease injured justice. Christ is a mediator of reconciliation in a way of satisfaction; reconciliation in this way is Christ's great work as mediator; this is what was proposed in covenant, and what he therein agreed to do, and therefore is called the mediator of the covenant.

Reconciliation supposes a former state of friendship, a breach of that friendship, and a renewal of it; or a bringing into open friendship again. Man in a state of innocence was in a state of friendship with God, had many high honours and special favours conferred upon him; being made after the image and likeness of God, had all the creatures put in subjection to him, was placed in a delightful garden, had a right to eat of the fruit of all the trees in it but one; to him the creatures were brought to give them names, and an help meet was provided for him; but man being in this honour abode not long, sin soon separated chief friends, and he was drove out of his paradisaical Eden; and appeared to be, as all his posterity are, not only at a distance from God, and alienation to him, but enmity against him, as the carnal mind of man is; and in this state the elect of God were considered, when Christ undertook in covenant to be the mediator of reconciliation for them; and in this condition he found them, when he came to make actual reconciliation for them; "you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled", Col 1:21" and hereby has brought them into an open state of grace and favour with God; into greater nearness to him, and into a more exalted state of friendship with him than was lost by the fall.

It should be observed, that the elect of God are considered in the covenant of grace as fallen creatures; and that Christ being a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction for them, supposes them such. In the covenant of works there was no

mediator; while that covenant remained unbroken, and man continued in a state of integrity, he needed none; he could correspond and converse with God without one; though he might have knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, and second person in the Trinity, which was necessary to his worship of him, yet he knew nothing of him as mediator, nor needed him as such; he could hear the voice of God, and abide in his presence without fear or shame; it was after he had sinned, and not before, that he hid himself among the trees, on hearing the voice of God: nor is there any mediator for angels, none was provided, nor admitted, for the fallen angels, they were not spared; and the good angels needed not any, having never sinned; they are admitted into the divine presence without a mediator to introduce them; they stand before God, and behold his face continually. Some have thought that Christ is the medium of union of angels with God, and of elect men, chosen in Christ, and considered as unfallen, which I will not object to; but a mediator of reconciliation and satisfaction, Christ is only to fallen men, and they needed one; a reconciliation was necessary, and without such a mediator the purposes of God concerning elect men, the covenant of grace made on their account, the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the salvation of men could not have been accomplished; nor the perfections of God, particularly his justice and holiness, glorified in it.

Sin has been committed, which is offensive to God, provoking to the eyes of his glory, and deserving of his wrath, even of eternal death; the law broken, which reflects dishonour on the lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy; justice injured and affronted, and which insisted on making a satisfaction, and that nothing less than perfect obedience to the law, and a bearing the penalty of it; fallen man could not make his peace with God, nor reconcile himself to him on such terms; Christ, as mediator of the covenant, undertook to

make reconciliation for elect men; and God set him and sent him forth to be, and he is become the propitiation for their sins; and God is pacified towards them for all that they have done, and has taken away all his wrath, and turned himself from the fierceness of his anger, and removed all the visible marks and effects of his displeasure.

Nor is this reconciliation Christ is the mediator of, as thus stated, any contradiction to the everlasting love of God to his elect in Christ; where there is the strongest love among men, when an offence is committed, there is need of reconciliation to be made. David had the strongest affection for his son Absalom as can well be imagined; Absalom committed a very heinous offence, murdered his brother Amnon, David's firstborn, and heir to his crown; he fled from justice, and from his father's wrath and vengeance he might justly fear; Joab became a mediator between them, first more secretly, by means of the woman of Tekoah, and then more openly in his own person, and succeeded so far as to obtain leave that the young man be called from his exile; nevertheless, when returned, David would not admit him into his presence until two years after, when, and not before, a full and open reconciliation was made and declared; and yet all this while the heart of David was towards his son, and continued, even notwithstanding his unnatural rebellion against him. And so the love of God to his people is from everlasting to everlasting, invariably the same: with him there is no shadow of turning; there is no change in God, as not from love to hatred, so not from hatred to love; he is in one mind, and none can turn him, no, not Christ himself; nor was it the work of Christ's mediation, nor the design of it, to turn the heart of God; for that proceeded according to the unalterable and unchangeable will of God; nor did the mediation of Christ procure, nor was it intended to procure the love and favour of God to his elect; so far from it, that itself is the fruit and

effect of that love, Joh 3:16 Ro 5:8 1Jo 4:10". It was love that set forth and sent forth Christ to be the propitiation for sin; it was owing to the good will and free favour of God, that a Mediator was admitted for sinful men; and it appeared still greater, in providing one to be a Mediator of reconciliation for them; and the reconciliation the scriptures speak of, as made by the blood, sufferings, and death of Christ, is not a reconciliation of God to them, as to his love, but justice; but a reconciliation of them to God; and that not so much of their persons, which are always acceptable and well pleasing to God, as considered in Christ, in whom they were chosen, as for their sins, Ro 5:10 2Co 5:19 Col 1:20,21 Heb 2:17 and which is no other than a satisfaction for them to divine justice; for the reconciliation of their persons in that way, is not to the love and affections of God, from which they were never separated, but to the justice of God, offended by their sins; and the whole is a reconciliation of the divine perfections to each other in the business of salvation; for though these agree among themselves, yet with respect to that, had different claims to make; the love and grace of God pleaded for mercy, and mercy pleaded for itself, that it might be shown to the objects of love; but justice insisted on it, that satisfaction be made for the offences committed; the difficulty was how to answer each of these pleas; Christ interposed, and offered himself in the covenant, to be a Mediator of reconciliation, or to make satisfaction for sin; and so mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Reconciliation then is the principal branch of Christ's office in the covenant as Mediator. Another follows, namely,

His intercession, or advocacy, which proceeds upon reconciliation or satisfaction made; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our sins", 1Jo 2:1,2 and it is his being the Propitiation for sin, that is the foundation of his advocacy,

or on which is grounded his plea for the remission of it; he is the Angel of God's presence, who always appears there for his people, and ever lives to make intercession for them; he is first the Mediator of reconciliation, and then of intercession; as they are reconciled to God by his sufferings and death, they are saved through his interceding life. He is called the Angel of God's presence, not only because he enjoys it himself; but because he introduces his people into it, and presents their petitions to God, offers up the prayers of all saints, perfumed with the much incense of his mediation; through which they become acceptable to God. Christ is the medium of access to God, to the throne of his grace; there is no drawing nigh of sinful men to God without a Mediator, without him he is a consuming fire; no man can come to the Father but by Christ; he is the only Way, the new and the living Way; and through him, his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, there is access with boldness and confidence. And he is the medium of acceptance, both of persons and services, which are only accepted in the Beloved, and become acceptable through his prevalent mediation and intercession; and he is the medium of conveyance of all the blessings of the covenant of grace to his people, which are all communicated in virtue of his advocacy for them; and he is the medium of the saints' communion and fellowship with God now, as he will be the medium of their glory and happiness to all eternity. The next thing to be considered is,

2. Secondly, The fitness of Christ for his work and office, as the Mediator of the covenant; since a mediator was necessary, and he must be one of the divine Persons in the Trinity; the Son of God being the middle Person in it, seems most proper and suitable to preserve the order, name, and place of the Persons in it: it does not seem so decent, that the first Person should be a Mediator to the second; but rather, since, as Dr. Goodwin expresses it, the suit of trespass was commenced,

and ran in the name of the Father, of the first Person for the rest; it seems most agreeable that the reconciliation be made to him by one of the other Persons; and since the second Person bears the name of a Son, as the first of a Father, it seems most in character that the Son should mediate with the Father, than the Father with the Son; and since it was proper that the Mediator should become the Son of man, as will be seen hereafter, it seems most agreeable, that he who is the Son of God should become the Son of man; otherwise there would be two Sons in the Trinity, or two Persons so called: and for the first or third Person to become a Mediator between God and man, does not seem so becoming, as he who is the second or middle Person among them. But the principal fitness of Christ for his office, as Mediator, at least for the execution of it, lies in the union of the two natures, human and divine, in his one Person; whereby he is the Immanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh; and as he partakes of both natures, he has an interest in, and a concern for both; he is fit to be a Mediator between God and man; both to take care of things pertaining to God and his glory, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

2a. It was requisite that he should be man, assume human nature into union with his divine Person, even a true body, and a reasonable soul.

2a1. That he might be related to those he was a Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of; that he might be their brother, their near kinsman, their God, and so have an apparent right to redeem them, as the near kinsman, according to the law, had, “Lev 25:48,49”.

2a2. That sin might be satisfied for, and reconciliation be made for it, in the same nature which sinned; and whereas, according to the scheme of mediation and salvation by Christ, the same individuals that sinned were not to suffer; it seems requisite and reasonable that an individual of that nature

should, in their room and stead, that so it might come as near to what the law required as could be, “Gen 2:17”.

2a3. It was proper that the Mediator should be capable of obeying the law, broken by the sin of man: as a divine Person could not be subject to the law, and yield obedience to it; and had he assumed the angelic nature, that would not have been capable of obeying all the precepts of the law, which are required of men; and universal perfect obedience was necessary for the justification of a sinner before God; hence Christ was made of a woman, that he might be made under the law, and yield obedience to it; by which obedience men are made righteous in the sight of God, Ga 4:4 Ro 5:19”.

2a4. It was meet the Mediator should be man, that he might be capable of suffering death; as God he could not die, and had he assumed the nature of an angel, that is incapable of dying; and yet suffering the penalty of the law, death, was necessary to make reconciliation; a sacrifice for sin was to be offered, and therefore it was proper Christ should have somewhat to offer; even a true body, and a reasonable soul, Which he did offer; peace was to be made by blood, and reconciliation by the sufferings of death, and therefore a nature must be assumed capable of shedding blood, and of suffering death; and without which he could not be made sin, and a curse for men, as the law required he should. In a word, it was highly becoming, that the Captain of our salvation should be made perfect through suffering, that he might be a perfect Saviour, which could not be, without the assumption of human nature; see “Heb 2:10,14,15 5:9 8:3”.

2a5. It was fit the Mediator should be man, that he might be a merciful, as well as a faithful High Priest, have a fellow feeling with his people, and sympathise with them under all their temptations, afflictions, and distresses, and succour and relieve them, from love and affection to them, as their friend and brother, “Heb 2:17,18 4:15.

2a6. It was necessary that he should be holy and righteous, free from all sin, original and actual, that he might offer himself without spot to God, take away the sins of men, and be an advocate for them, Heb 7:26 9:14 1Jo 3:5 2:1” but it was not enough to be truly man, and an innocent person; he must be more than a man, to be a mediator between God and man; it was requisite, therefore,

2b. That he should be God as well as man.

2b1. That he might be able to draw nigh to God, and treat with him about terms of peace, and covenant with him; all which a mere man could not do; and therefore it is with wonder said, and as expressive of the arduousness of the task, of the difficulty of the work, and of the necessity of a divine Person to do it; “Who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?” “Jer 30:21” to mediate between him and sinful men, to lay his hands on both, and reconcile them together; none but Jehovah’s fellow could or dared to do this.

2b2. That he might give virtue and value to his obedience and sufferings; for if he had been a mere man, his obedience and righteousness would not have been sufficient to justify men, nor his sufferings and death a proper sacrifice and atonement for sin. But being God as well as man, his righteousness is the righteousness of God; and so sufficient to justify all that believe in him, and them from all their sins; and his blood is the blood of the Son of God, and so cleanses from all sin, and is a proper atonement for it.

2b3. Being Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour, it naturally and necessarily leads men to put their trust and confidence in him, and rely upon him, for peace, pardon, and salvation; whereas, if he was a mere man, and not God, this would entail a curse upon them; “for cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm”, “Jer 17:5” and even to worship and adore him, and ascribe divine honour and glory to him; which to do would be idolatry, was he not God; for though he that is

Mediator is to be worshipped by angels and men, yet not as mediator, but as God; for it is his Deity that is the foundation of worship, and renders him the proper object of it; God will “not give” his “glory to another”, Isa 42:8 not even the glory of being a Mediator to any other but a divine Person; for of Christ, in his mediatorial capacity, are the words spoken, as appears from the whole preceding context: it is necessary that the Mediator should be God, that he might be the proper object of trust, worship, honour, and glory divine.

Nor is it any objection to his being a Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then the Father and the Spirit would be Mediators too, the divine nature being common to them all; since it is not in the divine nature, essentially considered, but as it subsists in the second Person, the Son of God, that Christ is Mediator, and performs his office; and to exercise this office in it, is no lessening and degrading of his Person, since it is a glory that none but a divine Person is fit to bear: and it may be observed, that among men this office is sometimes assumed and exercised by one superior to either of the parties between whom he mediates; and though the Father may be said to be greater than Christ, considered in his office capacity, yet this does not suppose any subjection and inferiority of his divine Person: nor is it any objection to Christ being Mediator, as to his divine nature, that then he must be a Mediator to himself, or reconcile men to himself; for not to observe, that Christ in his office may be distinguished from himself, as a divine Person; as one may be distinguished from himself as to different circumstances of age, office, &c. there is no impropriety that Christ is a Mediator for himself, or has made reconciliation and satisfaction to himself; for if the Father may be said to reconcile men to himself by his Son, as in 2Co 5:18,19 Col 1:20” why may not the Son be said to reconcile men to himself, as God, by his sufferings and death as man? There is no impropriety, that if a man has offended a society

of men, one of that society should take upon him to be a mediator for him, and reconcile him to that society, though he himself is a part of it, and as such, equally offended as they: or, still nearer to the case in hand, supposing a rebellion in a nation, against the king of it, and this king should have a son, who is near to his throne, and so must be equally offended with the rebels as his father, and yet should take upon him to be a mediator between his father and the rebels, and make peace between them; where would be the impropriety of it, though he himself, with his father, is the party offended?

The mediation of Christ thus stated, meets with and militates against two errors; one of those, who say he is only a Mediator as to his human nature; and that of others, who assert him to be only a Mediator as to his divine nature. But most certain it is, that there are various acts and works of Christ, as Mediator, in which both natures manifestly appear, and are concerned; not to make mention of the incarnation itself, or Christ's assumption of human nature, which manifestly implies both; for it was a divine Person that partook of flesh and blood, or assumed, not an angelic, but an human nature: it was the Word, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, that was made flesh, and dwelt among men; it was he that was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with him, that was found in fashion as a man, and took on him the form of a servant; it was God manifest in the flesh. In the obedience of Christ both natures are to be perceived; not only the human nature, in his being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; but the divine nature also; or otherwise, where is the wonder, that "though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered", Heb 5:8" and it was that which gave virtue to his obedience, and made it satisfactory to the justice of God, and made the law more honourable than the perfect and perpetual obedience of angels and men could do. In the act of laying down his life for

men, both natures appear; the human nature, which is passive in it, and is the life laid down; the divine nature, or the divine Person of Christ, who is active in it, and laid down his life of himself, he having such a power over his life as man, and that at his dispose, as no mere creature ever had; and both are to be observed in his taking of it up again; his human nature, in his body being raised from the dead; his divine nature or person, in raising it up of himself, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God with power: he was put to death in the flesh, in human nature, and quickened in the Spirit, or by his divine nature; the sacrifice of himself, was his own act, as Mediator; what was offered up were his soul and body, his whole human nature; this was offered by his eternal Spirit, or divine nature, which gave virtue to it, and made it a proper atoning sacrifice for sin. To observe no more, the redemption and purchase of his people, is a plain proof of both natures being concerned in his work as Mediator; the purchase price, or the price of redemption, is his precious blood, his blood as man; but what gave virtue to that blood, and made it a sufficient ransom price, is, that it was the blood of him that is God as well as man; and therefore God is said to purchase the church with his own blood, Ac 20:28.

2c. It was not only requisite and necessary, that the Mediator should be God and man, but that he should be both in one Person, or that the two natures should be united in one Person; or, rather, that the human nature should be taken up, and united to, and subsist in the Person of the Son of God; for the human nature, as it has no personality of itself, it adds none to the Son of God; it is no constituent part of his Person; he was a divine Person, before his assumption of human nature; and what he assumed was not a person, but a nature, and is called a “thing, nature, seed”, “Luke 1:35, Heb 2:16” had it been a person, there would be two persons in Christ, and so two mediators, contrary to the express words

of scripture, “#1Ti 2:5 and if the human nature was a person, as it must be a finite one, what was done and suffered by it, must be finite also, and of no use but to that person, and could have no sufficient virtue and value in them to justify men, and atone for sin; but these two natures being in personal union, the works and actions of either, though distinct and peculiar to each, yet belong to the whole Person, and are predicated of it; and so those of the human nature have virtue and efficacy in them, from the personal union, to make them effectual to the purposes for which they were designed, without which they would be ineffectual. Hence it may be observed, that Christ is described in one nature, by qualities, works, and actions, which belong to him in the other, and is what divines call a communication of idioms, or properties; thus the Lord of glory is said to be crucified; God is said to purchase the church with his blood; and the Son of man is said to be in heaven, while he was here on earth, “#1Co 2:8 Ac 20:28 Joh 3:13” the advantage of this personal union is, that the divine nature has an influence upon, and gives virtue and dignity to whatsoever is done or suffered in the human nature; which is of the utmost concern in the mediation of Christ: nor is it any objection that two natures should influence one and the same action, or be concerned in the production or perfection of it; when it is observed, that the soul and body of man, united together, concur in the performance of the same action, whether good or bad. I shall next enquire,

3. Thirdly, How Christ came to be the Mediator of the covenant, even the Mediator of reconciliation in it: it was owing originally to a thought in the heart of God, the offended Party; whose thoughts were “thoughts of peace, and not of evil”, towards offending man; this affair began with God the Father; “All things are of God”, that is, the Father, as appears by what follows; “Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation”;

the doctrine of it, to publish and declare to the world; the sum and substance of which is, “to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself”, “#2Co 5:18,19” that is, consulting with Christ his Son, and with him contriving the scheme and method of reconciling to himself the world of his elect, considered as sinful fallen creatures in Adam: upon the first thought of peace and reconciliation, a council of peace was held between the divine Persons, which issued in a covenant of peace in which it was proposed to Christ, and he agreed to it, to be the Peace maker, upon which he was constituted the Mediator of it; “I was set up from everlasting”, “Prov 8:23” says Christ; that is, by his divine Father; though not without his own consent: or, “I was anointed”, which does not design a collation of any gifts, qualifying him for the office of Mediator; as when he is said to be anointed with the Holy Ghost; only his investiture with that office, so expressed, because the rite of anointing was used in the consecration of kings, priests, and prophets to their office. And God not only set him up, but “set” him “forth”, in his eternal purposes and decrees, to be the “propitiation for sin”, to make reconciliation and satisfaction for it, “Rom 3:25” and declared him in prophecy to be the Prince of peace, and the Man that should appear in human nature, and make peace and reconciliation between him and men; he sanctified him, or set him apart to this office before the world began; and in the fulness of time, sent him to be the propitiation, or propitiatory sacrifice, for the sins of men; and even before his incarnation, being constituted in covenant the Mediator of it, he acted as such, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation: he exercised in each of his offices then; his prophetic office, by making known to Adam the covenant of grace, immediately after his fall; by preaching by his Spirit to the disobedient in the times of Noah, the spirits that were in prison, in the times of the apostle Peter; and by his Spirit, in the prophets

testifying beforehand his own sufferings, and the glory that should follow. His Kingly office, in gathering, governing, and protecting his church and people, who acknowledged him as their King, Judge, and Lawgiver: and his Priestly office, through the virtue of his blood reaching backward to the foundation of the world, and therefore said to be the Lamb slain so early, Re 13:8” and instances there are of his intercession under the former dispensation, “Zech 1:12,13 3:1-4” the actual existence of Christ’s human nature from eternity, was not necessary to his being a Mediator of the covenant; it was enough that he agreed in covenant, to be man in time; that this was known he would be, and was certain he should be; and accordingly he was, from the instant of the covenant making, reckoned and accounted, and bore the name of the God-man and Mediator, and acted as such. Some parts of his work did not require the actual existence of the human nature; he could draw nigh to God, as Jehovah’s fellow, without it; he could treat with God about terms of peace, and promise to fulfill them, and covenant with God without it: it no more required the actual existence of his human nature, to covenant with his Father, about the reconciliation and redemption of man, than it required that the Father should assume such a nature to covenant with his Son about the same: there were other parts of Christ’s work as Mediator, which required its actual existence; as obedience to the law, and suffering death, the penalty of it; but then, and not before, was it necessary for him to assume it, when the fulness of time was come agreed on, to obey and suffer. It only remains now,

4. Fourthly, To show what a Mediator Christ is, the excellency of him, and the epithets which belong to him as such. And,

4a. He is the one and only Mediator; “There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus”; and there is no other: the papists plead for other mediators, angels

and saints departed; and distinguish between a Mediator of redemption, and a mediator of intercession; the former, they own, is peculiar to Christ, the latter common to angels and saints; but there is no Mediator of intercession, but who is a Mediator of redemption and reconciliation; the instances produced are insufficient, and respect either the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ himself, Zec 1:12 Re 8:3 or saints, ministers, and members of churches in the present state, and not as departed, Re 5:8 and if is to be understood of departed spirits, it is only an Re 6:9 instance of prayer for themselves, and not for others: the passages in Ex 32:13 Job 5:1 with others, are quite impertinent mpertinent.

4b. Christ is a Mediator of men only, not of angels; good angels need not any, and as for evil angels, none is provided nor admitted, as before observed. Yet not of all men; for the world, said to be reconciled to God by Christ, is not all the individuals in it; but the world Christ gave his flesh, or human nature for the life of, since there is a world for which he is not so much as a Mediator of intercession, and much less a Mediator of reconciliation; see “#2Co 5:19 Joh 6:5117:9”. The persons for whom Christ acted as a Mediator, by means of death, for the redemption of their transgressions, were such as were called, and received the promise of the eternal inheritance, Heb 9:15”.

4c. Yet he is the Mediator both for Jews and Gentiles; for some of both these are chosen vessels of mercy; and God is a covenant God, not to the Jews only, but to the Gentiles also; and Christ is a Propitiation, not for the sins of the Jews only, but for the sins of the whole world, or of God’s elect throughout the whole world: and therefore both have access to God through the one Mediator, Christ, Ro 9:23,24 3:29,30 1Jo 2:2 Eph 2:18”.

4d. Christ is Mediator both for Old and New Testament saints; there is but one Mediator for both, but one Way to

the Father, which is Christ the Way, the Truth, and the Life; but one Way of life, peace, reconciliation, and salvation; but one Redeemer and Saviour; but one name given under heaven among men, whereby they can be saved; Old and New Testament saints are saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus; he is the Foundation of the apostles and prophets.

4e. Christ is a prevalent Mediator, his mediation is always effectual, ever succeeds, and is infallible; as his work was to make peace and reconciliation, and he agreed and engaged to make it; he has made it, the thing is done, and done effectually; and as for his prayers, they are always heard, his intercession ever prevails, and is never in vain; “I knew that thou hearest me always”, Joh 11:42”.

4f. Christ is an everlasting Mediator; he was Mediator from everlasting, and acted as such throughout the whole Old Testament period and still continues; he has an unchangeable priesthood; his blood always speaks peace and pardon, and he ever lives to make intercession; and when his mediatorial kingdom will be completed, and there will be no need of him, either as a Mediator of reconciliation or intercession, at least in the manner he has been, and now is; for sin being wholly removed from the saints, even as to the being of it, they may have access to God, and he may communicate unto them, without the intervention of a Mediator; as is the case of the holy angels; though Christ may be the medium of the glory and happiness of his people to all eternity; and since the happiness of the saints will greatly lie in beholding the glory of Christ as God-man, and the glory of God will be most illustriously displayed in him, it may be admitted: I shall observe no more, only that this office of Christ, as Mediator, includes his Kingly, Priestly, and Prophetic offices; all which will be considered in their proper place.

{2} Quis Rer. Divin. Haeres, p. 509. Vid. ibid. de Cherubim, p. 112.

{3} Plutarch. de Isid. et Osir.

{4} Suidas in voce ~mesiths~.

8. Of Christ, As The Covenant Head Of The Elect

There are various characters, relations, and offices, which Christ sustains in the covenant of grace; among which, that of a federal Head is one: Christ is often said to be the “Head of the Church”; not of any particular congregation of saints, in this or the other part of the world; but of the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, even of all the elect of God, that ever have been, are, or will be in the world, “Eph 1:22,23 5:23 Col 1:18” and he is a Head to them in different senses; he is that to them as a natural head is to a natural body, and the members of it; which is if the same nature with it, superior to it, communicates life, sense, and motion to it, as well as overlooks and protects it; such an Head of influence is Christ to the church, the source of life to it, from whom nourishment is derived, and all the supplies of grace, “Eph 4:15,16 Col 2:19”. He is an Head in a political sense, as a captain general is head of his army, and a king is head of his subjects, “Jude 10:18 11:11 Ho 1:11” and in an economical sense, as the husband is the head of the wife, and a father the head of his children, and a master the head of his servants and of his whole family, “Num 1:4 Eph 5:23,24 Isa 9:6 Mt 23:10”. The headship of Christ in these several senses, chiefly belongs to his Kingly office; but besides these, he is the representative head of his church, or of all the elect of God; they were all considered in him, and represented by him, when he covenanted with his Father for them; all that he engaged to do and suffer, was not only on their account, but in their name and stead; and all that he received, promises and blessings, were not only for them, but he received them

as representing them. As Christ was given to be the covenant of the people, so to be an Head of them in it, “Eph 1:22”. And thus,

1. Christ was considered in election; he was chosen as Head, and his people as members in him, and so they had union to him, and a representative being in him before the world began; they did not then personally exist, but Christ did, who represented them, and therefore were capable of being chosen in him, as they were, Eph 1:4”.

2. Such a relation Christ stood in to them in the covenant, that was made, not with him alone, but with all the elect of God, considered in him as their head and representative; hence we read of “the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ”; which was of God made sure and firm with his covenant people, in Christ, as their Head, before the foundation of the world; when as yet they had not an actual being, only a representative one in Christ, Ga 3:17 and hence the covenant was made sure to them in him, before the manifestation and application of it to Abraham, and his spiritual seed spoken of in the preceding verse; so that “the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after” that revelation and manifestation of the covenant to Abraham, “cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect”; for what commences in time, can never make void what was confirmed in eternity.

3. The promises of grace and glory, made to the elect of God in covenant, were made to them, as considered in Christ, their head and representative; for whereas these promises were made before the world began, Tit 1:2 they could not be made to them in their own persons, but as represented by Christ, and therefore were made to him their Head, and to them in him; and hence the promise of life is said to be “in” him, “#2Ti 1:1” and indeed, all the promises are Yea and Amen “in him”, “#2Co 1:20”. The apostle having said, that “to Abraham and

his seed were the promises made”, observes, “he saith not” and “to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ”; who is the head and representative of all his spiritual offspring, and in whom they are all collected and considered; all the promises made, manifested, and applied to Abraham, and his spiritual seed, were originally made to Christ, the everlasting Father of his spiritual offspring, the common Head and Parent of them, “Ga 3:16”.

4. All the blessings of grace, and grants of them in the covenant of grace, given and made to the elect in it, were given and made to Christ first in their name, and as representing them, and to them in him, as considered in him, their head and representative; for when these grants were made, and blessings bestowed, they were not in actual being, only had a representative one in Christ their head; hence grace is said to be given them “in Christ Jesus”, before the world began; and they to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places “in Christ”, as they were chosen in him before the formation of the world, “#2Ti 1:9 Eph 1:3,4”.

5. Christ, in the everlasting covenant, engaged in the name of his people, to obey and suffer in their stead; and accordingly he did both in time, as their Head and Representative. He obeyed the law, and fulfilled all righteousness, not as a single individual of human nature, and for himself, but as the federal Head of his people, as representing them; “That so the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us”, says the apostle, “Rom 8:4” that is, in the elect of God, they being considered in Christ their Head, when he became the fulfilling End of the law for righteousness unto them; and so they were made, or accounted, the righteousness of God “in him” their Head, Ro 10:4 2Co 5:21” in like manner as he in their name engaged to suffer for them; so in time he suffered in their room and stead, as their head and representative; insomuch that they may be truly said to suffer with him; they were all

gathered together, recollected in one Head, “in Christ”, and sustained and represented by him when he hung upon the cross, and are said to be “crucified with” him, Eph 1:10 Col 2:12”.

6. In consequence of Christ’s covenant engagements and performances, when he rose from the dead, he rose not as a private Person, but as a public Person, as the head and representative of all those for whom he obeyed and suffered; and therefore they are said to be quickened and raised together with him, as they were then also justified in him, when he himself, as their Head and Surety was, Eph 2:5,6 Col 3:1 1Ti 3:16. Yea, Christ is also gone to heaven, not only as the Forerunner of his people, but as their Head and Representative; he has taken possession of heaven in their name, appears in the presence of God for them, and represents them, as the high priest did the children of Israel, in the holy of holies; and hence they are said to be made to sit together in heavenly places “in Christ Jesus”, “Eph 2:6”.

7. The federal headship of Christ, may be argued and concluded from Adam being a federal head and representative of all his natural offspring; in which he was “the figure of him that was to come”, that is, Christ; for it was in that chiefly, if not solely, that he was a figure of Christ; at least, that is the chief, if not the only thing the apostle has in view, “Rom 5:14” as appears by his running the parallel between them, as heads and representatives of their respective offspring: Adam, through his fall, conveying sin and death to all his natural descendants; and Christ, through the free gift of himself, communicating grace, righteousness, and life to all his spiritual seed, the elect, the children his Father gave him: and hence these two are spoken of as the first and last Adam, and the first and second man; as if they were the only two men in the world, being the representatives of each of their seeds, which are included in them, “#1Co 15:45,47”.

Now, as Christ stands in the relation of an Head to the elect, he has all things delivered into his hands; in honour to him, and in love both to him and them, and for their good; God has given him to be “Head over all things” to the church, Mt 11:27 Joh 3:35 Eph 1:22 all persons and things are under his command, and at his dispose, to subserve his interest as Head of the church; even angels and men, good and bad, and all things in heaven and in earth; all power therein to protect and defend his people, and to provide for them; all fulness of grace, and the blessings of it to supply them; the government of the church, and of the world, is on his shoulders, who represents them; and therefore their persons, grace, and glory, must be safe in him; the covenant, and all its blessings and promises, are sure in him, the Head and Representative of his people in it.

9. Of Christ, The Surety Of The Covenant.

The suretyship of Christ is a branch of his mediatorial office; one way in which Christ has acted the part of a Mediator between God and men, is by engaging on their behalf, to do and suffer whatever the law and justice of God required, to make satisfaction for their sins. The Greek word for “surety” ~εγγυοV~, is used but once throughout the whole New Testament, “Heb 7:22” and there of Christ; where he is said to be made, or become, “the Surety of a better testament”, or covenant. And the word is derived either from ~εγγυV~, “near”, because a surety draws nigh to one on the behalf of another, and lays himself under obligation to him for that other; thus Christ drew nigh to his Father, and became a Surety to him for them; hence those words, “I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?” “Jer 30:21” or rather, it is derived from ~γουιον~, which signifies the “hand” {1}; because when one becomes a

Surety, he either puts something into the hand of another for security, or rather puts his hand into the hand of another, or strikes hands with him; a rite much used in suretyship, and is often put for it, and used as synonymous; see “Prov 6:1 17:18 22:26”. Snidas {2} derives it from ~gh~, ~guh~, the “earth”, because that is the firmest of the elements, and remains immoveable, and may denote the firmness and security of the promise, or bond, which a surety gives to one for another. The Hebrew word for a “surety”, in the Old Testament, [^]bre[^], “Gen 43:9” and elsewhere, has the signification of “mixing”, because, as Stockins {3} observes, in suretyship persons are so mixed among themselves, and joined together, that the one is thereby bound to the other: and, upon the whole, Christ, as a Surety, drew nigh to his Father on the behalf of the elect, struck hands with him, and gave him firm security for them, and put himself in their place and stead, and engaged to perform everything for them that should be required of him; for the better understanding this branch of Christ’s office in the covenant, it may be proper to consider,

1. First, In what sense Christ is the Surety of the covenant. And,

1a. First, He is not the Surety for his Father, to his people, engaging that the promises made by him in covenant shall be fulfilled; which is the Socinian sense of Christ’s suretyship {4}; for though the promises were made to Christ, and are Yea and Amen in him; and many of them, such as respect him, were fulfilled in him, and by him, as the minister of the circumcision, “Gal 3:16” “#2Co 1:20 Ro 15:8”. Yet, such is the faithfulness of God that has promised, that there needs no surety for him; his faithfulness is sufficient, which he will not suffer to fail; he is God, that cannot lie, nor deny himself; there is no danger of his breaking his word, and not fulfilling his promise, which may be depended on, and strongly confided in: and if his word was not enough, he

has joined his oath to it; so that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, the heirs of promise might have strong consolation, in believing the fulfillment of every promise made, “Heb 6:18”. Besides, though Christ is equal with his Father, is Jehovah’s fellow, and has all the perfections of Deity in him, yet he is not greater than he; and, with reverence to him be it said, he cannot give a greater security, than the word and oath of God, or that will lay a firmer foundation for confidence in the promises of God; and it is with an ill grace these men advance such a notion; since they make Christ to be but a mere man; and what dependence can there be upon him, when cursed is the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm? “Jer 17:5” and what greater security is it possible that a mere man should give, than what the promise of God itself gives? or what additional strength can a creature give to that, to induce a stronger belief of it? Nor,

1b. Secondly, Is Christ in such sense a Surety, as civilians call a “fidejussor”, or such a surety that is jointly engaged with a debtor, for the payment of a debt; or is so bound for another, as that other remains under obligation, and the obligation of the surety is only an accession to the principal obligation, which is made stronger thereby, and the creditor has the greater security; yet still the principal debtor is left under his debt, that is not removed from him, and he is under obligation to pay it, if able; and it is first to be demanded of him, or should his surety desert his suretyship, and not make satisfaction. But now none of these things are to be supposed in Christ’s suretyship.

1b1. He is not a mere accessory to the obligation of his people for payment of their debts; he and they are not engaged in one joint bond for payment; he has taken their whole debt upon himself, as the apostle Paul did in the case of Onesimus; and he has paid it off, and entirely discharged it alone.

1b2. Nor was any such condition made in his suretyship engagements for his people, that they should pay if they were able; for God the Father, to whom Christ became a Surety, knew, and he himself, the Surety, knew full well, when this suretyship was entered into, that they were not able to pay, and never would be; yea, that it was impossible for them, in their circumstances, ever to pay; for having failed in their obedience to God, all after acts of obedience, though ever so perfect, could not make amends, or satisfy for that disobedience, since to those God has a prior right; and their failure in obedience, brings upon them a debt of punishment, which is everlasting, and “ad infinitum”; and, if left on them, would be ever paying, and never paid; see Lu 7:41,42 Mt 18:24,25 5:26 25:46”.

1b3. Nor is such a supposition to be made, that Christ might desert his suretyship, withdraw himself from it; this indeed has been supposed by some: but though Christ was not obliged to become a Surety, he voluntarily engaged in this work, and cheerfully took it on him; yet when he had undertaken it he could not relinquish it, without being guilty of disobedience to his Father, and of unfaithfulness to his own engagements; for from the instant he became a Surety for his people, he became a Servant to his Father, and he called and reckoned him as such; “Thou art my servant, O Israel; behold my servant whom I uphold”, “Isa 49:3 42:1” and laid his commands upon him, both to obey his law, and lay down his life for his people, both which he undertook to do, and did perform; or otherwise he could not have had the character of God’s righteous Servant, nor would have been faithful to him that appointed him, nor to himself, “Isa 53:10 Heb 3:2” and consequently could not be without sin, which God forbid should ever be said or supposed of the holy Jesus, who did not sin, nor was guile found in his mouth; yet this has been supposed of him by some, and the dreadful consequences of it, which have been blasphemously uttered by some schoolmen

and popish writers, not fit to be mentioned.

1b4. Nor is it to be supposed, that Christ might not fulfill his suretyship engagements, or not make satisfaction, as might be expected; since if he did not, it must be either for want of will, or want of power; not of will, since the persons he became a surety for, he bore the strongest affection to; these were the sons of men, in whom was all his delight from everlasting; and such his love to them, that nothing whatever could separate from it: nor could it be for want of power, since, as a divine Person, he is the mighty God; as Mediator, has all power in heaven and in earth; as man, was made strong by the Lord for this work, and had a power, as such, to lay down his life, and take it up again: and should he have deserted his suretyship, and not have made the promised and expected satisfaction, the purposes of God, respecting the salvation of the elect by Christ, must have been frustrated, and made null and void; the council of peace held concerning it would have been without effect; the covenant of grace abolished; the salvation of God's people not obtained, and the glory of God, of his grace, mercy, truth, and faithfulness lost; yea, Christ himself must have been deprived of his mediatorial glory; all too shocking to be admitted. But,

1c. Thirdly, Christ is in such sense a Surety, as civilians call an expromissor, one that promises out and out, absolutely engages to pay another's debt; takes another's obligation, and transfers it to himself, and by this act dissolves the former obligation, and enters into a new one, which civilians call "novation"; so that the obligation no longer lies on the principal debtor, but he is set free, and the Surety is under the obligation, as if he was the principal debtor, or the guilty person. Now this sort of suretyship being most similar, and coming nearest to Christ's suretyship, is made use of to express and explain it; though they do not in everything tally; for the civil law neither describes nor admits such a Surety

among men as Christ is; who so substituted himself in the room and stead of sinners, as to suffer punishment in soul and body for them; but in some things there is an agreement.

1c1. Christ, by his suretyship, has took the whole debt of his people upon himself, and made himself solely responsible for it; he has dissolved thereby their obligation to payment or punishment, having taken it on himself; so that they were by it entirely set free from the very instant he became their Surety; it is a rule that will hold good, as Maccovius {5} observes, that as soon as anyone becomes a surety for another, the other is immediately freed, if the surety be accepted: which is the case here; for from henceforward, God the Father looked for his debt, and expected satisfaction of Christ, and let the sinners go free, for whom he engaged; he was gracious, and said, “deliver” them “from going down to the pit; I have found a Ransom”, “#Job 33:24” just as when the apostle Paul became a surety for Onesimus; supposing him accepted as such by Philemon, Onesimus was set free; the apostle taking the whole debt and wrong upon himself, and promising to repay and make satisfaction, and which he wrote and signed with his own hand.

1c2. When Christ became a Surety for his people, their sins were no longer imputed to them, but were imputed to Christ, were placed to his account, and he became responsible for them; it was not, at the time of his sufferings and death, that God laid on him first the iniquities of his people, and they were imputed and reckoned to him, and he accounted them as his own, 2Co 5:19 Isa 53:6 Ps 40:12 69:5 by which it appears, that obligation to payment of debts, or punishment, did not lie upon the principal debtor, or guilty person, but upon Christ, who became their Surety; for,

1c3. The Old Testament saints were really freed from guilt, condemnation, and death, before the actual payment was made by Christ their Surety; some had as full an application

of the pardon of their sins, and as clear a view of their interest in Christ's righteousness, as their justifying righteousness before God, as any of the New Testament saints ever had; the one were saved by the grace of Christ as the other; yea, they were received into heaven, and actually glorified, before the suretyship engagements of Christ were fulfilled, Isa 43:25 45:24,25 Ac 15:11 Heb 11:13-16". So that it is a plain case, that the obligation to payment and punishment lay not on those for whom Christ became a Surety, but was transferred from them to him; unless this absurdity can be admitted, that such an obligation lay on glorified saints, till the actual payment was made by Christ; or that there was a "limbus patrum", as the papists say, where the saints, before Christ's coming, were detained; but were set free by him when he came.

1c4. It is certain that the Old Testament saints had knowledge of the suretyship engagements of Christ, and prayed and pleaded for the application of the benefits of them to them, Job 19:25 Ps 119:122 Isa 38:14" and which they enjoyed: and such was the dignity of Christ's person, and his known faithfulness to his engagements, and the eternity of them, which with God has no succession, they were always present with him, and in full view, as if actually performed; before and after made no difference in the sight of God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and eternity itself as but a moment. And now, from this suretyship of Christ arise both the imputation of sin to Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness to his people; this is the ground and foundation of both, and on which the priestly office of Christ stands, and in virtue of which it is exercised, 2Co 5:21 Heb 7:20-22". I proceed,

2. Secondly, To consider what Christ as a Surety, engaged to do. And,

2a. First, He engaged to pay the debts of his people, and satisfy for the wrong and injury done by them; this may be

illustrated by the instance of the apostle Paul engaging for Onesimus; which is thus expressed, “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on my account; I Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it”, Phm 1:18,19. Sin is a wrong and injury done to divine justice, and to the holy law of God, broken by it; which Christ undertook to satisfy for; and sins are debts; see Mt 6:12 compared with Lu 11:4 not proper ones, for then they might be committed with impunity, since it is right and commendable to pay debts: but in an improper sense, as debts oblige to payment, so sins to punishment; even to endure the curse of the law, and death eternal, the sanction of it: these debts, or sins, are infinite objectively, as they are contracted and committed against an infinite being, and require punishment of a creature ad infinitum; and therefore not to be paid off, or answered, by a finite creature; but Christ being an infinite Person, as God, was able to pay off those debts, and answer for those sins, and engaged to do it, and has done it.

There is a twofold debt paid by Christ, as the Surety of his people; the one is a debt of obedience to the law of God; this he engaged to do, when he said, “Lo, I come to do thy will”; thy law is within my heart: and accordingly he was made under the law, and yielded perfect obedience to it, by which his people are made righteous; and the other is a debt of punishment, incurred through failure of obedience in them; the curse of the law he has endured, the penalty of it, death; and by paying both these debts, the whole righteousness of the law is fulfilled in his people, considered in him their Head and Surety. Now let it be observed, that these debts are not pecuniary ones, though there is an allusion to such, and the language is borrowed from them; but criminal ones, a wrong and injury done, as supposed in the case of Onesimus; and are of such a nature as deserve and require punishment in body and soul, being transgressions of the righteous law of God;

and God is to be considered, not merely as a creditor, but as the Judge of the whole earth, who will do right, and who will by no means clear the guilty, without a satisfaction to his justice; and yet there is a mixture of grace, mercy, and goodness in God, with his justice in this affair, by admitting a Surety to obey, suffer, and die, in the room and stead of his people, which he was not obliged unto; nor does the law give the least hint of an allowance of it; nor do the civil laws of men admit of any such thing, that an innocent person should suffer death in the room of one that is guilty, even though he consents to it, and desires it; because no man has a power over his own life, to dispose of it at pleasure; but God, who can dispense with his own law, if he pleases, has thought fit to explain it, and put a construction on it in favour of his people, where it is not express; and allow of a commutation of persons, that his Son should stand in their legal place and stead, obey, suffer, and die for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is owing to his sovereign grace and mercy; nor is at all inconsistent with his justice, since Christ fully consented to all this, who is the Prince of life, and had power over his own life, as man, to lay it down, and take it up again; and since justice is fully satisfied, by the obedience and death of Christ, and the law magnified and made honourable, and more so than it could have been by all the obedience and sufferings of angels and men put together.

2b. Secondly, Another thing which Christ as a Surety engaged to do, was to bring all the elect safe to glory; this may be illustrated by Judah's suretyship for Benjamin; thus expressed to his father, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever", "Gen 43:9". And thus Christ became a Surety to his divine Father, for his beloved Benjamin, the chosen of God, and precious; as he asked them of his Father, and they were given into his hands,

to be preserved by him, that none of them might be lost; he agreed that they should be required of his hand, everyone of them, and pass under the hand of him that telleth them, and their whole number appear complete, and none missing; as will be the case, when he shall say, “Lo, I, and the children which God hath given me”, “Heb 2:13”. Christ engaged to “bring” his people to his Father; this was the work proposed to him, and which he agreed to do; “to bring Jacob again to him, and to restore the preserved of Israel”, Isa 49:5,6 to recover the lost sheep, to ransom them out of the hands of him that was stronger than they; to redeem them from all iniquity, and from the law, its curse and condemnation, and save them with an everlasting salvation, and bring them safe to his Father in heaven; and because he laid himself under obligation to do all this; hence he says, “them also I must bring”, into his fold here, and into heaven and glory hereafter, “John 10:16” and “set” them “before” his Father; as he did at his death, when all the elect were gathered together in one head, even in him, to present them in the body of his flesh, through death, holy, unblameable, and unproveable in the sight of God; and as he now does in heaven, where he appears in the presence of God for them, and they are set down in heavenly places in him, as their Head and Surety; and as he will at the last day, when he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, the mediatorial kingdom, the kingdom of priests, complete and perfect, as he received them; and having first presented them to himself, as a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, he will present them faultless before the presence of his Father’s glory, with exceeding joy; and will be so far from bearing any blame, having so fully discharged his suretyship engagements, that he will appear without sin unto salvation; even without sin imputed, without the wrong done by his people put on his account; all being fully answered for according to agreement.

{1} So Hesychius and others.

{2} In voce ~ennuh~.

{3} Clavis Ling. Sanct. p. 810.

{4} Crellius et Schlichtingius in Heb. vii. 22.

{5} Theolog. Quaest. loc. 31. qu. 6.

10. Of Christ, The Testator Of The Covenant

1. First, The covenant of grace bears the name, and has the nature of a testament: it is often called the new and better testament, as administered under the gospel dispensation, “Matt 26:28 Heb 7:22 9:15 in distinction from the former: it is called a testament, in allusion to the last will and testament of men. And,

1a. Because it is the will of God himself, and not another; the will of him that is sovereign and absolute, who does according to his will in heaven and in earth, in nature, providence, and grace. The covenant is founded on the will of God, and is the pure effect of it; he was not obliged to make it; he freely and of his own accord came into it; so all the contracting parties in it, as has been before observed. A man’s will or testament ought to be voluntary; he is not to be forced nor drawn, nor pressed to make it, contrary to his inclination; or otherwise it is not his own will. The covenant, or testament of God, is of his own making, without any influence from another; all the articles in it are of his free good will and pleasure; as, that he will be the covenant God of his people; that they shall be his sons and daughters; that they shall be his heirs, and joint heirs with Christ; that they shall enjoy all the blessings of grace, redemption, pardon, justification, regeneration, perseverance in grace and glory; for he hath bequeathed, in this will, both grace and glory to his people, “Psalm 89:11 Lu 12:32”.

1b. As a will consists of various legacies to various persons, so does the covenant of grace; some to Christ, for

he, under different considerations, is a legatee in it, and a testator of it: all the elect, his spiritual seed and offspring, are bequeathed unto him, as his portion and inheritance, and with which he is greatly delighted, De 32:9 Ps 2:8 16:6". "As my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom", says he, "Luke 22:29" his mediatorial kingdom, a kingdom of priests, and which he disposed of to him in a testamentary way, as the word there used signifies. There are other legacies, such as before suggested, respecting grace and glory, left in this will for the brethren of Christ, among whom he is the firstborn, and so appointed principal heir, yea, heir of all things, and they joint heirs with him; and what is given to them, is in trust with him for them, particularly the inheritance bequeathed, which they obtain in him, and is reserved with him in heaven for them.

1c. In wills, what a man disposes of, is, or should be, his own; no man has a power to dispose, nor ought to dispose of, what is another's, or not his own; or otherwise, his will is a void will, and such bequests void bequests. All the blessings of goodness, whether of nature, providence, or grace, are all the Lord's own, and he has a sovereign right to dispose of them as he pleases, and to give them to whomsoever he will; and against which no one has any just cause or reason to object; and if he does, it is to no purpose; "Is it not lawful for me", says the Testator of the covenant, "to do what I will with mine own?" Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" "Matt 20:15".

1d. This will, or testament, of Jehovah, is an ancient one, it was made in eternity; it is called an everlasting covenant, or testament; not only because it always continues, and will never become null and void, but because it is from everlasting; the bequests and donations made in it were made before the world began, "#2Ti 1:9". It is, indeed, sometimes called a new testament, not because newly made, but because newly

published and declared, at least in a more clear and express manner; a new and fresh copy of it has been delivered out to the heirs of promise.

1e. It is a will or testament that is unalterable; “Though it be but a man’s covenant”, or testament, “yet if it be confirmed” by his own handwriting and seal, and especially by his death, “no man disannulleth or addeth thereunto”, “Gal 3:15”. The covenant of grace is ordered in all things, and sure; this testament, or will, is founded upon the immutability of the divine counsel; so that the heirs of promise, the legatees in it, may have strong consolation, and be fully assured of enjoying their legacies in it; which are the sure mercies of David, of David’s Son and Antitype, as all the promises of it are Yea and Amen in him.

1f. Testaments, or wills, are generally sealed as well as signed: the seals of God’s will or testament are not the ordinances; circumcision was no seal of the covenant of grace; it was a seal to Abraham, and to him only, that he should be the father of believing Gentiles; and that the same righteousness of faith should come upon them, which came upon him, when in uncircumcision: nor is baptism, which is falsely said to come in the room of it, and much less is it a seal of the covenant; nor the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper; for though the blood of Christ, one of the symbols in it, is yet not that itself: but the seals are the Holy Spirit of God, and the blood of Christ; and yet the Holy Spirit is not such a seal that makes the covenant, or testament, surer in itself, only assures the Lord’s people of their interest in it, by witnessing it to their spirits, by being in them the earnest of the inheritance bequeathed them, and by sealing them up unto the day of redemption; properly speaking, the blood of Christ is the only seal of this testament, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and therefore called the blood of the covenant, and the blood of the new testament, “Zech 9:11 Mt 26:28 Heb 13:20”.

1g. To all wills there are commonly witnesses, and often three, and in some cases three are required. Now as God sware by himself, because he could sware by no greater; so because no other and proper witnesses could be had, to witness this will made in eternity, God himself, or the three divine Persons, became witnesses to it, the Three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, “#1Jo 5:7”. Unless we choose to conceive of things in this manner; that as the Father, the first Person, gives the lead in all things in nature and in grace, and as he did in the council of peace, so in the covenant of grace, or in this testament, he may be considered as the maker of the will, or testament, and the Son and Spirit as witnesses to it.

1h. This will, or testament, is registered in the sacred writings, from thence the probate of it is to be taken; the public notaries, or amanuenses, that have copied it under a divine direction, are the prophets and apostles; hence the writings of the one are called the Old Testament, and the writings of the other the New Testament, the latter being the more clear, full, and correct copy. The covenant of grace having the nature of a testament, shows that there is no restipulation in it on the part of men; no more than there is a restipulation of legatees in a will; what is bequeathed to them being without their knowledge and consent, and without anything being required of them, to which they give their assent. The covenant of grace is properly a covenant to Christ, in which he restipulates; but a testament to his people, or a pure covenant of promise. Also it may be observed, that the legacies in this testament are owing to the goodwill of the testator, and not to any merit in the legatees; “For if theft which are of the law be heirs”, if they that seek eternal life by the works of the law be heirs of grace and glory, then, says the apostle, “faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect”, which declare it to be a free donation: and so again, “If the inheritance be of the law”, or

to be obtained by the works of it, “it is no more of promise”; these will not consist with, but contradict one another; “but God gave it to Abraham by promise”; as he has done to all the legatees in his covenant or will; see “Rom 4:14 Ga 3:18”.

2. Secondly, The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, may be considered as testator of the covenant of grace, as it is a will or testament, and which is plainly suggested in Heb 9:15-17 for,

2a. Christ as God has an equal right to dispose of things as his divine Father, seeing all that the Father has are his; as all the perfections of deity, so all persons, and all things in nature, providence, and grace; particularly all the blessings of grace and of glory. He is over all God blessed for ever, and all things are of him and owe their being to him, and are at his dispose; yea, all things are delivered by the Father to him as mediator: and if the Spirit disposes of his gifts and graces, dividing them to every man severally as he will; the Son of God may be reasonably thought to have a power and right to dispose of the blessings of his goodness to whomsoever he pleases.

2b. Nothing is disposed of in the covenant, or testament, without his counsel and consent; for though with respect to creatures, angels and men, it may be said of God, “with whom took he counsel?” yet with his Son, the Wonderful Counsellor, the Angel of the great council, he did; for the council of peace was between them both, the Father and the Son, which respected the salvation of men, and the donation of grace and glory to them.

2c. Nor was anything given in covenant, or disposed of in the will and testament of God, but with respect to the death of Christ; all promised in covenant was on condition of Christ’s making his soul an offering for sin, and of pouring out his soul unto death, Isa 53:10-12” all the blessings of grace bestowed on Old Testament saints, as they were legacies in

this testament, so they were given forth in virtue of the blood of the covenant, which had a virtue that reached backward; Christ being the lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and there is no blessing of grace in the covenant, but what is on account of the death of Christ the testator; redemption of transgressions, that were under both the first and second testaments, was by means of death; and without shedding of blood there was no remission under either dispensation; and it is the death of Christ that secures from condemnation, as well as by it reconciliation is made.

2d. Whatever is given in this will, is given to Christ first, to be disposed of by him, so that he is the executor as well as the testator of it; he was set up as mediator from everlasting; was prevented with the blessings of goodness, or had them first given to him; he was possessed of a fulness of grace, and grace was given to the elect in him before the world began; not only the blessings of grace were put into his hands to dispose of, but eternal life, for he has power to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him; whether this be considered as an inheritance which He, the Word of God's grace, the essential Word, is able to give among them that are sanctified by faith in him; or as a kingdom prepared for them in the purposes of God, and which Christ gives a right unto, and a meekness for; yea, he himself disposes of it in a testamentary way, "and I appoint unto you a kingdom", dispose of it to you by will and testament, Lu 22:29". Wherefore,

3. Thirdly, The death of Christ is necessary to put this will in force, to give strength unto it, that it may be executed according to the design of the maker of it; "for where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all, while the testator liveth", "Heb 9:16,17". It is not the death of any, only of the testator himself, that gives validity to his will, or renders it executable;

and it is only the death of Christ that gives force and strength unto, or ratifies and confirms the covenant of grace; not the death of slain sacrifices, for though by the blood and death of these the first testament was dedicated, ratified, and confirmed in a typical way, as these were types of Christ in his bloodshed and death, “Heb 9:19-22” yet the new testament is only, really, truly, and properly ratified and confirmed by the death of Christ itself; and whereas the Father and the Spirit were jointly concerned with Christ in making this will or testament, it was not necessary that they should die, nor could they, since they never assumed a nature capable of dying; only it was necessary that one of the testators should assume a nature capable of death, and in it die to give force to this will; and infinite wisdom judged it most proper and fitting that the Son of God should do it, who took upon him, not the nature of angels, who are incorporeal, immaterial and immortal spirits, and die not; but he became a partaker of flesh and blood, of human nature, that he might die and ratify the testament and will he was concerned in the making of; and this was necessary to give it strength and force: not as if it was alterable until the death of Christ, as the wills of men are until their death, which while they live are liable to be altered again and again; for the first thoughts of God always remain, and that to all generations; his mind is never turned, his counsel is immutable, and so his covenant and testament founded thereon is unalterable; nor that the inheritance bequeathed in this will could not be enjoyed before the death of Christ; this indeed is the case with respect to the wills of men, the legacies are not payable, nor estates bequeathed enjoyed, until the testator dies; but such is not only the certainty of Christ’s death, and which with God was as if it was, before it really was, but such is the virtue and efficacy of it, that it reaches backward to the beginning of the world, as before observed; wherefore the Old Testament saints not only received the

promise of eternal inheritance, but enjoyed it before the death of Christ, though in virtue of it, for they are said to “inherit the promises”, that is, the things promised, “Heb 9:15 6:11” but the death of Christ was necessary to confirm the covenant or testament, that the legatees might appear to have a legal right to what was bequeathed to them, law and justice being satisfied thereby; so that no caveat could be put in against them, and no obstruction made to their claim of legacies, and their enjoyment of them; and no danger of this will being ever set aside. There is another concern and part which Christ has in the covenant, and that is the “messenger” of it, Mal 3:1 but as that respects the administration of it, it will be considered in its proper place, after the fall of man.

11. Of The Concern The Spirit Of God Has In The Covenant Of Grace.

Having considered the parts which the Father and the Son have taken in the covenant, the part which the Holy Spirit has in it is next to be treated of; who was not a mere bystander, spectator, and witness of this solemn transaction, compact, and agreement, between the Father and the Son, but was a party concerned in it. And,

1. First, The third person, the Spirit, gave his approbation of, and assent unto every article in the covenant.

1a. In general, what respected the salvation of the chosen ones; for that is the grand and principal article of the covenant; “this”, says David, speaking of the covenant, “is all my salvation”, 2 Sa 23:5” that is, the whole of his salvation; all things relative to it were provided for in it, and secured by it; in the economy of which each Person took his part; and that of the Spirit is Sanctification; which makes meet for the enjoyment of complete and eternal salvation; hence called “the sanctification of the Spirit”, “#2Th 2:13 1Pe 1:2”. And

this clearly shows, that the Spirit approved of, and assented to the whole scheme of salvation, or of the thing itself in general; or otherwise he would never have taken a part in it; and as it was the purpose and will of God the Father to save men by his Son, and he appointed them to obtain salvation by him; so the Son of God came to seek and save men, being sent of God for that purpose in which mission of him the Spirit joined; “Now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me”, “Isa 48:16” which is a plain proof that he approved of and assented to it, that the Son of God should be the Saviour of men; and whereas it was proper that the Son of God should assume human nature, and in it work out the salvation of men; and which was agreed upon between the Father and the Son; so it was approved of and assented to by the Spirit; as appears from his concern in the incarnation of Christ; for what was “conceived in the Virgin was of the Holy Ghost”, “Matt 1:18,20” and, seeing it was necessary that the Saviour of men should suffer and die for them, to satisfy law and justice; and the divine Father enjoined his Son to lay down his life for them; to which command he became obedient; so the Spirit declared his approbation of it, by testifying beforehand, in the prophets, “the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”; as well as was assisting to the human nature of Christ, in the sacrifice of himself; since it was “through the eternal Spirit”, he offered up himself without spot to God, “#1Pe 1:11 Heb 9:14”. Once more, as it was highly proper, that as Christ should be delivered to death for the offences of men, so that he should rise again for their justification; or otherwise, the whole affair of salvation would have miscarried; hence the Father in covenant enjoined his Son, as to lay down his life, so to take it up again; and which he did, and in which the Spirit was concerned; and which showed his approbation of this closing part of the scheme of salvation by Christ; see “Romans 1:4”.

1b. The Spirit of God approved of and assented to all the promises in the covenant: there are many exceeding great and precious promises in the Scriptures, which are transcribed from the covenant, and are all Yea and Amen in Christ, and in which the Spirit has a concern; hence he is called “the Holy Spirit of promise”, “Eph 1:13” indeed, he himself is the great promise of the covenant; promised both to Christ the Head, and to his members, “Matt 12:18 Isa 42:1 44:3 Ga 3:14” and he is concerned in the application of every promise to the elect; it is he that remembers to them the word of promise, on which the Lord has sometimes caused them to hope; and it is he that opens the promise to them, instructs them in it, and shows them what is contained in it, the nature, use, and suitableness of it; it is he that applies the promises to them at a proper season, when they are like apples of gold in pictures of silver; and he it is that keeps up their faith and hope, as to the grand promise of eternal life; so that they, “through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith”, “John 14:26 Pr 25:11 Ga 5:5” by which it appears, that he approved of every promise of the covenant made in eternity, or he would never act the part he does, in the application of them in time.

1c. The blessed Spirit approved of and gave his assent to all the grants made to Christ, and to his people in the covenant, to the sure mercies of David, to the spiritual blessings wherewith the elect are blessed in heavenly places in Christ; for he takes of these in time, and shows them to the persons interested in them, and their interest therein, “John 16:14” which he would not do, if he had not approved of the grants of these blessings to them, in the everlasting covenant; as for instance, the blessing of a justifying righteousness, to be wrought out by Christ, was provided in the covenant; and which being brought in, is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith: and besides the external revelation of it in the gospel, the Spirit of God brings near this righteousness, and sets it in the

view of an awakened sinner, and shows him its suitableness, fulness, and excellency, works faith in him to receive it, and pronounces in his conscience his justification by it; hence it is said of such, that they are “justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit our God”, “#1Co 6:11”. Pardon of sin is another blessing of the covenant through Christ, and the Spirit takes the blood of Christ, the blood of the covenant, shed for the remission of sin, and sprinkles it on the conscience, and thereby speaks peace and pardon to it; saying, Son, or “daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee”, “Heb 8:12 10:22 12:24”. Adoption also, a blessing of grace, provided in the covenant, and which the Spirit bears witness to and makes application of, and is sent down into the hearts of the covenant and adopted ones for that purpose, and is hence called “the Spirit of adoption”, “#2Co 6:18 Gal 4:6 Rom 8:15,16”. In short, all the grace given to the elect in Christ, before the world began, all the things that are freely given them of God in the covenant, the Spirit in time makes known unto them, and declares and testifies their interests in them, 1Co 1:12 2:9-11”. All which abundantly prove his approbation of and assent unto everything contained in the covenant of grace.

2. Secondly, There are many things which the Holy Spirit himself undertook and engaged in covenant to do; and nothing more strongly proves this than his doing them; for had he not agreed to do them, they would not have been done by him. And,

2a. First, Some things he has done, as he agreed to do, with respect to Christ; he formed the human nature of Christ, in which he obeyed and suffered for the salvation of the elect: every individual of human nature is, indeed, made by him; “The Spirit of God hath made me”, says Elihu, “Job 33:4” but the individual of Christ’s human nature, was “fearfully and wonderfully made” by him, as David, representing him,

says he was “in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth”, in the womb of the Virgin, according to the model of it, in the book of God’s purposes and decrees; it was produced by the power of the Highest, the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, without the instrumentality of man; and so was free from the pollution of sin, propagated by ordinary and natural generation, and therefore called the holy thing, born of the Virgin, “Psalm 139:14-16 Lu 1:35”. The Spirit of God filled the same human nature with his gifts and graces without measure, which are the oil of gladness he anointed him with above his fellows, and thereby fitted and qualified him as man, for the discharge of his office as Mediator, “Isa 11:1-3 Isa 42:1 61:1” he descended upon him as a dove at his baptism; which was the signal by which John the Baptist knew he was the Messiah, and pointed him out as such to others; he assisted him as man, in the ministry of the gospel, whereby he spake as never man did, and with an authority the Scribes and Pharisees did not; and in the performance of miracles; for he cast out devils, as he himself says, by “the Spirit of God”, “Matt 12:28”. He also was concerned in Christ’s offering up himself a Sacrifice; and in his resurrection from the dead, as before observed; whereby he glorified him, as well as by other things, Christ said he would, “John 16:14”. All which he did according to covenant agreements and settlements.

2b. Secondly, There are other things he has done, as he agreed to do, with respect to men; either,

2b1. To such as are in a public office and capacity, as the prophets of the Old Testament; whom he inspired to speak and write as they did, “#2Pe 1:21” and the apostles of the New, who were endowed with power from on high, with his extraordinary gifts to preach the gospel, in all languages, to all people, and to confirm it with miracles, “Acts 1:4,5” “Acts 2:4 Heb 2:3,4” and ordinary ministers of the word, in all succeeding generations, with gifts and grace suitable to

their office; whom he calls and separates to it, directs where they should go, he has work for them to do, and makes them overseers of flocks or churches committed to their care, “Acts 13:2 16:6,7 20:28” and it is he that makes the word preached by them effectual to the conviction and conversion of sinners, and to the comfort and edification of saints; and whereby he conveys himself into the hearts of men, 1Th 1:5,6 2Co 3:6,8 Gal 3:2”. All which he undertook to do, and has done. Or,

2b2. To such as are in a private capacity, to whom he is,

2b2a. A Spirit “of conviction”; he convinces them of sin, original, actual, of all their sins of thought, word, and deed; of the demerit of sin, and of the inability of men to make atonement for it; and brings them to such a sense of it, as to loath it, and themselves for it; to blush and be ashamed of it, and to have such a godly sorrow for it, which works repentance unto salvation. And “of righteousness”; of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them before God; and of the excellency and suitableness of the righteousness of Christ. And “of judgment”; that there is one not to be escaped, and at which all must appear, and in which there will be no standing, but in the righteousness of Christ, “John 16:8”.

2b2b. A Spirit “of regeneration” and “renovation”; men must be born again, and they that are born of God, even of the Spirit of God, are renewed by him in the Spirit of their minds; all things are made new; a new man is created in them, a new heart and a new spirit are given unto them, according to the covenant of grace; hence we read of “regeneration”, and “the renewing of the Holy Ghost”, “Titus 3:5”.

2b2c. A Spirit “of faith”; all men have not faith, only God’s elect; and therefore true faith is called the faith of God’s elect; and those that have it, have it not of themselves, it is the gift of God; it is of the operation of God, a work of his almighty power, begun, carried on, and performed with power, and that by the Holy Ghost: and therefore he is called

“the Spirit of faith”, “#2Co 4:13”.

2b2d. A “Comforter”, under which character he is often spoken of, and promised by Christ, that he should be sent by him, and from his Father, according to covenant agreements; and which office, as he freely undertook in covenant, he performs, by shedding abroad the love of God and Christ in the hearts of his people; by leading into the comfortable doctrines of the gospel; by opening and applying the precious promises of it; by taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to them; and by witnessing to them their adoption; and by being the earnest of their inheritance, and the sealer of them up unto the day of redemption.

2b2e. A Sanctifier; if any are sanctified, it is by the Spirit of God; sanctification is his work, and therefore called “the sanctification of the Spirit”, as before observed: it is the Spirit that begins, and carries on, and finishes the work of grace and holiness upon the hearts of God’s elect, without which no man shall see the Lord. He is the Spirit of strength to the saints, to enable them to exercise grace, and to perform duties he is put into them according to the covenant of grace, to cause them to walk in the statutes and judgments of the Lord to do them; to strengthen them to walk on in the ways of the Lord, and to persevere in faith and holiness to the end. And all this the Spirit of God does, as he engaged and undertook to do, in the everlasting covenant; and therefore he is said to “come”, being sent, to do these things; not without his will and consent, but according to his voluntary engagements in covenant, without which he could not be sent by the Father and the Son, being equal to them; and this will account for the several passages where he is said to be sent by the Father, in the name of Christ, and by Christ, from the Father, “John 14:16,26 15:26 16:7 Ga 4:6”. This being all agreed on, and settled in the covenant between them.

12. Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of Grace in the Patriarchal State

Though the administration of the covenant of grace may be considered in a three fold state; as in the patriarchal state, before the giving of the law; and then under the Mosaic dispensation; and last of all under the gospel dispensation: yet more agreeable to the apostle's distinction of the first and second, the old and the new covenant, observed in the preceding chapter, I shall choose to consider it in the distinct periods under these two; and I shall begin with the administration of it under the first testament, as reaching from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, and consider it as held forth in the several periods in that long interval of time.

1. The first period shall be from Adam to Noah. And those in this period to whom the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it were manifested and applied, were,

1a. Our first parents themselves, Adam and Eve, and that both by words and actions. By words, and these spoken not directly to them, nor by way of promise to them; but to the serpent, and threatening-wise to him; and yet were the first dawn of grace to fallen man, "Gen 3:15" from whence it might be at once concluded by Adam and Eve, that they should not immediately die, but that a seed should be of the woman who would be the ruin of Satan, and the Saviour of them; which must spring light, life, and joy, in their trembling hearts: and though these words are short and obscure, yet contain some of the principal articles of faith and doctrines of the gospel; as the incarnation of the Son of God, signified by the "seed of the woman", who should be made of a woman, born of a virgin, unbegotten by man, and without father as man; the sufferings and death of Christ for the sins of men, signified by the serpent's "bruising his heel", bringing him to the dust of death in his inferior nature, sometimes expressed by his being bruised for the sins of his people; and may hint at the manner

of his death, and crucifixion, since his feet could not well be pierced with nails without bruising his heel; also the victory he should obtain over Satan signified by “bruising his head”, destroying his power and policy, his schemes and works, his authority, dominion, and empire; yea, him, himself, with his principalities and powers; and may express the bruising him under the feet of his people, the deliverance of them from him; the taking the captives out of the hand of the mighty, and the saving them with an everlasting salvation. Which is the sum and substance of the gospel, and matter of joy to lost sinners.

The grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it, were manifested and applied to our first parents, by certain actions and things done; as by the Lord God making “coats of skin”, and “clothing them with them”, which were emblems of the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, Christ has wrought out; that righteousness which God imputes without works; and is unto all, and upon all them that believe, as their clothing and covering: and those coats being made of the skins of slain beasts, very probably slain for sacrifice, which man was soon taught the use of; may have respect to the sacrifice of Christ, the woman’s seed, which should be offered up, as was agreed on in the covenant of grace, and by which atonement would be made for sin, and upon which justification from it proceeds; all which are momentous articles of faith. The “cherubim” and “flaming sword”, placed at the East end of the garden of Eden, to keep the way of the tree of life, were not for terror, but for comfort; and were an hieroglyphic, showing that God in succeeding ages would raise up a set of prophets, under the Old Testament, and apostles and ministers of the gospel, under the New Testament, who should hold forth the word of light and life; that word which is quick and powerful, sharper than any twoedged sword; that has both light and heat in it; and who should show to men the way of salvation, and

observe unto them the true tree of life, and the way to it; even Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; see “Gen 3:21,24”.

1b. Abel, the Son of Adam, is the next person to whom an exhibition of the covenant and of the grace of it, was made; he was an instance of electing grace, according to which the blessings of the covenant are dispensed: a hint was given in the serpent’s curse, that there would be two seeds in the world, the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman; this distinction took place in the first two men that were born into the world. Cain was of the wicked one, the seed of the serpent; Abel was one of the spiritual seed of Christ, a chosen vessel of salvation; and, in virtue of electing grace, was a partaker of the blessings of grace in the covenant; particularly of justifying grace: he is called righteous Abel, not by his own righteousness, but by the righteousness of faith, by the righteousness of Christ received by faith; for he had the grace of faith, which is a covenant grace, bestowed on him; by which he looked to Christ for righteousness and eternal life; “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain; by which he obtained witness that he was righteous”, “Hebrews 11:4”. His sacrifice was a more excellent one; not only as to its kind, being a lamb, and so typical of the Lamb of God; but as to the manner in which it was offered, by faith, in the view of a better sacrifice than that; even the sacrifice of Christ, by which transgression is finished, sin made an end of, reconciliation for it made, and an everlasting righteousness brought in; all which Abel, by faith, looked unto, and God had respect to him, and to his offering; which he testified in some visible way; perhaps by sending down fire upon it; which drew the envy of his brother upon him, who could not rest until he had slain him: in this Abel was a type of Christ, as well as in his being a keeper of sheep; who, through the envy of the Jews, who were in some sense his brethren, was delivered to the Roman governor, to be put to death; so that

they are justly said to be the betrayers and murderers of him; and a like punishment of their sin came on them as on Cain; as he was drove from the presence of God, was an exile from his native place, and wandered about in another land; so they were carried captive by the Romans, and dispersed throughout the nations of the world, among whom they wander about to this day. Abel was a type of Christ also in his intercession; for as he “being dead, yet speaketh”; so Christ, though he was dead, yet is alive, and ever lives to make intercession, to speak on the behalf of his people, and be an Advocate for them; and his blood has a speaking voice in it, and speaks better things than that of Abel; it calls for peace and pardon.

1c. Seth, the other seed appointed in the room of Abel, whom Cain slew, is not to be overlooked; since the appointment of him was of grace, and to fill up the place of righteous Abel, and be the father of a race of men that should serve the Lord; and was put, set, and laid as the foundation, as it were, of the patriarchal church state, as his name signifies; and was a type of Christ, the foundation God has laid in Zion: and in the days of his son Enos, as an effect of divine grace, and the displays of it, “Men began to call upon the name of the Lord”, “Gen 4:25,26” not but that they called upon the Lord personally, and in their families, before; but now being more numerous, families joined together, and set up public worship; where they met, and socially served the Lord, and called upon him in the name of the Lord, in the name of Christ, who, as Mediator, might be more clearly manifested; or they called themselves by the name of the Lord, of the Lord’s people, and the sons of God, in distinction from the sons of men, the men of the world, irreligious persons, profane and idolatrous; which distinction took place before the flood, and perhaps as early as the times of Enos; see “Gen 6:2”.

1d. Enoch is the only person in this period besides, who is taken notice of for the grace of God bestowed on him;

though, no doubt, there were thousands who also were made partakers of it. He was “trained” up in a religious way, as his name signifies; he was eminent for his faith, and was high in the favour of God: he had a testimony that he pleased God, which could not be without faith, by which he drew nigh, had much nearness to, fellowship and familiarity with him; he “walked with God”, enjoyed much communion with him, and had large communications of grace, light, and knowledge from him; was even favoured with a spirit of prophecy, and foretold a future judgment, and the coming of Christ to it; and as he was made acquainted with the second coming of Christ, so, no doubt, with his first coming to save lost sinful men: and as Abel was a type of Christ in his low estate, in his sufferings and death, Enoch was a type of him in his ascension to heaven; for he “was not” on earth any longer than the time of his life mentioned; “for God took him”, translated him from earth to heaven took him to himself; so Christ, when he had finishes his work on earth, was taken to heaven, a cloud received him out of the sight of his apostles, and he ascended to his God and their God, to his Father and their Father.

2. Secondly, The next period of time in which an exhibition of the covenant of grace was made, is that from Noah to Abraham. And Noah is the principal person taken notice of in it. His father, at his birth, thought there was something remarkable in him, and designed to be done by him, and thus expressed himself; “This same shall comfort us concerning our work”, &c. “Gen 5:29” and therefore called his name Noah, which signifies comfort, and is derived from [^]Mxn[^], to “comfort”, the last letter being cut off. And in this Lamech has respect, not so much to things temporal, and to that benefit that should be received through Noah’s invention of instruments for the more easy cultivating of the earth, and by bringing agriculture to a greater perfection, as he did; whereby the curse of the earth was, in a great measure,

removed, which made it very difficult, through great toil and labour, to get a livelihood; but not so much to these as to things spiritual, respect is had by Lamech; and if he did not think him to be the promised Seed, the Messiah, the Consolation of Israel; yet he might conclude, that he would be an eminent type of Christ, from whom all comfort flows, the Saviour of men from their sins, their evil works, and from the curses of the law, on account of them; and who has eased them from the toil and labour of their hands, to get a righteousness of their own for their justification, having wrought out one for them. However, in this person, Noah, there was a rich display of the grace of the covenant. 2a. In his person, both in his private and public capacity. He found grace in the eyes of the Lord; that is, favour and good will, which is the source of all the blessings of grace, of electing, redeeming, justifying, pardoning, adopting, and sanctifying grace; of all the graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, &c. all which Noah was a partaker of, and this in the midst of a world of ungodly men; which showed it to be free and distinguishing: he was a just, or righteous man; not by his own works, by which no man can be justified, but by the righteousness of faith, of which he was an heir, “Heb 11:7” even the righteousness which is by the faith of Christ: and he was “perfect in his generations”; not in himself, but in the righteousness of Christ, by which he was justified, and was a truly sincere and upright man, and walked with God, as Enoch did, and was favoured with much communion with him: and in his public capacity he was a “preacher of righteousness”; of righteousness to be done between man and man; of the righteousness of God in bringing a flood upon the world to destroy it; and also of the righteousness of Christ; for no doubt he was a preacher of that of which he was an heir, and so had knowledge of and faith in it: the persons to whom he preached, or Christ in him by his Spirit, were the spirits that are now in prison; but then

in the days of Noah, while he was preparing the ark, were on earth; to whose ministry they were disobedient, and so it was without success; see “#2Pe 2:5 1Pe 3:19,20”.

2b. There was a display of the grace of God in the ark which Noah was directed to make for the saving of his family, “Heb 11:7” which may be considered either as an emblem of the church of God, which is to be formed in all things according to the pattern given by God himself, as that was; and which weathers the storms and tempests, and beatings of the waters of affliction and persecution, as that did in a literal sense; and in which are carnal professors, hypocrites, and heretics, as well as God’s chosen people, and truly gracious souls; as there were all sorts of creatures in the ark: or else the ark may be considered as a type of Christ, the cover and shelter from the storm and tempest of divine wrath and vindictive justice, and in whom spiritual rest is to be had for weary souls; just as the dove let out of the ark found no rest until it returned to it again; and as in the ark few souls were saved, only Noah and his family, and none but those that were in the ark; so there are but few that seek and find the way of salvation, and eternal life by Christ; and there is salvation in no other, but in him; nor are there any saved, but who are saved in and by him.

2c. This sacrifice of Noah, after he came out of the ark, was typical of the sacrifice of Christ, both with respect to the matter of it, clean creatures; expressive of the purity of Christ’s sacrifice, who is the Lamb of God without spot or blemish; and who offered himself without spot to God; and who, having no sin himself, was fit to be a sacrifice for the sins of others: and also with respect to the acceptance of it; “God smelled a sweet savour”; that is, he was well-pleased with, and graciously accepted of Noah’s sacrifice; and the same phrase is used of the acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice, “Eph 5:2” “Gen 8:20,21”.

2d. The covenant made with Noah, though it was not the

special covenant of grace, being made with him and all his posterity, and even with all creatures; yet as it was a covenant of preservation, it was a covenant of kindness and goodness in a temporal way; and it bore a resemblance to the covenant of grace; inasmuch as there were no conditions in it, no sign or token to be observed on man's part; only what God himself gave as a token of his good will, the rainbow in the cloud; and seeing that it is a covenant durable, lasting, and inviolable; see "Isa 54:9,10". The rainbow, the token of it, showed it to be a covenant of peace, which is one of the titles of the covenant of grace in the text referred to. So Christ, the Mediator of it, is said to have a rainbow upon his head; and a rainbow is said to be round about the throne, signifying, that access to the throne of grace is only through the peacemaker Jesus Christ, "Rev 10:1 4:3". To which may be added, that if this covenant of preservation had not taken place; but mankind had been now destroyed; the covenant of grace would have been made void, and of no effect; since the promised Seed, the great blessing of that covenant, was not yet come, and if so, never could, in the way promised.

2e. Noah's blessing of Shem is not to be omitted; "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem!" in which is a display of covenant grace; for to be the Lord God of any person, is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace, which always runs in this style, "I will be their God", Moreover, Noah foretold spiritual blessings of grace which should be enjoyed by his posterity in future time; "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem", "Gen 9:26,27". The tents of Shem signify the church of God in its tabernacle state; and which continued among the Jews who were of the race of Shem, until the coming of Christ; and then God sent the gospel into the Gentile world, among the posterity of Japheth, and enlarged, or "persuaded" them, as some choose to render the word, to come and join with the believing Jews in the same gospel

church state; whereby they became of the same body, and partakers of the same promises and blessings of the covenant; by which the above prophecy was in part fulfilled, and will be more completely in the latter day; see “Isa 60:1-8”.

3. Thirdly, The next period of time in which an exhibition was made of the covenant and of the grace of it, is that from Abraham to Moses. And,

3a. Abraham himself stands foremost in it; he was an eminent instance of the grace of God, of the electing and calling grace of God. He was born in an idolatrous family, and lived in an idolatrous land; and he was called from his own country, and his father’s house, to forsake it, and go elsewhere and serve the Lord; and to be separate from them, and the rest of the world; as the people of God are, when effectually called: he was an eminent instance of justifying grace; he was justified, but not by works, and so had not whereof to glory before God; but he was justified by faith in the righteousness of Christ; “He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness”, “Gen 15:6”. Not the act of faith, but the object of it, what he believed in, the Lord and his righteousness; for what was imputed to him, is imputed to all that believe in Christ, Jews or Gentiles, in all ages; now whatsoever may be said for Abraham’s faith, being imputed to himself for righteousness; it can never be thought, surely, that it is imputed to others also for the same. Besides, it is the “righteousness of faith”, the righteousness of Christ received by faith, which Abraham, when uncircumcised, had; and which is imputed to them also that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, “Rom 4:2,3,11,13,22-24”. To which may be added, that the gospel was preached to Abraham; the good news of his spiritual seed, those that walk in the steps of his faith, whether Jews or Gentiles, being blessed with all spiritual blessings in the Messiah, who should spring from him, “Gal 3:8”.

But what more especially deserve attention, are the various appearances of God unto Abraham, and the manifestations of the covenant of grace then made unto him. The first appearance was at the time of his call from his idolatrous country and kindred, when the covenant of grace was broke up to him, and he was assured of the blessings of it, “Gen 12:1-3” as it is to the chosen ones in effectual calling; and that it was this covenant that was then made known to Abraham, is clear from “Gal 3:17” where it is said to be “confirmed before of God in Christ”; which certainly designs the covenant of grace; for what else could be said to be thus “confirmed?” and which indeed was made with him, and confirmed in him in eternity, and was now made manifest to Abraham; and from the time of the manifestation of it to him at his call from Chaldea, to the giving of the law on mount Sinai, were four hundred and thirty years there mentioned. The next appearance of God to him I shall take notice of, (for I propose not to consider everyone) is that which is recorded in “Gen 15:1” where in a vision God said unto him, “I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward”; his shield, to protect him from all enemies, temporal and spiritual; his reward, portion, and inheritance in this life and that to come; and which is an exceeding great one, and is the sum and substance of the covenant of grace. Another appearance of God to Abraham was, when he was ninety nine years of age; when, besides the covenant of circumcision, God gave to him, and his natural seed of the male gender, and a promise of the land of Canaan to his posterity, as he had done before, he made himself known to him as the almighty God, or God all sufficient; whose power and grace were sufficient to support him in his walk before him, and bring him to a state of perfection, “Gen 17:1” and particularly in “Gen 17:4” he said to him, “As for me, behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations”; which the apostle explains of his being the father of all that believe, whether

circumcised or uncircumcised; even of all that walk in the steps of his faith, and believe unto righteousness, as he did; these are blessed, with faithful Abraham, with all the blessings of the covenant of grace, as he was, “Rom 4:9-17 Ga 3:9,29”. Once more, the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre. Three appeared to him in an human form, two of them were angels, and one was Jehovah, the Son of God; who not only foretold the birth of a son to Abraham, but made known to him the design to destroy Sodom; and gave an high encomium of his piety and justice; and allowed him to expostulate with him about the destruction of Sodom; admitted him to stand before him, and he communed with him. All which showed him to be a friend of God, and interested in the covenant of his grace, “Gen 18:3,10,17,22,33”. At the time of the offering up of his son Isaac, by the command of the Lord, he appeared to him, and restrained him from the actual performance of it; upon which he called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will see, or will appear in the mount of difficulties, as he had to him; and when he made a further manifestation of the covenant of grace in that important article; “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed”, “Gen 22:14-18” meaning the promised Seed, the Messiah, that should spring from him, as he did, and is called the Son of Abraham, “Matt 1:1” in whom all the elect are blessed with all spiritual blessings, the blessings of the everlasting covenant. Not to omit the interview Abraham had with Melchizedek, who met him upon his return from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him in the name of the most high God; this man was an eminent type of Christ; his name and title agree with his, king of righteousness, and king of peace; the righteous and peaceable king; a priest continually, and of whose order Christ was; and whose eternity is shadowed forth in his genealogy being unknown, in which he was made like unto the Son of God, the eternal Son of the eternal Father: it may be our Lord

has respect to this interview, when he says, “Abraham saw my day, and was glad”; saw him in the promise, and saw him in this type, “John 8:56 Heb 7:1-3 Ge 14:18,19”.

3b. Isaac, the son of Abraham, is the next instance of covenant grace in this period of time; in his line from Abraham it was promised the Messiah should come, and did: the same covenant of grace that was exhibited to Abraham, was manifested to Isaac in the same words, “Gen 26:3,4”. And he was himself an eminent type of Christ, the promised Seed, and the great blessing of the covenant, both in his sacrifice and in his resurrection. Isaac was Abraham’s own son, his only son, his beloved son, whom he took to offer on mount Moriah; Isaac went with him without reluctance, carrying the wood on which he was to be laid, and was laid; by which it appeared that Abraham withheld him not. So Christ, who has been offered a sacrifice by the will of God, is his own Son, his begotten Son, his only begotten Son, and his beloved Son, when it was his pleasure to make his soul an offering for sin, he willingly went, as a lamb to the slaughter, bearing on his shoulders the cross on which he was crucified; and was not spared by his divine Father, but delivered up for us all. And though Isaac died not, yet he was reckoned by Abraham as dead; who accounted that God was able to raise him from the dead; from “whence also he received him in a figure”, “Heb 11:19” a ram caught in a thicket being shown him, and which he offered in his room; and so Isaac was delivered, and went home alive to his father’s house; and this was on the third day from the time Abraham reckoned him as a dead man. So Christ was “put to death in the flesh”, signified by the ram in the thicket; and “quickened in the Spirit”, typified by Isaac saved alive; who, after his resurrection, went to his God and our God, to his Father and our Father; and his resurrection was on the third day, according to this scripture type of him.

3c. Jacob, the son of Isaac, is another instance in whom

there was a display of covenant grace, in the period of time between Abraham and Moses. He was an eminent and illustrious instance of electing grace, according to which the blessings of the covenant are dispensed. He and Esau were brothers, twins, and if any, Esau had the precedence; yet before their birth it was notified to Rebekah, that “the elder should serve the younger”, “Gen 25:23” which the apostle makes use of to illustrate and exemplify the grace of God in election, “Rom 9:11-13”. The same covenant of grace that was manifested to Abraham and Isaac, was repeated and made known to Jacob, “Gen 28:13-15”. Christ also was represented to him by a ladder, whose top reached to heaven, and on which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending, “Gen 28:12”. The same is said of Christ, “John 1:51” who in his divine nature reached to heaven, and was in heaven when in his human nature he was here on earth; and to whom angels ministered, and who is the only Mediator between God and man, and the way of access to God, and communion with him. Christ in an human form appeared to Jacob, and wrestled with him, with whom Jacob had so much power as to prevail, and obtain the blessing from him, and got the name of Israel, “Gen 32:24-28”. The Messiah was prophesied of by him, under the name of Shiloh, the prosperous and the peaceable; in whose hands the pleasure of the Lord prospered, and who made peace for men by the blood of his cross; and that he should spring from his son Judah, and out of his tribe, as he did; and that he should come while civil government, in some form or another, was in Judah; and that when he came, there should be a great gathering of the Gentiles to him; all which have been exactly fulfilled: and for Christ, as the author of salvation, provided and promised in the covenant of grace, did the patriarch Jacob wait, “Gen 49:10,18”.

3d. Within this period of time, about the time the children of Israel were in Egypt, and before the times of Moses, lived

Job, and his three friends: who, though they were not of Israel, but of the race of Esau, yet the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it, were made known to them, as a pledge and earnest of what would be done in later times. Job was an eminent instance of the grace of God; his character, as given by God himself, is, that he was “a perfect and upright man”; perfect, as justified by the righteousness of Christ; upright and sincere, as sanctified by the Spirit; and who, in his walk and conversation, appeared to be “one that feared God and eschewed evil”, “Job 1:8” and as he was a man of great knowledge of natural and civil things, so of things divine, spiritual, and evangelical; of the impurity of nature; of the insufficiency of man’s righteousness to justify him before God; and of the doctrine of redemption and salvation by Christ. How many articles of faith, and doctrines of grace, are contained in those words of his; “I know that my Redeemer liveth?” &c. from whence it appears, that he knew Christ as the Redeemer, and as his Redeemer, provided and promised in the covenant of grace; that he then existed; that he would be incarnate, and dwell among men on earth; and come a second time to judge the world; and that there would be a resurrection of the same body, and a beatific vision of God in a future state; see “Job 9:2,20,30,31 14:4” “Job 19:25-27”. Job’s three friends, though they mistook his case, and misapplied things to him, yet were men that knew, much of divine things; of the corruption of nature; of the vanity of self-righteousness; this, indeed, was their quarrel with Job, imagining, though wrongly, that he was righteous in his own eyes: and how gloriously does Elihu speak of the great Redeemer as the “Messenger” of the covenant, the uncreated Angel, Christ; as “an Interpreter” of his Father’s mind and will; One among a thousand, the Chiefest of ten thousand, whose office it is “to show unto men his uprightness”, his own righteousness, to declare and preach it, “Pslam 40:9”. And as a Ransom

found in council and covenant; a proper Person to give his life a ransom for men: “Job 4:17,18 15:14-16” “Job 25:4-6 33:23,24”. Thus the covenant of grace was exhibited, held forth, displayed, and manifested in the grace and blessings of it in the times of the patriarchs.

13. Of the Exhibitions of the Covenant of Grace Under the Mosaic Dispensation

Having traced the manifestation and application of the Covenant of Grace from the times of our first parents, through the patriarchal state, to the times of Moses; I shall now consider it as exhibited in his time, and unto the times of David and the prophets; and shall begin,

1. With Moses himself, who was a great man of God; and though the law was by him, he had large knowledge of Christ; of his person, offices, and grace; of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it. “Had ye believed Moses”, says Christ to the Jews, “ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me”, “John 5:46”.

Moses was an eminent type of Christ, in whom the grace of Christ, and of the covenant, was eminently displayed. The apostle in “Heb 3:1-14” runs the parallel between Moses and Christ, though he gives the preference to Christ, as it was just he should; they were both, he observes, concerned in the house of God; both faithful therein; with this difference, Moses as a servant, and Christ as a Son in his own house. Moses was a mediator when the covenant on Sinai was given, at the request of the people of Israel, and by the permission of God; and stood between God and them, to deliver his word to them, “Gal 3:19 De 5:5” in which he was a type of Christ, the Mediator of the new and better covenant, and the Mediator between God and man. He was a prophet, and spoke of Christ as who should be raised up a prophet like unto him, and was to be hearkened to; and who has been raised up; and God has spoken by him all

his mind and will to the sons of men. When Moses and Elias were with Christ on the mount, which showed harmony and agreement between them; a voice was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him", as the great Prophet of the church; see "Deut 18:15 Heb 1:1,2" "Matt 17:5". Moses was a priest, and officiated as such before Aaron was appointed to that office; and he, indeed, invested him with it by the offering of sacrifices, "Ex 29:1 Ps 99:6" in which he prefigured Christ in his priestly office, who became man, that he might be a merciful and sympathizing one; and being holy, harmless, and separate from sinners, was fit to be one, and to offer a pure sacrifice for sin. Moses was also a king and a lawgiver under God; a ruler and governor of the people of Israel, "De 33:4,5". Christ is King of Zion and King of saints; by the designation of his Father, and with the acknowledgment of his people, who own him, and submit to him as such; and of whose government there will be no end, "Psalm 2:6 Isa 33:22 9:7". Once more, Moses was a deliverer or redeemer of the people of Israel, out of that state of bondage in which they were in Egypt, "Acts 7:35" and in this bore a figure of Christ the Redeemer of his people, from a worse than Egyptian bondage, the bondage of sin, Satan, and the law; and herein and hereby through him were held forth the grace of the covenant, and the blessings of it in Christ to the faith of God's people.

There were many things done by him, and under him, and in his time, which exhibited and showed forth the covenant of grace, and the things contained in it. The whole ceremonial law was nothing else than a shadowy exhibition of it; it was a shadow of good things to come by Christ, the great high Priest, which are come by him; as peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation. The priests, their garments, and their sacrifices, with other numerous rites, all prefigured Christ, and the grace of the covenant, which is by him: the

ceremonial law was the gospel of the Israelites, it was their pedagogue, their schoolmaster, that taught them the A B C of the gospel in their infant state. Christ was the mark and scope it aimed at, the end of it, and in whom it had its full accomplishment; the Israelites, by reason of darkness, could not see to the end of those things, which are now abolished, and which we with open face behold. It would be too tedious to go over the various particulars in the former dispensation, which held forth the grace of Christ, and of the covenant to the faith of men. It may be sufficient to instance in three or four of them, which were for a time, or of longer continuance; and were either stated ordinances, or extraordinary works of providence, which typified spiritual things.

The passover, which was instituted at the time of Israel's going out of Egypt, was kept by faith; not only of deliverance from Egyptian bondage, but in the faith of a future redemption and salvation by Christ; hence he is called "Christ our passover", "#1Co 5:7 Heb 11:23". The passover was a lamb without blemish, slain by the congregation of Israel, between the two evenings; it was then roasted with fire, and eaten whole with bitter herbs, and its blood was sprinkled upon the doorposts of the houses of the Israelites; that when the destroying angel passed through Egypt, to destroy their firstborn, seeing the blood where it was sprinkled, passed by the houses in which the Israelites were, and left them unhurt; and hence the institution had the name of the passover; see "Ex 12:1-51". All which was typical of Christ, who is the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish; who was taken by the Jews and crucified and slain; who endured the fire of divine wrath, whereby his strength was dried up like a potsherd; is to be, and is fed upon by faith; even a whole Christ, in his person, and offices, and grace, attended with repentance and humiliation for sin; believers in him, when they look to him by faith, mourn; and a profession of him is, more or less, accompanied

with bitter afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions; and his blood, which from hence is called the blood of sprinkling, that being shed and sprinkled on the hearts of men, not only purges their consciences from dead works, but secures them from the wrath and justice of God; who, looking upon this blood, which is ever in sight, is pacified towards them, and passes by them, when he takes vengeance on others.

The manna was another type of Christ; that was typical bread, Christ is the true bread; hence Christ, speaking of the manna, and of himself, says, "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven", "Jonh 6:32" meaning himself, the truth of the type; the manna was only a shadow, Christ is the substance, the solid and substantial food, signified by it, and therefore is called "the hidden manna", "Rev 2:17" which every believer in Christ has a right to eat of, and does; so the Old and New Testament saints "all eat of the same spiritual meat", "#1Co 10:3". The Israelites being in the wilderness, and hungry, complained for want of food, and murmured; God promised to give them bread from heaven, which he did: this when they first saw, they knew not what it was; and asked one another, What is it? it was small in bulk, white in colour, and sweet in taste; this they gathered every day for their daily food, as they were directed; and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans: and on this they lived while in the wilderness, until they came to the land of Canaan; see "Ex 16:1-36" and "Num 11:1-35" and "Jos 5:12". All which pointed to Christ and his grace, the food of faith; who, when he came into the world, the world knew him not; nor is he known to the Israel of God before conversion; they are without Christ, without the knowledge of him while unregenerate; until it pleases God to call them by his grace, and reveal his Son in them. And he is entirely hidden from the men of the world; in whose eyes, and in the eyes of carnal professors, he is little, mean, and contemptible; yet white and

ruddy, comely and beautiful, pure and holy, and desirable, to truly gracious souls; to whose taste his fruits, the blessings of his grace, his doctrines, his word, and ordinances, are sweet and pleasant; and a crucified Christ, whose sufferings are signified by the manna being ground, beaten, and baked, is the food of believers in this present state; what is their daily food, and which they live upon while they are in the wilderness, till they come to Canaan's land, and eat of the "old corn", the things which God from all eternity has prepared for them that love him.

The water out of the rock the Israelites drank of in the wilderness, was another emblem and representative of Christ and his grace; hence called "spiritual drink", and the rock a "spiritual rock; and that Rock was Christ", "#1Co 10:4".

The Israelites wanting water in the wilderness, murmured, when Moses was ordered by the Lord to smite a rock at two different times and places, from whence water gushed out for the supply of them, their flocks, and herds. Christ was signified by the rock, who may be compared to one for height, shelter, strength, and duration; and with which they are followed and supplied while they are in this world: and as it was by the rod of Moses the rock was smitten; so Christ was stricken and smitten in a legal and judicial way, being the surety and representative of his people, by which means the blessings of grace flow unto them; as justification, pardon, &c. just as the blood and water sprung from his side when pierced with the spear; and this rock being thus smitten for believers, they have a never failing supply of grace through the wilderness. The brazen serpent was another figure of Christ and his grace. The Israelites being bitten with fiery serpents, of which many died; Moses was ordered by the Lord to make a fiery serpent of brass, and set it on a pole, that whoever was bitten might look unto it and live; which was done accordingly, and the promised effect followed, "Num 21:6-9". Our Lord takes

notice of this very significant type himself, and applies it to himself, “John :14,15”. The serpent Moses made had the form of a serpent, but not the nature of one: Christ was in the likeness of sinful flesh, but his flesh was not sinful; he was without the poison of the serpent, sin, original or; actual: it was a fiery one, denoting either the wrath of God sustained by Christ, or the vengeance he took on his and our enemies when on the cross; or rather, it may denote his flaming love to his people, expressed in his sufferings and death. It being of brass, denoted not only his lustre and glory, but his strength; who, being the mighty God, is able to save to the uttermost all that come and look unto him for salvation. The situation of the serpent of Moses on a pole, may signify the crucifixion of Christ, which he himself expressed by being lifted up from the earth, “John 12:32” or his exaltation at the right hand of God; or rather, the setting of him up in the ministry of the gospel, where he is erected as an ensign and standard to gather souls to him; and where he is held forth evidently as crucified and slain, as the object and ground of hope. And as the end of the erection of the serpent was, that such who were bitten by the fiery serpents might look to it and live; so the end of Christ’s crucifixion, and of the ministration of him in the Gospel is, that such who are envenomed with the poison of the old serpent, the devil, and whose wound is otherwise incurable, might, through looking to Christ by faith, live spiritually, comfortably, and eternally; as all such do who are favoured with a spiritual sight of him, “John 6:40”.

2. Besides Moses, there were others in his time, in whom the grace of the covenant was remarkably displayed and manifested; particularly Aaron, his brother, called “the saint of the Lord”, “Pslm 106:16” the Holy One, with whom were the Urim and Thummim, “Deut 33:8” a type of Christ, in whom all lights and perfections are; and though Christ, as a priest, was not of the order of Aaron, but of another; yet Aaron, in

his priestly office, prefigured him; he was taken from among men, from among his brethren, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin, and did not take this honour to himself, but was called of God to it; “so Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest”; but was made so by his divine Father, “Heb 5:4,5” and has offered up a sacrifice for the sins of his people, of a sweet smelling savour to God; which the sacrifices of Aaron and his sons were typical of, by which the faith of believers in those times was led to the great and better sacrifice of Christ. Aaron was also a type of Christ in his intercession, as well as in his sacrifice; he could speak well, and therefore was appointed the spokesman of Moses unto the people, “Ex 4:14-16”. Christ is an advocate for his people; he can speak well to their case for them, and ever lives to appear in the presence of God, and to make intercession for them, and is always heard.

3. Joshua, the successor of Moses, was also a type of Christ, and in him the grace of Christ, and of the covenant, was evidently displayed. Their names agree, both signify a Saviour; Joshua is called Jesus, “Heb 4:8”. Moses conducted the people of Israel through the wilderness, to the borders of the land of Canaan, but was not allowed to lead them into it; intimating, that it is not by the works of the law, or by the works of righteousness, done by men, that they are or can be saved; that a man must have a better righteousness than his own, or he will never enter into the kingdom of heaven; there is no salvation but in and by the name of Jesus, the antitype of Joshua: as Joshua led the people of Israel into the land of Canaan, and settled them there; so Christ, by his blood and righteousness, has opened a way for his people into the heavenly state, and gives them an abundant entrance into his kingdom and glory. Joshua did not give the true rest in Canaan; for then another would not have been spoken of; it was only a typical one he gave; but Christ, our spiritual Joshua, gives spiritual rest here, and eternal rest hereafter.

The scarlet thread which Rahab the harlot was ordered by the spies in the times of Joshua, to bind at her window, that her house might be known by them, in order to save her, and all in it, when Jericho was destroyed, was an emblem of the blood of Christ, by which are peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation for the chief of sinners; for Gentile sinners, as well as Jews; and through which is security from wrath, ruin, and destruction. Joshua was favoured with an appearance of Christ unto him, with a sword drawn in his hand, who declared unto him, that he came as the Captain of the host of the Lord, to animate, encourage, and assist him. Christ is the Captain of salvation, who has fought the battles of his people for them; conquered all their enemies, and made them more than conquerors through himself. There were later appearances of Christ to others in this period of time, as to Manoah and his wife, who declared to them his name was "Pele", a Wonder, or Wonderful, which is one of the names of Christ, "Isa 9:6" and to Gideon, Samuel, and others, I shall take no further notice of.

Of the Covenant of Grace, as Exhibited in the Times of David, and the Succeeding Prophets, to the Coming of Christ

Christ, the great blessing of the covenant, was spoken of by all "the holy prophets which have been since the world began"; by the patriarch prophets; by Moses and others; but more abundantly by the prophets of a later date; God, who at sundry times, in different ages of the world; "and in divers manners", as by angels, by vision, by dreams and impulses on the mind; "spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets", concerning his mind and will, the covenant of his grace, and the blessings of it; to which dispensation of things is opposed that which is by Christ; "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son", "Luke 1:70 Heb 1:1,2". From whence it appears, that the first administration of the covenant of grace, as has been observed, reached from the beginning of the world, or

near it, to the coming of Christ; and now having traced it from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to David; I shall next consider it as more clearly manifested in the times of David, and by succeeding prophets, to the coming of Christ. And begin,

1. First, with David, who was a prophet, and by whom the Spirit of God spake concerning Christ, and the covenant of grace made with him, “Acts 2:30 1:16 2Sa 23:2-5”. The grace of the covenant was displayed in him, the blessings of it were bestowed on him, the covenant itself was made with him; not only the covenant of royalty, concerning the succession of the kingdom of Israel in his family; but the special covenant of grace, in which his own salvation lay; a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and an everlasting one, “#2Sa 23:5”. This was made with him, as he declares, that is, made manifest and applied unto him, and he was assured of his interest in it. He was an eminent type of Christ, who is therefore often called by his name, “Psalm 89:3,20 Eze 34:23,24 37:24 Ho 3:5”. In his person, in the comeliness of it; in his character and employment, as a shepherd; in his offices, of prophet and king; in his afflictions and persecutions; and in his wars and victories. And great light and knowledge he had of things respecting Christ and his grace, as the book of Psalms, written by him, under divine inspiration, abundantly shows; as, of the person of Christ; of his divine and eternal sonship; of his being the eternal begotten Son of God, to whom this was first, at least, so clearly made known, “Pslm 2:7”. From whence are taken all those expressions in the New Testament, of Christ’s being the only begotten Son, the only begotten of the Father, his own and proper Son: phrases expressive of Christ’s co-essentiality, co-eternity, and co-equality with his Father. David speaks of the humanity of Christ, of a body being prepared for him in covenant, of the formation of it in the womb of the virgin; of his being of his seed, and springing

from him as man, as he did, “Psalm 40:6” compared with “Heb 10:5 Ps 139:15,16 132:11,17 Ac 13:23”. He speaks very expressly of his sufferings and death, in “Psalm 22:1-31” uses the very words Christ uttered on the cross; exactly describes the persons that surrounded him, and mocked at him when on it, as well as the manner of his death, by crucifixion, signified by his hands and feet being pierced; and also the dreadful pains and agonies was then in, by which he was brought to the dust of death; yea, some minute circumstances of his sufferings are observed, as casting lots on his vesture, and parting his garments; and elsewhere, the giving him gall and vinegar to drink, “Psalm 69:21”. He foretells his burial in the grave, which should not be so long as to see corruption, and his resurrection to an immortal life, “Psalm 16:10,11 Ac 2:25-31”. His ascension to heaven, “Psalm 68:18” compared with “Eph 4:8-10”. His session at the right hand of God, “Psalm 110:1 Heb 1:13”. He treats of his suretyship engagements, and of his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King, “Psalm 40:6-9 110:4 2:6 89:27 72:8”.

2. Secondly, Solomon, the Son of David, and his successor in the kingdom, had not only the covenant of royalty established with him, but the special covenant of grace was made with him, or made known unto him; “I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son”, “#2Sa 7:14”. He was both a preacher and king of Israel; and, no doubt, a good man, notwithstanding his fall; his prayer at the dedication of the temple shows it; as well as his being the amanuensis of the Holy Spirit, in various writings: an eminent type he was of Christ, who is therefore called Solomon, “Song 3:7,9,11 8:11,12” in his name, which signifies peaceable, and agrees with Christ, the Prince of peace; in his scent, the Son of David; in his wisdom, in which Christ is greater than Solomon; in his wealth and riches; and in the peaceableness and extent of his kingdom. Much of Christ, and the blessings of grace through him, were made known

unto him. He writes of him under the name of Wisdom, as a divine Person, the same with the Logos, the Word, and Son of God; of his eternal existence; of the eternal generation of him; of his being brought forth, and brought up as a Son with his Father from everlasting, as is declared in the eighth of Proverbs; which when one reads, might be tempted to think he was reading the first chapter of John, there being such a similarity, yea, sameness of diction, sentiment, and doctrine. Solomon or Agur speaks of Christ under the names of Ithiel and Ucal; the one signifies, "God is with me"; as he always was with Christ, and Christ with him: the other, "the mighty One", or, "I am able", I can do all things; as he could, being the Almighty. He speaks in the same place of the infinite, omnipresent, and omnipotent Being, whose name, that is, his nature is incomprehensible and ineffable; and to whom he ascribes a Son, as a divine, distinct Person from his Father; as of the same incomprehensible and ineffable nature with him, and so co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal with him, "Prov 30:1,4". The book of Canticles, written by Solomon, is a rich display of the glories and excellencies of Christ, of his great love to his church, and of the covenant blessings of grace bestowed upon her. Pass we on now.

3. Thirdly, To the prophets who lived in the succeeding reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah; as Isaiah, Jeremiah, &c. who were holy men of God, and spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of God was in them, and spoke by them; and the sure word of prophecy they delivered, was as a light or lamp in a dark place; the gospel day not as yet being broke, nor the shadows of the ceremonial law fled, nor Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, yet up and risen. These,

3a. Speak much of the covenant of grace. Of it as a covenant of life and peace, in which provision is made for the spiritual and eternal life of the covenant ones; and in which

the plan and model of their peace and reconciliation by Christ was formed, “Mal 2:5 Isa 54:10”. Of it as an everlasting one, which should continue for ever, and never be altered, nor removed, “Isa 55:3 54:10”. Of the persons who engaged and entered into it, Jehovah and the branch, that should build the temple of the Lord, between whom the council of peace was; yea, Jehovah the Father, the Word of God, and his Spirit, who were each of them concerned in the covenant of grace, “Zech 6:12,13 Hag 2:4,5”. Of Christ, as the sum and substance of it, said to be the covenant of the people, in whom are all the blessings and promises of it, called the sure mercies of David; and whose blood is said to be the blood of the covenant, by which it is ratified and confirmed; and he is spoken of as the messenger of it, “Isa 42:6 49:8 55:3 Zec 9:11” “Mal 3:1”. Mention is made by them of the persons on whose account the covenant of grace was made, the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles, “Isa 49:5,6,8” yea, they speak of the new covenant, or of the administration of it under the New Testament dispensation, and give the several articles of it; which would be more clearly known, and more powerfully have their effect, “JEr 31:31-34”. Which may lead on to observe,

3b. That the prophets in this period of time speak very plain of the blessings of the covenant of grace, even more plainly and fully than heretofore. As of,

3b1. The blessing of pardon of sin through Christ, which is a blessing of the covenant, “Heb 8:10,12”. Not only Moses relates, that God appeared to him, and caused his goodness to pass before him, and proclaimed his name, a God gracious and merciful, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; and David describes the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and instances in himself, “Ex 34:6,7 Ps 32:1,2,5”. But the apostle Peter observes, that to Christ “give all the prophets witness”, that “through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins”,

“Acts 10:43”. They speak of it as belonging to God, and him only, even every act of it, and as flowing from his mercy; on which account there is none like unto him, “Dan 9:9” “Micah 7:18” and of his being abundant in it, or abundantly pardoning, even all that apply to him for it; and all their sins and transgressions, thou ever so many and great, “Isa 55:7 1:18” and of the freeness of pardon, as the effect of the free favour, love, grace, and mercy of God, which is very strongly expressed in “Isa 43:25” after so many aggravated sins of omission and commission are observed; and yet they speak of it as founded upon the sufferings of Christ, and redemption, reconciliation, atonement, and satisfaction procured thereby, “Zech 3:9 Isa 44:22 Da 9:24”. They also describe the persons that share in this blessing, even such whom God has reserved for himself in election, and in the covenant of grace, and who are the remnant of his heritage, his portion, and the lot of his inheritance, “Jer 50:20 Mic 7:18”.

3b2. The blessing of justification by the righteousness of Christ; which though a doctrine more clearly revealed under the gospel dispensation, yet is “witnessed by the law and prophets”, “Rom 3:21,22”. The prophets speak of the righteousness by which men are justified as an everlasting righteousness, that was then to be brought in by Christ, the Surety and Saviour of his people, “Dan 9:24” and as “well pleasing to God”, because by it the “law is magnified”, all its demands answered, and it made “honourable”, and more so than it could have been by the most perfect obedience of angels and men, “Isa 42:21”. They speak of Christ as the author of it; and hence he is called by them, “The Lord our Righteousness”; and “the Sun of Righteousness”; because righteousness is wrought out by him, and springs from him, as light from the sun, “Jer 23:6” “Mal 4:2”. They speak of Christ as the justifier of them that know him, and believe in him, “Isa 53:11”. And of the seed of Israel being justified in

him, and glorying of him, as the Lord their Righteousness, even all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles; and the church is represented by them as expressing her strong faith of interest in the righteousness of Christ, as her justifying one; “Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength”, “Isa 45:24,25”. Under the emblem of Joshua, the high priest, accused of, and charged with sin and guilt, yet acquitted by Christ, the Angel of the Lord is represented an elect sinner, charged with sin by law and justice, by Satan and his own conscience; but cleared from all by the application and imputation of the righteousness of Christ, to him expressed by those strong terms, “causing his iniquity to pass from him, and clothing him with change of raiment”, “Zech 3:1-4”. The same with the garments of salvation, and robe of righteousness, the church declares she was clothed and covered with, and in which she rejoiced, “Isa 61:10”.

3b3. The blessing of adoption is another covenant blessing, spoken of by the prophets; not national adoption, included in the national covenant made with the people of Israel; but adoption by special grace. The prophets speak of God’s putting some among the children that were unlovely, unworthy, and deserving of his displeasure, and yet were the objects of his love and delight; his dear sons and pleasant children, and whom he owned in such a relation, “Jer 3:19 Jer 31:20” of some that were given to Christ as his children, and to whom he stood in the relation of an everlasting Father, Isa 8:18 9:6 Heb 2:13”. And though the saints under the former dispensation for the most part had not such a measure of the Spirit of adoption, as under the New Testament, yet they were then heirs, and so children; and some of them had a strong assurance of their interest in God, as their Father; “Doubtless, thou art our father”, Isa 63:16. And the prophets also speak of a large number of adopted sons and daughters of God, as in the latter day, in each of the parts of the world, both among

the Gentiles and among the Jews, Isa 43:6 45:11 Ho 1:10.

3b4. Salvation, spiritual and eternal, in general, is the great blessing of the covenant of grace, “#2Sa 23:5” and this the prophets enquired after, and diligently searched into and spoke of; of the author of it, declaring it was not in hills and mountains, nor to be expected from thence, but in the Lord God only; they affirm that Christ was appointed as God’s salvation to the ends of the earth; that he would come and save, and as having salvation; they represent him as mighty to save, yea as if salvation was then already wrought out by him, “Jer 3:23 Isa 49:6 35:4 63:1,5 Zec 9:9”. They speak of the nature of it as an everlasting salvation, and describe the persons interested in it as the Israel of God, both Jews and Gentiles; even such who are at the ends of the earth, and who are encouraged to look to Christ for salvation, “Isa 45:17,22” and they speak of the time when it should be wrought out, “Den 9:24 1Pe 1:10,11”.

3c. There are various things relating to Christ, his person, office and grace, which are copiously and frequently spoken of by the prophets in this period of time; as his incarnation, which though not till many hundred years after, is spoken of as if then done, because of the certainty of it in the purpose and promise of God, “to us a child is born”, “Isa 9:6” his birth of a virgin, with the name given him, Immanuel, God with us; and which is represented as wonderful, new and unheard of, as it justly might, “Isa 7:14 Mt 1:23 Jer 31:22 Da 2:45”. The place of his birth, Bethlehem Ephratah, “Micah 5:2 Mt 2:4-6 Joh 7:41,42”. Some things following his birth, as the murder of the infants about Bethlehem; his being carried to Egypt, and called again from thence, and residing in Nazareth, “Jer 31:15 Ho 11:1” “Matt 2:13-23”. The parts where he should chiefly live, converse, and minister, “Isa 9:1 Mt 4:13,14”. His state of humiliation, sufferings, and death, which are particularly described in “Isa 53:1-12”. The circumstances of his being

sold for thirty pieces of silver by one of his disciples, forsaken by them all, and his side pierced with a spear, “Zech 11:12,13 13:7 12:10” “Matt 27:3-10 26:31 Joh 19:34-37”. The prophets also speak of the time of his coming and of his sufferings: Daniel fixes the exact time of them, from a date given; and Haggai and Malachi declare he should come into the second temple, and give it a greater glory than the former; so that he must come and suffer as he did, before the destruction of that, “Dan 9:24,26 Hag 2:7,9 Mal 3:1”. And the same prophets, with Zechariah, who were the last of the prophets, speak of his near approach, that he was just at hand, and would soon, Suddenly, and at unawares, come into his temple; and of his forerunner, “Zech 3:8 6:12 9:9 Hag 2:6 Mal 3:1 4:5” but though the prophets mentioned were the last of the inspired writers, prophecy did not wholly cease with them; as appears by the instances of Zechariah the father of John the Baptist, who prophesied of him, and of the Messiah; and good old Simeon, to whom it was revealed by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ; and Anna the prophetess, who spoke of him to those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem, “Luke 1:67 2:25,26,36,38”. So true it is what our Lord says, that “the law and the prophets were until John”; which finishes the Old Testament dispensation, and the first and old administration of the covenant of grace; after which the kingdom of God, or gospel of Christ, was preached more clearly and fully, and God spake no more by the prophets, but by his Son, “Luke 16:16 Heb 1:1,2” when the second and new covenant, or administration of it, took place; of which we shall treat in the next chapter. And from what has been observed it appears, that the former administration of the covenant of grace, reaching from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, was by types and figures, by shadows and sacrifices, and by promises and prophecies of future things, which are now fulfilled; Christ, the sum and substance of all,

being come, the great blessing of the covenant of grace, and in whom all are included.

14. The Abrogation of the Old Covenant, Or First Administration of it, And the Introduction of the New, Or Second Administration of it.

When we speak of the Abrogation of the Covenant this is to be understood, not of the covenant of grace, as to the matter and substance of it, which remains invariably the same in all periods of time; it is an everlasting covenant; it is ordered in all things and sure; it can never be broken and made void; every promise of it is unalterable, and every blessing irreversible; the covenant of peace can never be removed; it will stand firm to all generations; but with respect to the form of the administration of it only, even the form of it, under the former, or Old Testament dispensation, before described; and in order to set this in its true and proper light,

1. First, Let it be observed, that it was never designed that the first administration of the covenant of grace should continue always in that form; it was foretold that there should be a cessation of it, and therefore it might be expected.

1a. It was only intended to continue for a certain time, called, “The time of reformation”, “Heb 9:10” when there would be a reform from burdensome rites and ceremonies; or “of correction”, when what was faulty and deficient would be corrected, amended, and become perfect; or “of direction”, when the saints would be directed to look to Christ, the substance of types and figures, and for perfection in him; the same with “the time appointed of the Father”, until which time, children, though heirs, are under tutors and governors; so the Israelites were under the elements of the world, the ceremonies of the former dispensation, under the tutorage and pedagogy of the law: for the “law”, the ceremonial law, was their “schoolmaster unto Christ”, that led them to him,

and instructed them in him; but when he came, they were no longer under a schoolmaster; and this was when “the fulness of time was come”, agreed on between the Father and the Son; at which time the Son was sent, “that they might receive the adoption of children”, and be no more considered as in their nonage, and as needing the instructions of a schoolmaster, “Gal 3:1-4 3:24,25”.

1b. The ancient form of the administration of the covenant of grace, in a course of time, was limited to a certain people in a certain country, worshipping at a certain place, and sacrificing on the same altar. The word, worship and service of God, peculiarly belonged to the Jews, which was their distinguishing privilege above all the nations of the world, “Psalm 147:19,20 Ro 3:1,2 9:4”. All their males were obliged three times in the year to appear at Jerusalem and worship together; and all their offerings and sacrifices were to be brought and offered on the altar there, and no where else, “Deut 12:11,14 16:16”. Now such a state of things was never designed to continue always; since when Shiloh, the Messiah, should come, there would be a gathering of the people to him, of people out of all nations of the world, who were to be blessed in him; he was to be set up as an ensign to them, to whom they would seek; from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, his name was to be great among the Gentiles, and incense to be offered to it in every place, “Gen 49:10” “Isa 11:10 Mal 1:11”. Now to such a dispensation the former state of things could never suit, and therefore could not be intended to be continued; the people of all nations could never be convened into one country, and worship at one place, and sacrifice on one altar.

1c. It is expressly foretold, that there would be “a new covenant”, or a new administration of it; and that the former, in course, would cease, “Jer 31:31,32” and it is upon this the apostle reasons, and proves the abrogation of the former

covenant, “in that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old”, “heb 8:8,13”. Particularly it was foretold, that sacrifices should cease, and be no longer acceptable to God; which were a considerable branch of the administration of the old covenant. These were from the beginning, as early as the first manifestation of the covenant of grace to fallen man: indeed, while they were in use by divine appointment, they were not in such high esteem with God as moral obedience and spiritual services, “1Sa 15:22 Ps 69:30,31 Ho 6:6”. And plain hints were given, that the time would come when they should be no more practised and regarded David had knowledge, by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, of what Christ, the surety of his people, said to his divine Father in the council and covenant of peace, and what he would say again when he came into the world to be their Saviour; “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire”, &c. “Then said I, Lo, I come”, &c. “Psalm 40:6,7 Heb 10:5-7”. Christ’s coming into the world to offer up himself a sacrifice for the sins of his people, was virtually saying, that God would have legal sacrifices no longer ordered up, and would no more accept of them. And Daniel expressly says, that the Messiah would “cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”; the daily sacrifice, and every other offering according to the law, “Dan 9:27”. And the Jews themselves say, {1} “that all sacrifices will cease in time to come (in the time of their vainly expected Messiah) but the sacrifice of praise.”

According to prophecy, the Levitical priesthood, with which so many rites and ceremonies were connected, and upon which sacrifices were established, and in the exercise of which they were performed, was to be changed; the Messiah was to come, an High Priest of another order of priesthood than that of Aaron; “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek”, “Psalm 110:4” which are the words of God the Father to Christ, and from whence the apostle argues the

imperfection of the Levitical priesthood, and the change of it; and also of necessity the change of the whole law, on which it was founded, Heb 7:11,12 7:15-17”.

The ark was something very remarkable in the former dispensation; in it was the Decalogue, and on the side of it the whole body of the Jewish laws; it was a token, and indeed the place of the divine presence, and a type of Christ, a symbol of the covenant; and therefore called the ark of the covenant, and included the whole of the ceremonial law; and is put for the whole service and worship of that dispensation. Now of this it is foretold, that there would be a time when it should be no more, and should not be so much as thought of any more, “Jer 3:16”.

The ecclesiastical, as well as civil state of the Jews, was to be shaken and removed; the one is signified by the shaking of the heaven, as the other by the shaking of the earth, in “Hagg 2:6” which the apostle explains of “the removing of things shaken, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain”, “Heb 12:26,27” even of the immovable kingdom after spoken of; the second administration of the covenant of grace, which is to remain, and the ordinances of it, until the second coming of Christ; whereas the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant were so shaken as to be removed; and which were made to be removed, as they have been, according to the above prediction.

Prophecy was another considerable way and means by which the covenant of grace was administered, throughout the whole Old Testament dispensation; and it was foretold that this should be sealed up, finished, and cease; for one part of the Messiah’s work, when come, was to seal up the “vision and prophecy”, “Dan 9:24” all the visions and prophecies of the Old Testament were to have, and had their accomplishment in Christ; were to be sealed up and fulfilled in him, the sum and substance of them; or to “seal up the vision and prophet”;

the prophets were to be till John, the forerunner of Christ, and no longer: after Christ, the great Prophet to be raised up, like unto Moses, there was to be no other, he only is to be heard; whatever scheme of things, either as to doctrine or worship, is set up, through pretended vision and prophecy, is to be disregarded; nor has any prophet risen up since prophecy, as foretold, was at an end. From all this now it might be expected, that the first and old administration of the covenant would in time cease.

2. Secondly, There are reasons to be given why the first covenant should and must cease.

2a. It was a typical covenant; the people on whose account it was made, was a typical people, typical of the whole Israel of God, consisting of Jews and Gentiles; of the spiritual Israel, chosen of God, redeemed by Christ, and who shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; the works, duties, and services enjoined them, and required of them with so much strictness, rigour, and severity, were typical of the obedience of Christ, the surety of the spiritual Israel; of that righteousness he was to fulfil and bring in, by which they are made righteous in the sight of God. The blessings promised unto them were typical ones; they were only shadows of good things, of spiritual blessings that were to come by Christ, "Heb 10:1 9:11". As the earthly Canaan was a type of the heavenly inheritance, obtained in him; the sacrifices offered under that covenant were typical ones; the priests that offered them, the garments they offered them in, and the gifts and sacrifices offered by them, "served to the example and shadow of heavenly things", "Hebv 8:4,5 9:23". The mediator of it, Moses, was a typical mediator, typical of Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant; the blood with which the first testament, or covenant, was dedicated and confirmed, was typical blood, typical of the blood of Christ, called, "The blood of the everlasting covenant", Heb 9:18 13:20". Now when the Antitype of all

this came, the types must cease; when Christ, the body, the sum and substance appeared, these shadows must flee away, and disappear, in course, “Col 2:17”.

2b. It was a faulty covenant, and therefore it was proper it should give way to a new and better covenant; so the apostle reasons; “for if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second”, “Heb 8:7,8”. Not that there was anything sinful or criminal in the first covenant, but it was defective; there were some deficiencies in it, which made the abrogation of it necessary.---

2b1. It did not exhibit Christ present, only in figure, in promise, and in prophecy; it only signified, that he would come and save his people; but it did not hold forth salvation as wrought out by him; it gave an intimation of the righteousness of Christ, that he was to bring in, but not as brought in; under it the propitiation, reconciliation, and satisfaction for sin, were not made, nor redemption from it obtained; wherefore Christ became the propitiation “for the remission of sins that are past”; and he suffered death “for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament”, “Rom 3:25 Heb 9:15”.

2b2. The sacrifices then offered were imperfect; for some sins there were no sacrifices appointed, as for sabbath breaking, murder, adultery, &c. and those that were appointed, could not really take away sin; at most they only made a typical expiation, not a real one; they sanctified only “to the purifying of the flesh”; but could not remove sin from the conscience, and “purge that from dead works”; that only the blood of Christ could do, “Heb 9:13,14”.

2b3. There was but a small measure of the gifts and graces of the Spirit bestowed on men under the first covenant; for though there were here and there one on whom great gifts, and much grace were bestowed, as Abraham and David, &c. yet in common, it was but a scanty measure of grace, light,

knowledge, and holiness, that was given to ordinary saints; and the communication was made, for the most part, only to Israelites, and but to a few among them, a remnant, according to the election of grace.

2b4. It was a state of darkness and obscurity under that covenant; it was like a night season, in which lamps are lighted, and torches used; such was the sure word of prophecy; it was like a light or lamp in a dark place; there was light in some particular persons, as in the prophets, and it was held forth by them; but in general there was but little among the people, who “could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished”, the ceremonial law; under which the mysteries of grace were couched, were clouded, and lay hid; they could not clearly see the end, design, and scope of them; though there were glorious promises of grace, these were covered with the veil of ceremonies, of which the veil, on the glory of the face of Moses, was a type, “2Co 3:7,13”.

2b5. It was a state of bondage; this covenant was signified by Hagar the bondwoman, and by mount Sinai, which gendered to bondage, and answered to Jerusalem, as it was in the apostle’s time; to the state of the Jews then, who were in bondage with their children: and the Israelites, while in their nonage, while children, were in bondage, under the elements of the world, which brought upon them a spirit of bondage to fear; for such a number of laws and ordinances being given them, to the breach of which death was annexed without mercy; and they so liable to break them, they, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage, “Gal 4:3,24,25 Ro 8:15 Heb 2:15”.

2c. The rites and ceremonies by which this covenant was greatly administered, are by the apostle called, “weak and beggarly elements”; and being “weak” and “unprofitable”, there was, therefore, a “disannulling” of them, “Gal 4:9 Heb 7:18,19”. The sacrifices, which were a principal part of them,

could not make, neither them that did them, nor the comers unto them, perfect, as to the conscience; they could not purge the worshippers, or those that attended ceremonial services, so as that they should have no more conscience of sin; they could not take away sin, neither from the sight of God, nor from the conscience of the sinner; nor so as that there should be no remembrance of them; for notwithstanding the daily sacrifices, morning and evening, and others on particular accounts, there was an annual remembrance made of them all, on the day of atonement, “Heb 9:9 10:1-4”. And especially when the great high priest was come, and his sacrifice was offered, they were quite impotent and useless, to answer any end at all: and therefore of right ought to cease, and be no more used; which leads,

3. Thirdly, To the abrogation of the first covenant, or of the administration of it; which was signified by the rending of the veil between the holy place and the holy of holies, at the death of Christ; whereby the way into the holiest of all was made manifest, and all within exposed to open view; as are the mysteries of grace, the veil of ceremonies being removed; and now, with boldness and freedom, entrance is had into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, consecrated through the veil of his flesh, which the former veil was a type of. The abrogation of the old covenant is expressed by “breaking down the middle wall of partition”, which stood between Jews and Gentiles; such the ceremonial law was, and is so called in allusion to the enclosure of the court of the Israelites, in the temple, over which the Gentiles might not pass; and by abolishing and slaving the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; the same ceremonial law, which had this name; because it indicated the hatred of God against sin, and irritated the hatred of natural men to it, by its numerous and wearisome rites; and because it was the occasion of enmity between Jew and Gentile, “Eph

2:14-16". It is moreover expressed by a disannulling of the commandment, the commandment of the priesthood, and of sacrifices and rites belonging to it; and even the whole ceremonial law, as to be of no more force, nor any longer binding; so that no man, henceforward, ought to "judge" another, with respect to them, nor take upon him to command an observance of them, and require obedience to them, "Heb 7:19" "Col 2:16,17". It is likewise expressed by "a blotting out the hand writing of ordinances that was against us"; being an accusation for sin, containing a charge of sin, and implying an acknowledgment of it; as if they had given it under their hands, and showing and owning that satisfaction for sin, and that expiation were not yet made; wherefore when Christ came and paid the debt, he took up his bond, and cancelled it, and blotted out this handwriting against his people, that it might not be read any more, and nailed it to his cross; where law and justice are directed to go for satisfaction, "Col 2:14". Once more, the abolition of the first covenant, and its form of administration, is signified by the fleeing away and disappearance of shadows. The law and its ceremonies were only shadows of good things to come by Christ; when he, the Sun of Righteousness, arose, these shadows fled; when he, the body, sum, and substance appeared, these disappeared: to this the church has respect, "Song 2:17 4:6".

Now the abrogation of the first and old covenant, or of that form of administration of the covenant of grace, was made, not at once, but gradually; and which the apostle suggests, when he says; "In that he saith a new covenant, he hath made the first old; now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away", "Heb 8:13". It began to decay, and there were some symptoms of a decay of it at the Babylonish captivity, and under the second temple; when the land of Canaan, a type of the heavenly inheritance, was seized upon by the Chaldeans, the inhabitants carried captive, a governor

appointed over it by the king of Babylon, and people left in it to till it for his use; the temple was burnt, and temple worship and service ceased for many years, and the vessels of it were carried to Babylon; and though after a term of years there was a return of the people to their own land, and the temple was rebuilt, and worship restored; yet, as the Jews themselves own {2}, the ark and many other things were wanting in that temple; great declensions there were, both in doctrine and worship; the sect of the Pharisees arose, and set up their own traditions upon a level with the written word, if not above it; and great confusion there was in the priesthood, that and the civil government being blended together; and men were put into it, especially towards the close of this period, that were very unfit for it; and oftentimes obtained it by corruption and bribery; all which showed a decay, and foreboded a change of things as near.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, came and proclaimed the near approach of the Messiah; he declared, that “the kingdom of heaven was at hand”, “Matt 3:2”. The gospel dispensation, the new administration of the covenant of grace, and the blessings of it: his father, at his birth, called him “the prophet of the Highest”, who was to prepare his way, and give knowledge of salvation to his people; and when he entered upon his office, he directed the people to believe on Christ, who was to come; and quickly pointed him to them, saying, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”, “John 1:29” which the lambs of the daily sacrifice, and all other sacrifices, could not do. Christ himself appeared, and preached the same as John had done, and began his ministry with the same words; but during his life the ceremonies of the law continued in use: he himself was circumcised the eighth day; his mother purified herself according to law, at the proper time, and presented him in the temple, cording to the usual manner; at twelve years of age he went up with his

parents to Jerusalem, to keep the passover; and when he had entered on his public ministry, he attended synagogue and temple worship; when he healed the leper he sent him to the priest to offer his gift; and one of the last actions of his life, was keeping the passover with his disciples; but at his death, of right, though not in fact, all ceremonies ceased, and even the whole dispensation or administration of the covenant, as it had been before in use; all things now concerning him had an end, “Luke 22:37” all types and figures, shadows, sacrifices, promises, and prophecies; he by his sacrifice, by his sufferings and death, caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease, of right; nor should any afterwards have been offered up, “Dan 9:27” nor any other rite and ceremony observed: yet, through the influence of Judaizing teachers over weak minds, it was thought advisable to continue the use of some of the ceremonies, at least for a time; after it was known by Peter and others, that they were no longer in force, yet because of the many thousands of Jews, who were all zealous of the law, it was judged proper that compliances should be made, and charity and prudence to be exercised, that weak minds might not be offended, until they were better instructed in the doctrine of Christian liberty; which, when that was done, the use of them was strongly opposed against the obstinate and self-willed, who were resolved to retain them at any rate; and the saints were exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled with the yoke of bondage; by which means the Christian churches were freed from those burdensome rites and ceremonies. But still the carnal Jews continued them, and even sacrifices, until the destruction of Jerusalem, which put an end to them; for according to the law of God, no sacrifice might be offered but at Jerusalem, and upon the altar there; so that when the city, temple, and altar were destroyed, they ceased to offer any sacrifice, and never have offered any since; whereby

that prophecy is remarkably fulfilled; “the children of Israel shall abide many days without a sacrifice”, “Hosea 3:4” as they have for nineteen hundred years, and still do; not even a passover lamb is slain by them, as well as no other sacrifice offered; which yet they would gladly offer, in defiance of Christ, the great Sacrifice, were it not for the above law, which stands in their way, and by which they are awed; and which is no small instance of the wisdom and goodness of God in providence. Now it was a little before the destruction of Jerusalem the apostle wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, and therefore, with great propriety, he says of the old covenant, that it was not only decayed, and waxen old, but was “ready to vanish away”, “Heb 8:13”. This being the case,

4. Fourthly, The new covenant, or the new administration of the covenant of grace, took place; and as the one was gradually removed, the other was gradually introduced; and this observation will serve to reconcile the different aeras fixed by different persons, for the beginning of the new dispensation; some placing it at the birth of Christ; offsets at the ministry of John the Baptist; others at the death of Christ, and his resurrection from the dead; and others at his ascension, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; whereas these were so many gradual manifestations of it: at the birth of Christ, undoubtedly, “the fulness of time” was come for the redemption of his people from the law who were under it; and on which very day the gospel was first preached by the angels to the shepherds, and afterwards more clearly and fully by John, by Christ and his apostles: Mark the evangelist, seems to make the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God, to be with the ministry of John the Baptist, “Mark 1:1-3” and which agrees with what Christ says; “the law and the prophets were until John”; they terminated in him, his ministry put a period to them; “since that time the kingdom of God is preached” in a

clearer manner, and attended to by more than it was before, “Luke 16:16”. Christ appeared, and preached the gospel as never man did; grace and truth came by him in a clearer and fuller manner than it ever had: he not only preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, as John did, but that it was already come; though not with pomp, with outward show and observation, and was actually among the people, “Luke 17:20,21”. At his death, and by the shedding of his blood, the New Testament was sealed, ratified, and confirmed by him, as the Testator of it; and therefore called, “the blood of the New Testament, and the blood of the everlasting Covenant”, “Matt 26:28 Heb 13:20” of that new administration of the covenant which should always continue; but this new dispensation more clearly appeared at his ascension, and by the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the apostles at the day of Pentecost; at his resurrection he gave them a commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; and ordered them to wait at Jerusalem until they were endued with the Holy Spirit, as they were on the above day; whereby they were furnished and qualified to carry the gospel, and preach it among all nations, as they did. And now it may be observed, that the new administration of the covenant, under the gospel dispensation, lies in the following things:

4a. In an exhibition of Christ as come, and as become the author of eternal salvation; in it he is set and held forth as incarnate; as having obeyed, suffered, and died, and has made peace and reconciliation, and full satisfaction for sin; and has obtained eternal redemption; has risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and has received for and given gifts to men to preach his gospel; these various articles of grace are comprised in the “great mystery of godliness”, “1Ti 3:16” and in those words, which are the sum of the gospel declaration, “this is a faithful saying”, &c. “1Ti 1:15”.

4b. In a more clear and extensive ministration of the

gospel: it first began to be spoken by Christ in the clearest and fullest manner it possibly could be; and then by his apostles, who received it from him, and gifts to minister it; and who by his orders carried it throughout the world, and preached it to every creature under heaven, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles; and is, “according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations, for the obedience of faith”, “Rom 16:25,26” so that the administration of the covenant is no longer restrained to a certain people, but men of all nations have the benefit of it.

4c. In a freedom from all bondage and servitude: not from the bondage of sin and Satan, common to all believers under every dispensation; but from the rigorous exaction of the law, as a covenant of works; from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and from the judicial laws, as peculiar to the Jews; and which further lies in the free use of things indifferent, and in the enjoyment of the privileges and immunities of the gospel church state: this is the glorious liberty of the children of God, the liberty with which Christ has made them free; and who receive the Spirit of adoption, by whom they cry, Abba, Father; and who is a free Spirit, and where he is, there is liberty.

4d. In a large communication of the gifts and graces of the Spirit: of extraordinary gifts, which in the first part of this administration were bestowed, not only upon the apostles, but upon common Christians, men and women, sons and daughters, servants and handmaids, according to the prophecy of Joel, “Joel 2:28,29” of common and ordinary gifts, to fit men for the ordinary ministry of the word; and of the special graces of the Spirit, in a greater degree to saints in common; as a larger measure of faith, peace, joy, and comfort, and of light and knowledge; for according to this covenant, and the administration of it, all know the Lord from the least to the greatest; and though John was greater than the prophets, the

least in this kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation, is greater than he, Jer 31:34 Mt 11:11”.

4e. In ordinances more spiritual than the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant were, which are called “carnal” ones; but these, which are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, do in a very lively and spiritual manner represent the sufferings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and hold forth the blessings of the covenant of grace in a comfortable way, and are the means of applying them to believers, to the increase of their joy and peace; and these will continue throughout the present administration of the covenant, even to the end of the world, Mt 28:19,20 1Co 11:26”. Of these ordinances I shall particularly treat elsewhere.

Now as the former administration of the covenant was carried through the various periods of time from the first exhibition, after the fall of Adam, to the first coming of Christ; so this second and new administration of the covenant is carried through various successive periods, unto his second coming. The book of the Revelation exhibits the state of the church from the resurrection of Christ to his personal coming; and particularly the seven churches of Asia are emblematical of it in each of the successive periods of time within that interval; and represent it in its various changes and vicissitudes, as sometimes in prosperity and sometimes in adversity; sometimes in the freer use and enjoyment of the ministry of the word and ordinances, and sometimes as under clouds, darkness, and discouragements, through persecutors and false teachers, until the spiritual reign of Christ takes place; when the whole earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and be enlightened with his glory; when the gospel will be in its purity everywhere, and the ordinances kept as they were first delivered, and gospel churches set up, and gospel discipline maintained everywhere; which will be followed with the personal reign of Christ, the resurrection of

the dead, the last judgment, and the ultimate glory: of each of which in their proper place.

{1} Vajikra Rabba, s. 9. fol. 153. 1. and s. 27. fol. 168. 4.
{2} T. Bab. Yoma. fol. 21. 2.

15. What Was the Purpose Of the Law of God

It appears by what has been observed, that there was an intermixture of law and gospel under the former dispensation, as there also is in the present one; they are interspersed in both testaments; though the law was more largely held forth than the gospel, under the former dispensation; and therefore we commonly call it the legal dispensation; and there is more of the gospel than of the law under the present dispensation; for which reason we call it the gospel dispensation; yet there are of each in both; and here will be a proper place to treat of law and gospel distinctly, which will connect what has been already said to what is yet to be said; and by the latter I shall be naturally led to the great and glorious truths of the gospel, I intend to treat distinctly of. And shall begin with the law.

The word law is variously used, sometimes for a part of the Scriptures only, the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses; as when it is mentioned in the division of the Scripture by Christ, “Luke 24:44” and along with the prophets, and as distinct from them, “John 1:45 8:5”. Sometimes for all the books of the Old Testament, which in general go by the name of the Law, as does the book of Psalms on that account, as the places quoted out of it, or referred to in it, show, “John 10:34” “John 12:34 15:25”. Sometimes it signifies the doctrine of the Scriptures in general, both legal and evangelical, “Psalm 19:7” and the doctrine of the gospel in particular, even the doctrine of the Messiah, “Isa 2:3” “Isa 42:4” called in the New Testament “the law”, or doctrine “of faith”, “Rom 3:27” and sometimes it signifies the whole body of laws given from

God by Moses to the children of Israel, as distinct from the gospel of the grace of God, “John 1:17” and which may be distinguished into the laws ceremonial, judicial, and moral.

1. The ceremonial law, of which little need be said, since much has been observed concerning it already; this concerns the ecclesiastical state of the Jews, their priests, sacrifices, feasts, fasts, washings, &c. and though some of these rites were before the times of Moses, as sacrifices, the distinction of clean and unclean creatures, circumcision, &c. yet these were renewed and confirmed, and others added to them; and the whole digested into a body of laws by Moses, and given by him under a divine direction to the people of Israel. This law was a shadow of good things to come by Christ, of evangelical things, and indeed was no other than the gospel veiled in types and figures; the priests served to the example and shadow of heavenly things; the sacrifices were typical of the sacrifice of Christ; the festivals were shadows, of which Christ was the body and substance; the ablutions typified cleansing by the blood of Christ; and the whole was a schoolmaster to the Jews, until he came; but when faith came, that is, Christ, the object of faith, they were no longer under a schoolmaster, nor had they need of the law as such; there was a disannulling of it, because of its weakness and unprofitableness; for it became useless and unnecessary, having its accomplishment in Christ.

2. The judicial law, which respects the political state or civil government of the Jews, and consists of statutes and judgments, according to which the judges in Israel determined all causes brought before them, and passed sentence; in which sentence the people were to acquiesce, “Deut 17:8-11”. Such as related to any injuries done to their persons or property, and to the punishment of offences, both of a greater and of a lesser kind; these were given by Moses, but not made by him; they were made by God himself. The government of the Jews was a very particular form of government; it was a theocracy, a

government immediately under God; though he is King of the whole world, and Governor among and over the nations of it, yet he was in a special and peculiar manner King over Israel; and he made laws for them, by which they were to be ruled and governed: nor had the commonwealth of Israel a power to make any new laws; nor any of their judges and rulers, not even Moses, their lawgiver under God: and therefore, when any matter came before him, not clearly determined by any law given by God, he suspended the determination of it until he knew the mind of God about it; see “lev 24:12 Num 15:34”. And when the people of Israel were desirous of a king, after the manner of neighbouring nations, it was resented by the Lord, and reckoned by him as a rejection of him from being their King; and though he gave them a king, or suffered them to have one, it was in anger; and so far he still kept the peculiar government of them in his hands, that their kings never had any power to make new laws; nor did their best and wisest of kings make any, as David and Solomon; and when a reformation was made among them, as by Hezekiah and Josiah, it was not by making any new regulations, but by putting the old laws into execution; and by directing and requiring of the judges, and other officers, to act according to them.

It may be inquired, whether the judicial laws, or the laws respecting the Jewish polity, are now in force or not, and to be observed or not; which may be resolved by distinguishing between them; there were some that were peculiar to the state of the Jews, their continuance in the land of Canaan, and while their polity lasted, and until the coming of the Messiah, when they were to cease, as is clear from “Gen 49:10” such as related to inheritances, and the alienation of them by marriage or otherwise; the restoration of them when sold at the year of jubilee; the marrying of a brother’s wife when he died without issue, &c. the design of which was, to keep the

tribes distinct until the Messiah came, that it might be clearly known from what tribe he sprung. And there were others that were peculiarly suited to the natural temper and disposition of that people, who were covetous, cruel, and oppressive of the poor, froward and perverse, jealous and revengeful; hence the laws concerning the manumission of servants sold, at the end of the sixth year; the release of debts, and letting the land rest from tillage every seventh year; concerning lending on interest; leaving a corner in the field for the poor, and the forgotten sheaf;--and others concerning divorces, and the trial of a suspected wife, and the cities of refuge to flee to from the avenger of blood: these, with others, ceased when the Jewish polity did, and are not binding on other nations. But then there were other judicial laws, which were founded on the light of nature, on reason, and on justice and equity, and these remain in full force; and they must be wise as well as righteous laws, which were made by God himself, their King and Legislator, as they are said to be, "Deut 4:6,8". And they are, certainly, the best constituted and regulated governments that come nearest to the commonwealth of Israel, and the civil laws of it, which are of the kind last described; and where they are acted up unto, there what is said by Wisdom is most truly verified, "By me kings reign, and princes decree judgment"; and if these laws were more strictly attended to, which respect the punishment of offences, especially capital ones, things would be put upon a better footing than they are in some governments; and judges, in passing sentences, would be able to do that part of their office with more certainty and safety, and with a better conscience. And whereas the commonwealth of Israel was governed by these laws for many hundreds of years, and needed no other in their civil polity, when, in such a course of time, every case that ordinarily happens, must arise, and be brought into a court of judicature; I cannot but be of opinion, that a digest of civil laws might be made out of

the Bible, the law of the Lord that is perfect, either as lying in express words in it, or to be deduced by the analogy of things and cases, and by just consequence, as would be sufficient for the government of any nation: and then there would be no need of so many law books, nor of so many lawyers; and perhaps there would be fewer law suits. However, we Christians, under whatsoever government we are, are directed to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and for conscience sake; even to everyone that is not contrary to common sense and reason, and to religion and conscience; see Ro 13:1-7 Tit 3:1 1Pe 2:13,14".

3. The moral law, which lies chiefly in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, "Ex 20:3-17" and which our Lord has reduced, even both tables of the law, to two capital ones, love to God, and love to our neighbour, "Matt 22:36-40" as the apostle has reduced the commands of the second table to one, that is, love, which he calls the fulfilling of the law, "Rom 13:9,10". And this law, to love God and our neighbour, is binding on every man, and is eternal, and remains invariable and unalterable; and concerning which I shall treat more largely. And shall consider,

3a. First, The author and giver of this law; God was the author and maker of it; Moses the giver and minister of it from God; it was God that first spoke the ten words, or commands, to the children of Israel; and it was he that wrote and engraved them on tables of stone; the writing was the writing of God, and the engraving was by the finger of God; it was from his right hand this fiery law went: the ministry of angels was made use of in it; it is called, the word spoken by angels; it was given by the disposition of them; it was ordained by them in the hands of a mediator, who was Moses, who stood between God and the people, received the lively oracles from him, and delivered them to them. There was a law in being before the times of Moses; or otherwise there

would have been no transgression, no imputation of sin, no charge of guilt, nor any punishment inflicted; whereas death, the just demerit of sin, reigned from Adam to Moses; and besides the positive law, which forbid the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and was given as a trial of man's obedience to the whole moral law, and in the form of a covenant, in which Adam stood as a federal head, to all his posterity; and which covenant he broke, and involved himself and his in misery and ruin. Besides this, there was the law of nature, inscribed on his heart by his Maker, as the rule of his obedience to him; and by which he knew much of God, and of the nature of moral good and evil; and which; though much obliterated by the fall, some remains of it are to be discerned in Adam's posterity; and even in the Gentiles, "Rom 1:19,20 2:14,15" and which is reinscribed in the hearts of God's people in regeneration, according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, "Jer 31:33". Now the law of Moses, for matter and substance, is the same with the law of nature, though differing in the form of administration; and this was renewed in the times of Moses, that it might be confirmed, and that it might not be forgotten, and be wholly lost out of the minds of men; of which there was great danger, through the great prevalence of corruption in the world: and it was written, that it might remain, "*litera scripta manet*"; and it was written on tables of stone, that it might be the more durable; the apostle says, "it was added because of transgressions", to forbid them, restrain them, and punish for them; and it "entered that the offence might abound", the sin of Adam; that the heinousness of it might appear, and the justness of its imputation to all his posterity might be manifest; as well as all other offences might be seen by it to be exceeding sinful, and righteously punishable: see "Gal 3:19 Ro 5:20" "Rom 7:13". It was not delivered as a pure covenant of works, though the self-righteous Jews turned it into one, and sought

for life and righteousness by it: and so it gendered to bondage, and became a killing letter; nor a pure covenant of grace, though it was given as a distinguishing favour to the people of Israel, “Deut 4:6,8 Ps 147:19,20” “Rom 9:4” and much mercy and kindness are expressed in it; and it is prefaced with a declaration of the Lord being the God of Israel, who had, of his great goodness, brought them out of the land of Egypt, “Ex 20:2,6,12”. But it was a part and branch of the typical covenant, under which the covenant of grace was administered under the former dispensation; and of what it was typical, has been observed before; and a principal end of its being renewed was, that Christ, who was to come of the Jews, might appear to be made under the law, as the surety of his people, the righteousness of which he was to fulfil, and, indeed, all righteousness; being the end of the law, the scope at which it aimed, as well as the fulfiller of it.

3b. Secondly, The epithets of this law, or the properties of it, may be next considered; such as the scriptures expressly give to it; and which will lead into the nature and quality of it. As,

3b1. That it is perfect. “The law of the Lord is perfect”, “Pslam 19:7” which is true of the moral law, by which men come to know “what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God”, “Rom 12:2” what it is his will should be done, and what not be done; it takes in the whole duty of men, both to God and man; for to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man; it includes love to God, and love to our neighbour; and which are comprehensive of every duty to both: it is very large and capacious; it is the commandment which is exceeding broad; it is so complete and perfect, that as nothing is to be detracted from it, so nothing is to be added to it, nor can be added to it, to make it more perfect: the papists talk of counsels, exhortations, &c. as additions; but these belong either to law or gospel. And the Socinians say, that

Christ came to make the law more perfect; which they infer from some passages in “Matt 5:1-48” where Christ observes, that it had been said by some of the ancients of old, thus and thus; but he said, so and so; which is not to be understood of any new laws made by him, but as giving the true sense of the old laws, and vindicating them from the false glosses and interpretations of the Scribes and Pharisees: and when the apostle John speaks of a new commandment, he means the old commandment to love one another, as he himself explains it, “#1Jo 2:7,8” and which he calls new, because enforced by a new instance and example of Christ’s love in dying for his people, and by new motives and arguments taken from the same.---

3b2. It is spiritual; We know that the law is spiritual, says the apostle, “Rom 7:14” which is to be understood of the moral law; for as for the ceremonial law, that is called, “The law of a carnal commandment”; and is said to stand in “carnal ordinances”, “Heb 7:16 9:10” which only reached the flesh, and the sanctifying of that: but the moral law is so spiritual in its nature and requirements, that so holy and spiritual a man as the apostle Paul when he compared himself with it, and viewed himself in the glass of it, thought himself “carnal, and sold under sin”. The law reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and the affections of the mind, and forbids and checks all irregular and inordinate motions in it, and the lusts of it. Thus, for instance, the sixth command not only forbids actual murder, but all undue heat, passion, anger, wrath, malice, resentment and revenge, conceived in the mind, and expressed by words. So the seventh command not only prohibits the outward acts of uncleanness, as fornication, adultery, &c. but all unclean thoughts, impure desires, and unchaste affections, as well as looks and words. The law directs, not only to an external worship of God, but to an internal, spiritual one; as to love the Lord, to fear him, and put trust and confidence in

him, suitable to his nature as a Spirit; it requires of a man to serve it with his own mind and spirit, with his whole heart, as the apostle did, “Rom 7:25” and the assistance of the Spirit of God is necessary to the observance of it; and God in covenant has promised his people, that he “will put his Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes”, and “keep his judgments, and do them”, Eze 36:27”.

3b3. The law is “holy”; so it is said to be, “Rom 7:12” and the commandment holy; it comes from an holy God, from whom nothing unholy can proceed; for holiness is his nature, and he is holy in all his works; and the law is a transcript of his holy will; the matter of it, or what it requires, is holy; even sanctification of heart and life; and it directs to live holily, soberly, righteously, and godly, in this evil world.

3b4. It is also “just”, as well as holy and good, “Rom 7:12”. There are no laws so righteous as the laws of God; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether, “Deut 4:8” “Pslam 19:9”. It is impartial unto all, and requires the same of one as of another, and renders to every man according to his works; it is just in condemning wicked men for sin, and in justifying those that have a righteousness answerable to its demands; for God is just, according to his law, while he is the justifier of those that believe in Jesus.

3b5. The law is good; the author of it is good only, essentially, originally good; from whom every good and perfect gift comes, and nothing that is evil and bad. The law is materially good, it is morally good; as God by the light of nature, so much more by the law of Moses, does he show to men that which is good; in it he sets before them the good they are to do; and the evil they are to avoid: it is pleasantly good; not to an unregenerate man, whose carnal mind is enmity to all that is good, and so to the law of God; but to a regenerate man, who, as the apostle, delights in the law of God after the inner man, and loves it, as David did, and meditates on it,

as every good man does, Ro 7:22 Ps 119:97 1:2". And it is also profitably good; not to God, for when men have done all they can, they are, with respect to God, unprofitable servants, "Luke 17:10" but to men, their fellow creatures, and fellow Christians, to whom they are serviceable, by their good works, "titus 3:8" and also to themselves; for though not "for", yet "in" keeping the commands there is great reward, as peace of conscience, Ps 19:11 119:165". The law is good, "if a man use it lawfully", "#1Ti 1:8". There is a lawful and an unlawful use of the law; it is used unlawfully when men seek to obtain life and righteousness by it; for the law cannot give life, nor is righteousness by it; nor can then be justified by the works of it, in the sight of God; for no man can perfectly keep it; there is not a just man that does good and sins not: but it is lawfully used when obeyed in faith, from a principle of love, with a view to the glory of God, without any selfish and sinister ends. Which leads me to consider more particularly,

3c. Thirdly, The uses of the law both to sinners and saints.

3c1. To sinners.

3c1a. To convince of sin. Sin is a transgression of the law, by which it is known that it is sin, being forbidden by the law; "By the law is the knowledge of sin"; not only of gross actual sins; but of the inward lusts of the mind; "I had not known lust", says the apostle, "except the law had said, Thou shall not covet", "Rom 3:20 7:7". Yet only as it is used by the Spirit of God, who holds it up to a mind enlightened by him, whereby it sees the sinfulness of it; for it is the Spirit's work savingly to convince of sin; which he does by means of the law.

3c1b. To restrain from sin; of this use are the laws of men; hence civil magistrates are terrors to evildoers: so the law, by its menaces, deters men from sin, when they are not truly convinced of the evil of it, nor humbled for it; though by such restraints, it does but rise and swell, and rage the more within,

like a flood of water stopped in its course.

3b1c. To condemn and punish for sin; for sinners it is made, and against them it lies, to their condemnation, unless justified in Christ, “#1Ti 1:9,10”. It accuses of sin, charges with it; brings evidence of it; stops the sinner’s mouth from pleading in his own cause; pronounces guilty before God; and curses and condemns: it is the ministration of condemnation and death; and its sentence takes place where the righteousness of Christ is not imputed.

3c2. It is of use to saints and true believers in Christ.

3c2a. To point out the will of God unto them; what is to be done by them, and what to be avoided; to inform them of, and urge them to their duty, both towards God and man; for in that the whole of it lies.

3c2b. To be a rule of life and conversation to them; not a rule to obtain life by; but to live according to; to guide their feet, to direct their steps, and preserve them from going into bye and crooked paths. The wise man says, “The commandment is a lamp, and the law is light”, “Prov 6:23”. And the wise man’s father says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path”, “Pslam 119:105”.

3c2c. It is as a glass, in which a believer, by the light of the Spirit of God, may see his own face, what manner of man he is; how deformed, how carnal and corrupt, when compared with this law; and how far short of perfection he is in himself; “I have seen an end of all perfection”, says David; “Thy commandment is exceeding broad”; to which the imperfect works of men are not commensurate; hence good men are sensible that their own righteousness is insufficient to justify them before God, it being but as rags, and those filthy ones. Hence,

3c2d. They are led to prize and value the righteousness of Christ, since that is perfectly agreeable to the holy and righteous law of God; yea, by it the law is magnified and

made honourable; wherefore they desire to be found in Christ, not having on their own righteousness, but his; who is the end of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believes. Now,

3d. Fourthly, The law of God continues under the present dispensation for the said uses; Christ came not to destroy it, and loosen men's obligations to it; but to fulfil it: nor is the law made null and void by faith; by the doctrine of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ; so far from it, that it is established by it {1}: there is a sense in which the law is "done away", and saints are "delivered" from it; "that being dead wherein they were held", as in a prison; and they "become dead to it by the body of Christ", by his obedience and sufferings in it, 2Co 3:11 Ro 7:4,6".

3d1. It does not continue as a covenant of works; and, indeed, it was not delivered to the children of Israel as such strictly and properly sneaking, only in a typical sense; though the Jews turned it to such a purpose, and sought righteousness and life by it: but God never made a covenant of works with men since the fall, in order to their obtaining life and salvation by it; for it never was in the power of man since to perform the conditions of such a covenant; however, it is certain, believers are not under the law as a covenant of works; but under grace as a covenant of grace.

3d2. Nor does it continue as to the form of administration of it by Moses; it is now no longer in his hands, nor to be considered as such; the whole Mosaic economy is broke to pieces, and at an end, which was prefigured by Moses casting the two tables of stone out of his hands, and breaking them, when he came down from the mount: the law, especially as it lies in the Decalogue; and as to the form of the administration of that by Moses, was peculiar to the Jews; as appears by the preface to it, which can agree with none but them; by the time of worship prescribed them in the fourth command, which was temporary and typical; and by the promise of long life in

the land of Canaan, annexed to the fifth command.

3d3. It continues not as a terrifying law to believers, who are not come to mount Sinai, and are not under that stormy and terrible dispensation; but they are come to mount Sion, and to all the privileges of a gospel church state: nor are they brought into bondage by its rigorous exactions; on a strict compliance to which, or perfect obedience thereunto, their peace and comfort do not depend: nor are they awed and urged by its menaces and curses, to an observance of it; but are constrained, by the love of God and Christ, to run with cheerfulness the way of its commandments; they are made willing to serve it with their mind and spirit, through the power and efficacy of divine grace upon them; and they do serve it, not in the oldness of the letter but in the newness of the spirit; or, as they are renewed by the free Spirit of God.

3d4. Nor is it a cursing and condemning law to the saints. As sinners and transgressors of it, they are subject to its curses; but Christ has redeemed them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them; and so there is no more curse to them here or hereafter; they are out of the reach of its curses, and of condemnation by it; there is none to them that are in Christ: Who shall condemn? it is Christ that died; and who by dying has bore their sentence of condemnation, and freed them from it; and having passed from death to life, they shall never enter into condemnation, Ga 3:10,13 Ro 8:1,33 Joh 5:24”.

3d5. Yet it continues as a rule of walk and conversation to them, as before observed; and is to be regarded by them as in the hands of Christ {2}; by whom it is held forth as King and Lawgiver, in his church; and who, and not Moses, is to be heard, and his voice hearkened to, as the Son and Master, in his own house. Believers, though freed from the law, in the sense before declared, yet are “not without law to God, but under the law to Christ”, and obliged to regard it; and the rather, as it was in his heart, and he was made under it, and

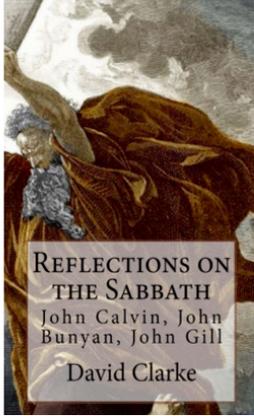
has fulfilled it; and therefore may be viewed and served with pleasure, 1Co 9:21”.

{1} See a Sermon of mine called, “The Law established by the Gospel. “

{2} See another Sermon of mine, called, “The Law in the hand of Christ.”

Other Publications

Reflections on the Sabbath: John Calvin, John Bunyan, John Gill



Authored by David Clarke

Since the Reformation in England men have had access to the scriptures and were able to read for themselves the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. These scripture were able to free men from the bondage of Rome and give light as to the way of salvation through Christ alone. In the early Church there were men who taught the Law of Moses must be kept in order to be saves but the Apostle Paul stepped in to show clearly that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the rule not life for the believer and not the Law of Moses. A conflict arose among those who advanced certain days were to be kept holy and their views were to bind others to their practice.

This book seek to take the reader through the developments in Articles of religion since the early 17 Century, stating with the first London Baptist Confession 2nd Edition 1646, through to the Gospel Standard Articles of 1878.

These has continued in the Christian world conflicting views on the Sabbath and this book sees to identify the development of thinking among those seeking to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Col. 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

In this book the author relates from his personal experience a conflict relating to the Sabbath which resulted in him being informed he would not be accepted as a member in any Gospel Standard church due to his scripture views on the Sabbath and Law of Moses.

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5.25" x 8" (13.335 x 20.32 cm)

Black & White on White paper

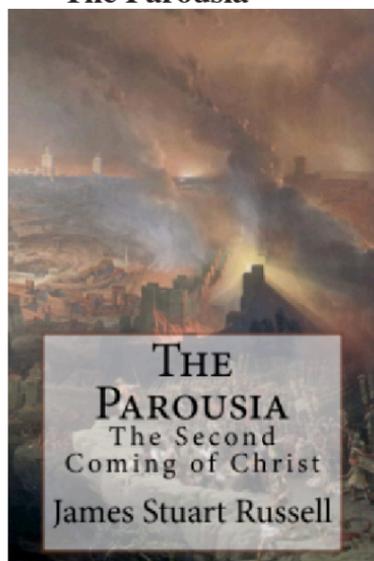
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BISAC: Religion / Christian Theology / Systematic

The Parousia



Authored by James Stuart Russell

Foreword by David Clarke Cert. Ed.

A reformation - indeed - a revolution of sorts is taking

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

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

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

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

followed in their path and Bible commentaries today almost casually assert the failure of the Bible writers - and Jesus - in their eschatological predictions.

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

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

Russell not only fully established the undeniable reality of the first century imminence of "the end," he powerfully and carefully shares with the reader that "the end" that Jesus and the N.T. writers were anticipating was not the end of the time space continuum (end of the world). It was in fact, the end of the Old Covenant Age of Israel that arrived with the cataclysmic destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70. Russell properly shows how the traditional church has so badly missed the incredible significance of the end of that Old Covenant Age.

Russell's work is a stunning rejection - and corrective -- of what the "Orthodox" historical "Creedal" church has and continues to affirm. The reader may well find themselves wondering how the "divines" missed it so badly! Further, the reader will discover that Russell's main arguments are an effective, valid and true assessment of Biblical eschatology.

And make no mistake, eschatology matters.

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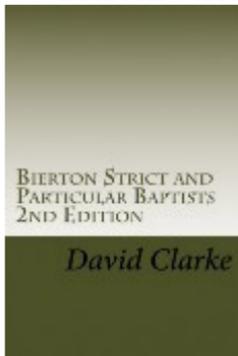
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Bierton Strict and Particular Baptists



My Testimony and Confession

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. They were both sent to prison for carrying a re arm without a license and malicious wounding. They were however both converted from crime to Christ after which they turned their lives around and from crime to Christ. This story tells of David's Conversion in 1970 and that of Michael, 1999 some 30 years later. It tells of their time in HMP Canterbury Prison and David's time in HMP Wormwood Scrubs and then

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, 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.

He tells of the event 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 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 findings in his book "The Bierton Crisis" 1984 written to help others.

David's tells how his brother Michael was untouched by his conversion and how he continued his flamboyant lifestyle ending up doing a 16 year prison sentence, in the Philippines, in 1996, where he died in 2005.

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 how David felt compelled to write this story under the title, "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.

David tells how Michael too was converted through him reading C.S. Lewis's book, "Mere Christianity", and him being convinced that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God, after this it tells of David's mission to the Philippines 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.

This story is told in there 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.

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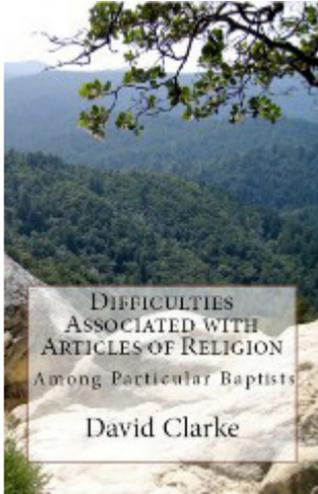
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Difficulties Associated with Articles of Religion



Among Particular Baptists

Articles of Religion are important when dealing with matters of the Christian Religion, however problems occur when churches fail to recognize there is a growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in any believer. When a person first believes in the Lord Jesus Christ they cannot possibly have a comprehensive knowledge of a churches constitution or its articles of religion, before solemnly subscribing to them. The author David Clarke has introduced the Doctrines of Grace to Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan, situated in Rahim Yar Khan, Pakistsan and bearing in mind his own experience with articles of religion he has compiled Bierton Particular Baptists Pakistan articles of religion from the first Bierton Particular Baptists of 1831, of which he is the sole surviving member, the First London Baptist Confession, 2nd edition 1646, and those of Dr John Gill, in order to avoid some of the difficulties encounter by Particular Baptist during the later part of the 19 century and since. This booklet highlights the problem and suggests the Bierton Particular

Baptists Pakistan is as step in the right direction.

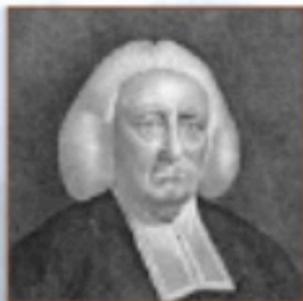
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Isaiah 52:8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.



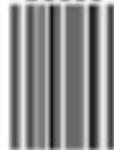
This book treats the subject of the Everlasting Covenant of grace. A covenant made between the three Persons Father Son and Holy Ghost before the world began. That has been gradually revealed by means of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant as declared by the Lord Jesus and His Apostles. It is by this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

Dr. John Gill (23 November 1697 - 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian who held to a firm Calvinistic soteriology. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, he attended Kettering Grammar School where he mastered the Latin classics and learned Greek by age 11. He continued self-study in everything from logic to Hebrew, his love for the latter remaining throughout his life. He is the only person to write a commentary on each very of the bible and after its completion wrote his Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity from which this subject The Everlasting Covenant is an extract. This book has be republished by Börtton Particular Baptists with a view to promote the cause of God and truth and to encourage all to read and study the scriptures for themselves. A knowledge of this subject will enable one to be free from the pitfalls of Arminianism

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